

GMB – BRITAIN'S GENERAL UNION

PROCEEDINGS

at the

ANNUAL CONGRESS

The Brighton Centre, Brighton

on

Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2007 – Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> June 2007

**FIRST DAY**

Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2007.

## **FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS**

**SUNDAY, 3<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2007**

### **MORNING SESSION**

*Congress assembled at 10 a.m.*

### **OPENING OF CONGRESS**

THE PRESIDENT: Conference, come to order, please. Good morning all and welcome to Brighton on this lovely sunny day. Conference, before we start, we need to go through some safety procedures and announcements. Delegates, in your wallets you will find the evacuation procedure. Will you please check and make sure that you have them. We are now going to show a video and please, please, everyone, listen to the instructions.

*(The public safety announcement was made)*

Thank you, Conference, for being so attentive. The other issue is to make sure that all mobile phones are off. Otherwise it will be a costly Congress for you, and that includes General Secretaries and officers in the same way.

### **BANNER CEREMONY**

THE PRESIDENT: Delegates, this year we have asked Birmingham & West Midlands Region to form the Banner Party. I ask Congress to be upstanding to greet the Banner. Thank you.

*Congress stood as the Banner Party proceeded to the platform to the accompaniment of "Jerusalem".*

I would like to thank the Birmingham & West Midlands Region delegates for having done such a fine job. I am sure that bringing in the Banner must be absolutely nerve-racking. Well done to all of you. *(Applause)*

### **WELCOME TO DELEGATES AND VISITORS**

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I now have a few guests to mention.

I would, firstly, like to welcome our General Member Auditor, Jim Clarke, who will be counting this votes this week, hopefully.

I would also like to welcome some visitors who we have with this. The following ex-Regional Secretary are attending Congress. The first is Bill Smith from North West & Irish Region. Is he here? Perhaps not yet. However, I know that Frank Wilkinson from Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region is here. Also I know that John Cope from the London Region is also here. *(Cheers and Applause)* Welcome, John.

Our Regional guests are Vic Baines, the Regional Vice-President of the Midland & East Coast Region, and Geoff Norton and Gerry O’Kane from Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. Welcome to all of you.

On Monday we will be welcoming Peter Mandelson, the EU Commissioner for Trade. *(Groans from the delegates)* Don’t, because I will say it when he comes. He is a lovely prince, isn’t he? *(Laughter)*

On Thursday we will be welcoming Mr. Shiri V.V. Rane, the Secretary of the Mumbai Port Trust, Dock and General Employees Union. I understand he is here today. Welcome to our Conference, colleague. *(Applause)*

I welcome our friends, the verbatim shorthand writers, Michael Thear and Phyllis Hilder, who do a great job, and of course I welcome the sign language interpreters, Nigel Cleaver, Marco Nardi and Zane Hema. Welcome to you all. *(Applause)*

Congress, the programme for this week is something that I will try to keep you abreast of at all times. For first time delegates I know it will be a nerve racking experience when you come up to speak but I promise you that we will be courteous and kind to you, although maybe not too kind if you take a liberty. We have all been there so you will not be on your own. We will give you as much help as we can. Where changes are expected, I will try and give the movers of the resolutions plenty of warning that I may be calling them early. So please make sure that you have got all of your speeches in your bag throughout the week.

The Final Agenda includes all motions and rule amendments remaining on the Agenda; all composite motions; Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1; SOC guidelines for Congress business, including time limits for speakers and the Representation Statement. Then we have the Income & Expenditure Statement.

## **ROLL CALL**

THE PRESIDENT: I call on Debbie Coulter to call the Roll.

*The Deputy General Secretary called the roll.*

THE PRESIDENT: If Regional Secretaries would notify the Congress Office of any further alterations, that would be very helpful.

## **APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS**

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, the next item is the Appointment of Tellers. Debbie.

THE DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY: The following Tellers have been appointed.

### **Birmingham**

No. 1 – Sandra Tanner to count GMB Scotland.

## **London**

No. 2 – Barbara Benham to count Southern.

## **Midland**

No. 3 – Carol Clarkson to count South Western.

## **Northern**

No. 4 – George Murray to count Yorkshire.

## **North West & Irish**

No. 5 – Derek Sutcliffe to count Birmingham.

## **GMB Scotland**

No. 6 – Phil Brannan to count London.

## **Southern**

No. 7 – Jack Cheeseman to count Midland.

## **South Western**

No. 8 – Pauline Phillips to count Northern.

## **Yorkshire**

No. 9 – Eric Batty to count North West & Irish.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Debbie. Let me emphasise that Tellers must remain in the Congress Hall whilst Congress is in session and that delegates must be in their allotted seats when a vote is taken. The General Secretary informs me that he has put some buckets for them at the end of the rows, so no leaving the hall.

## **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1**

THE PRESIDENT: I call on Gerry Ferguson, Chair of Standing Orders, to give the Standing Order Committee Report No. 1.

## **GMB CONGRESS 2007**

### **STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 1**

The business of Congress will be conducted in accordance with the Agenda, the Programme and the Guidelines for Congress Business, subject to changes at the President's discretion.

### **TIMES FOR CONGRESS**

The Standing Orders Committee wishes to draw the attention of Delegates to the starting times of the morning and afternoon sessions set out in the Congress programme as follows:

Sunday 3 June 10.00 am - 12.30 pm / 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm  
Monday 4 June to Thursday 7 June 9.30 am - 12.30 pm / 2.00pm - 5.00 pm

The Standing Orders Committee recommends that the President be authorised to close each session when appropriate, without further reference to the Standing Orders Committee or to Congress.

### **TIMES FOR SPEAKERS**

The Standing Orders Committee recommends the following Time Limits for Speakers.

#### **General Motions and Rule Amendments:**

Movers up to	4 Minutes
Seconders up to	2 Minutes
Other Speakers up to	2 Minutes

#### **Officers' Reports:**

General Secretary up to	10 Minutes
Deputy General Secretary up to	7 Minutes
Movers of Section Reports up to	5 Minutes
Questions up to	1 Minute

Officers' and Section Reports, and questions to them, should relate only to matters of general policy, and not to details of negotiations.

#### **Special Reports and CEC Statements:**

Mover up to	6 Minutes
Seconder up to	3 Minutes
Other Speakers up to	3 Minutes

It would help the business of Congress enormously if, wherever possible, motions could be formally seconded, and if replies to questions and debates were kept to a minimum.

The Standing Orders Committee draws Delegates' attention to the two rostrums and asks speakers to be ready by the vacant rostrum when it is their turn to speak. Chairs will be provided at the front of the hall for speakers awaiting their turn.

### **QUESTIONS ON BALANCE SHEET AND AUDITORS' REPORT**

Questions on the Balance Sheet and Auditors' Report must be submitted in writing to the Congress platform no later than 5 pm on Tuesday 5 June.

### **MOTIONS OUT OF ORDER**

The Standing Orders Committee has ruled that the following Motions are Out of Order for the reasons specified:

#### **Motion 11. Policy**

The motion calls for every member and every future member to sign a contract of commitment. This would require a rule amendment to Rule 5.1. Congress 2007 is not a rules revision year, so the motion is out of order at this year's Congress

#### **Motion 26. Retired Life Members**

The motion calls for changes to Rule 49A Clause 4a. Congress 2007 is not a rules revision year, so the motion is out of order at this year's Congress.

### **Motion 47. Equal Rights and Race Relations**

It is unclear from the wording of the motion what it means and what it is trying to achieve, so it is out of order for debate at Congress.

### **COMPOSITE MOTIONS**

Agreement has been reached on the Composite Motions printed in the Final Agenda.

### **EMERGENCY MOTIONS**

The Committee has ruled that the following Emergency Motion(s) is in order:

Emergency Motion 1: "Contract Changes in ASDA", standing in the name of Birmingham & West Midlands Region.

### **MOBILE PHONES**

If mobile phones are brought into the Congress Hall, they must be switched off at all times when Congress is in session.

### **FILM CAMERAS**

The Standing Orders Committee has given permission for film cameras to be used in the Conference Hall. The Committee has been assured that filming will be carried out with no interference to Delegates.

### **BUCKET COLLECTIONS**

Requests for permission to hold Bucket Collections should be submitted in writing to the Committee by 11.00am on the first Sunday morning session of Congress (It is a term of Exhibitors' agreements with GMB that they will not request permission to hold a collection.) Requests must be submitted in writing by the Regional Secretary, and must have the support of the Regional Delegation. Priority will be given to requests for collections which concern trade union or related issues. Where permission is granted, those requesting the collection must organise, count and bank the collection, if necessary liaising with the Congress office for support from Congress Stewards. They must then notify the Congress office of the amount collected, so that the President can inform Congress.

By agreement reached at Congress 96, Regional Committees will each contribute a further sum to the national Congress gift. So permission will not be granted for a collection to augment the Congress gift

**BRO. G. FERGUSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee):** I formally move SOC Report No. 1. Colleagues, you will find SOC Report No. 1 in a copy of your Final Agenda, starting on page 24. I formally move adoption of this report and, in doing so, the SOC would like to thank delegates and their regional secretaries for agreeing 33 composite motions which also appear in your Final Agenda, starting on page 103.

Would colleagues please note the long-standing Guidelines for Congress Business on page 17 of your Final Agenda. This will help you all, especially the new delegates, in the understanding of the procedure and the guidelines that the President and the SOC work to.

Motions out of order. The SOC have ruled that the following motions are out of order for debate at this year's Congress. Motion no. 11, Policy. This motion calls for every member and every future member to sign a contract of commitment. This would require a rule amendment under rule 5.1. Congress 2007 is not a rules revision year so the motion is out of order for debate at this year's Congress.

Motion 26, Retired Life Members. This motion calls for a change to rule 49A, clause 4a. Congress 2007 is not a rules revision year so it is out of order for debate at this year's Congress.

Motion 47, Equal Rights and Race Relations. The wording of this motion is not clear as to what it means or what it is trying to achieve. So it is out of order for debate at Congress.

There is one withdrawn motion. South Western Region. Motion 139, Single Status, is being withdrawn in favour of Motion 141.

Emergency Motions. The Standing Orders Committee has ordered that the following emergency motion is in order. Emergency Motion no. 1 – Contract changes in Asda – standing in the name of Birmingham and West Midlands Region. You will find this emergency motion on page 127 in your Final Agenda.

President and Congress, I formally move adoption of Standing Orders Committee Report, No. 1.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gerry.

BRO. A. GOODFELLOW (Southern): I am at the rostrum but not supported by my region. I am responding on motion 11. Chair and Congress, I think there are many issues in this motion that need to be debated, especially at this point in time, when you look at the political horizon. I will be brief. The first line of this motion says that this is not a Rules Revision Appeal. There is a difference between terms and conditions and rules and regulations. I believe that terms and conditions are something you consider before you sign, and rules and regulations are for when you are a member. I leave it up to the Chair to decide. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. John.

BRO. J. TOOMEY (North West & Irish Region): President, I put in a motion regarding speaking without support and a mandate, and it has been completely withdrawn. I am asking Congress to vote that it be on the agenda. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: John, can you explain that again to me. You put a resolution in and it is not on the agenda?

BRO. TOOMEY: It is not, no.

THE PRESIDENT: That is not our fault. The region must have withdrawn it.

BRO. TOOMEY: It is the CEC who withdrew it. So it is up to the delegates to vote on it.

THE PRESIDENT: John, we do not have that authority. If it is not on the agenda, then I am afraid it is not going to be called.

BRO. TOOMEY: That is not democracy, Mary. Come on! Let the delegates here decide.

THE PRESIDENT: John, we do not have the resolution. Full-stop. It is not on the final agenda.

BRO. TOOMEY: Then Standing Orders can tell us why it was withdrawn.

THE PRESIDENT: But they would not know either, I don't think. Let us ask the region. John, ask your region.

BRO. P. McCARTHY (Regional Secretary, North West & Irish): The Region discussed it at the pre-delegation discussion. The delegates voted on it and it was not accepted.

THE PRESIDENT: Ah, that is democracy, John. *(Laughter)* Does anyone else wish to come to the rostrum? *(No response)* Gerry.

BRO. FERGUSON (Chair, SOC): President, I am responding to SOC No. 1. In relation to motion 11, colleagues, the first sentence of rule 5.1 of the GMB Rule Book reads: "All persons engaged or seeking to be engaged in any kind of industry or service whether manual, clerical, technical, computer, administrative, executive, professional, supervisory, managerial or comparative work, including graduate trainees, shall be eligible to join the Union." Motion 11 seeks to qualify this rule requiring members and future members to sign a contract of commitment. The motion calls for the commitment to be binding, perhaps even introducing terms and conditions of membership.

The SOC considers that this would require a change to rule. Congress 2007 is not a rules revision year, so the motion is out of order for debate at this year's Congress. In ruling that the motion is out of order, the Standing Orders Committee is not passing a judgement on the merits of the motion but only whether it is in order for debate at this year's Congress. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Gerry. Does Congress accept Standing Orders Report No. 1? All those in favour, please show? All those against, please show?

*(Standing Orders Committee Report No. 1 was carried)*

## **PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS TO CONGRESS 2007**

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Bro. M. Sage): Congress, I would now like to call the Union's President, Mary Turner, to give her address to Congress. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, good morning and welcome to all delegates and visitors who are here this week. Before I begin my address, I would like to make a couple of special thanks to people who have helped me along the way during my career in the Union. I would like to thank my region and the three regional secretaries who I have worked with during my time, and they are my present regional secretary,

Ed Blissett, John Cope, who is here, and also Paul Kenny, who is now the General Secretary. I would like to thank them and thank all the delegates in my region and to all of you for the support that you have given me and the Union over the last year. That is personally from me. Thank you very much.

Congress, last year I opened my Address by recalling the trauma of the previous years, and ended by looking forward to the future with pride. A new future, led by a new General Secretary campaigning on behalf of our members. This year I am able to say that the new future we anticipated has become a reality. We are a campaigning union, we are a growing union and we are a union with a successful organising agenda: campaigning on the issues that matter to our members – jobs, pay, fairness and equality; a growing membership and financially stable.

Last year, Congress, you decided against merger. I would like to congratulate the TGWU and Amicus on their marriage.

We have not looked back and we see our union going from strength to strength. And that strength and influence is needed because there is much to be done in the coming years.

On the political front there are about to be some dramatic changes – soon we will have a new Prime Minister and new Deputy Leader. The candidates for the deputy leadership will be coming here on Monday afternoon and delegates will have an opportunity to put questions to them. I am sure you will have many issues to raise.

On Tuesday we welcome our future Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, to address Congress, and there will also be an opportunity to put questions to him.

Two years – two Prime Ministers – speaking direct to GMB members. I am sure there will also be no shortage of issues to raise. Since 1997 successive Labour governments have made progress and the country is a far better place than the mess that the Tories left us in. However, to quote the present Prime Minister, Tony Blair – this Congress wishes him and his family well in his retirement – “a lot done, a lot still to do”.

We want to talk to Gordon about what needs to be done: the future of our public services; our workers in local government, schools and the National Health Service; pensions; the decline in manufacturing; inequality in pay; the creeping takeover by private equity and the disgraceful betrayal of our Remploy workers to name just a few.

Very close to my heart is the plight of our workers in the National Health Service. Let's be honest, there have been many positive steps in the Health Service – higher investment and cuts in waiting lists. But the endless reforms since 1997 – outsourcing to the private sector and the cuts in jobs to balance budget shortfalls – are not signs of the “best year ever” that Patricia Hewitt seems to think the NHS has had.

For some of our members in the NHS it has been their worst year ever. They are demoralised, frustrated and uncertain of what the future holds for them. The Union is here to fight for fairness for the working people of the UK, wherever they come from.

This year we have a new debate at Congress on migrant workers, reflecting the tremendous work that the union has done to support and represent people who come here to work and need support against exploitation.

I am proud as your President to give a few examples of what we have been doing to support migrant workers. We now have migrant worker branches in Southampton and Glasgow. In Midlands & East Coast Region we have appointed Lithuanian and Polish officers to support migrant worker organisations. South Western Region has improved language and training for migrant workers through learning reps. All of this has been developed, Congress, in less than two years.

We have given evidence to the Low Pay Commission which has helped prevent employers taking huge chunks out of their employees' wages for their accommodation and bringing them below the National Minimum Wage.

The National Minimum Wage will be going up to £5.52 in October of this year – not close enough to the GMB's target of £7 an hour, but closer than it would be without the work done by trade unions. There will be stronger enforcement powers too, an issue which we have kept at the forefront.

And we are the forefront of the international campaigns as well. We are pressurising the Government on the atrocious slaughter of our brother and sister trade unionists in Colombia, and on Monday morning there will be a short but shocking film highlighting this fact; the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe under an evil dictatorship, and the dreadful impact on the Cuban people of the iniquitous US blockade. Colleagues, we have been at the forefront of all of these campaigns.

On Wednesday the financial report will demonstrate the turn around in the Union's finances. Our membership now stands at almost 600,000. It is a proud day for me to stand here and say that. Hopefully, we have stopped the decline. We have a new and more effective sectional structure and the implementation of the next stage of Framework for the Future will be put before you later on today.

This Union has been transformed. There is a new confident approach to campaigning, a fresh approach to recruitment, a dedicated national organising team and membership growth in targeted recruitment areas. And, of course, our very effective campaigning strategy. I never thought I would be quoting from *The Spectator* in a President's address, but here goes. There is a first time for everything:

*"In the past few months trade unions have been making the running on issues ranging from the role of private equity to the responsibility of manufacturers to keep their factories in Britain. Led mainly by the GMB..."*

When Burberry decided to move its production from Treorchy to China they thought no one would notice. But they weren't prepared for the sustained and sophisticated campaign that the GMB launched, questioning their reputation and bringing about a decent settlement for the workforce. I congratulate from this platform the South Western Region on the hard work they all did.

Private equity companies have been getting away with asset stripping and tax breaks for years. But once the GMB got its teeth (or camel) into Permira, the public sat up and took notice. Well, Conference, they ain't seen nothing yet! At Congress last year we played *There Ain't No Stopping Us Now*". No, there ain't no stopping us now. The Union is rejuvenated. Congress, I thank everyone who has taken us to where we are today in such a short time.

The theme of Congress is GMB@Work – so much work has been done by the General Secretary and the senior management team, the officers, staff and, above all, you, our members who are the Union.

Progress in so many areas, commitment and pride in our Union is at the fore. Yes, we are transformed. We are on the up and up and we mean to stay there. Thank you. *(Applause)*

### **VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT**

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mary. Colleagues, I now call on Vin Bloor, the CEC and Birmingham & West Midlands Region, to give the Vote of Thanks to the President.

BRO. V. BLOOR (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, visitors and guests, it is a privilege to move this vote of thanks to our National President, Mary Turner, on your behalf. It is an honour for me to say just a few words about a lady of substance and a person for all seasons who has given her working life to the trade union Movement. What a great asset, as we have heard this morning, it is for us to have her on our side when, without doubt, Mary Turner would have been successful in whatever walk of life she had chosen. Thank you, Mary, for choosing this path, a path where you have fought vigorously over the years for the low paid and part-time workers, just to name a few, in the name of the GMB. You are always prepared to stand up and be counted when the going got tough.

Mary, during the years that I have known you I have always felt that you have been understanding, tolerant and fair, but also you have a sense of urgency. This week you will show those attributes time and again. When you sit at the rostrum you are calm, collective and always have a warm smile to greet us daily.

One example that comes to my mind when I look at you is that of a driving instructor. A first time delegate comes to the rostrum and you understand that it is a big occasion for that individual. But, Mary, your words of warmth and encouragement, I am sure, are both welcome and comforting to them. Then we get the seasoned campaigners, who I am sure you know are colour blind when it comes to the traffic light system, and your tolerance is tested to the limit. But the one thing you have in common with both is that you are understanding, patient and you do not stifle debate. When they walk from the rostrum to the applause of Congress they both know that they have passed their test. Mary, you allow them the opportunity that gives them that sense of achievement. Thank you.

Congress, Mary Turner does not always get the credit she richly deserves, although, may I add, she does not ask for it. She will quite openly tell you, if you ask her, that

healthy eating in schools was Mary's brainchild. It always has been since her days as a dinner lady. But the powers that be in this country thought that a little bit of spotlight for a little unknown, by the name of Jamie Oliver, would not do him or his career any harm at all. Mary, they have not fooled us. The GMB through you has triumphed again, benefiting our children in the schools for the future.

Mary is a fellow CEC member and the pressures over the past few years have been great in stabilising our Union, but we all know that without someone with your conviction, leadership and integrity, we may not have been here in the position we find ourselves today. As you have already commented, you have shown direction at the CEC level, enabling our Union to be finally stronger with a growing membership.

Mary, I mentioned earlier about a sense of urgency. Congress, this world is full of very competent people who, for the best will in the world, will do something tomorrow or as soon as possible. But thank goodness we are blessed with a person like yourself, Mary, who has this sense of urgency to get things done today. Congress, if we had to change one thing in our lives today we should follow our President and embrace this sense of urgency. Without this, we could and will become complacent.

Mary, I do not know sometimes where you get your energy from when you go from one meeting to the next. I remember recently asking you "How does Denny cope and does he still remember with your lifestyle?" Your reply to me was, "He doesn't cope, but I leave a photo on the pillow so when he goes to bed it reminds him of what I look like." Mary, that sums it up.

As you know, Mary, as the cliché goes, could you have got through and been as successful as you have in life without the support of your family both in good and bad times? Mary, we know you have had your share of both. The answer, I am sure, is no. So, Mary, it would be remiss of me not to mention Denny and all your family who, I am sure, have been a tower of strength over the years enabling you to succeed.

Finally, Mary, as the business of Congress has got underway we wish you a smooth and successful week. Let me say one last thing, Mary. If business looks as though it is over-running on any day, would you do Congress a favour – just show a bit of urgency. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I thank Vin for those warm and kind words. I feel very humbled. Yes, Vinny, I am the proudest girl to lead this Union. That pride shows at times, sometimes in temper and sometimes in laughter, when fighting for our members' rights. Thank you for mentioning my family. Yes, we have had our share of problems over the past 18 months but, let me say, none of us in this hall, including me, could do the work we do without the support of our family and partners. I think that they deserve gold medals because of our commitment and their commitment to seeing that we succeed. To all the families both past and present, thank you for lending us our stewards, reps, officers right the way through to our Executive. Thank you very much, indeed. (*Applause*)

## **OBITUARY**

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I now come to a very sad part of our business. Before we do we now have the obituary of colleagues who we have lost since we last met.

Congress, it would be remiss of me if I did not mention one individual, and that is Les White from Midland & East Coast Region. As many of you know, he was a great performer at this Congress who died suddenly working for the union in his role as National Auditor. He is a sad loss to us and, of course, to his family. We attended his funeral and gave your condolences to his family.

I ask you to be upstanding for the list.

*(The Congress stood in silent tribute as the Obituary List was scrolled on the screen)*

## **CONFIRMATION OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE**

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, we now come to the confirmation of the Standing Orders Committee. They are those individuals who we have hidden away in a room at the back. They have little boxes in front of them. It is not *Deal or no Deal* when we go in there, but they do a tremendous amount of work. They are present at Congress long before we are to put the running of Congress together.

I ask you to welcome from Birmingham Region, Brian Adams; London, John Onslow; Midland & East Coast, Helen Johnson; Northern, Gerry Ferguson; North West & Irish, Andy McGivern; Scotland, Mary Finn; Southern, Alan Durrant; South Western, Gareth Lewis and Yorkshire, Peter Bagnell.

The CEC Observer is Robert Welham, North West & Irish Region.

Congress, they do a great job. I know that sometimes you do not agree with their decisions, but those are the rules and they carry them out. You will not see many of them this week. *(Applause)*

## **PRESENTATION OF GMB GOLD BADGES**

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I now come to a very, very nice part of the Agenda, and it is the presentation of the GMB Gold Badges. The Women's Gold Badge this year has been awarded to Edna Rolph from the London Region. I know that Edna is here as is her family.

The Men's Gold Badge has been awarded to Albert Rollinson from Midland & East Coast Region. I know that Albert is with us, too.

Colleagues, Edna has been a GMB member for 45 years. A former CEC member, she is a Regional Council member and she has held many representative posts including becoming branch secretary of Luton branch which she built up to be one of the largest in London Region.

Her proudest achievements with the GMB have been her successes in campaigning for women's rights. She started at a ball bearings factory and became a full-time convenor and securing equal pay for women. Beyond the GMB, she and her husband, Peter, have raised two highly successful children, and I know that they are here as well today, as are her grandchildren and great grandchildren. So welcome to the families.

Edna has also raised thousands and thousands of pounds for her local children's hospice: Keech Cottage.

Edna, it gives me the greatest pleasure to present you with this Gold Badge, both as a colleague and as a friend. Thank you. (*Presentation made amidst applause*) Edna, the floor is yours. I would love to give a vote of thanks to Edna because I could tell you some stories. Couldn't I, Edna?

SIS. E. ROLPH (London): You could, Mary. President and Congress, I cannot begin to say how grateful and proud I am to be afforded this immense honour by my peers and some of my dear, dear friends. Colleagues, I am truly humbled to be award this Union's highest accolade. In thanking you all today, I feel as nervous as I did at my first speech at a GMB conference, and I can remember that nerve wracking speech as if it was yesterday. It was back in the 1960s and it was the GMB's National Engineering Conference. I had a speech all prepared on the fantastic work that the GMB did for many, many good causes in the community and society, but it just did not seem to get the due recognition in the press and media.

Going back to my speech, colleagues, I was so nervous that I started to deliver the speech sitting down, hoping that no one would see me. All of a sudden, that old London die hard regional representative, Stan Gibbs, jumped up and shouted at the top of his voice, "Stand up and give your name and region". Well, that was the best thing that could have happened because I just jumped up and delivered my maiden speech. I have lost count of the number of speeches I have had the honour to give since. I shall always be indebted to Stan for that push.

Colleagues, I joined the GMB all those years ago when I was working for an engineering firm in Luton called Skecco and they made ball bearings in all sizes. It was a male dominated environment and there was no equal pay. However, although it was a male dominated workplace, the leadership of the GMB was historically female. Connie Hill was the convenor from the war years till the '50s; Mag Yars was the convenor from the '50s to the '60s and I was convenor until 1995 when I was made redundant. I think that is a remarkable achievement for a trio of women.

Colleagues, as a trade union convenor in Skecco, but probably more importantly because I was a woman, I fought long and hard for equal pay, but when legislation was enacted to allow for equal pay the biggest problem was not, strangely, the company but my female colleagues. The men had wound them up saying that the price for equal pay was that they would have to do the really heavy work. The women did not think that they could handle this so they were reluctant to commit themselves. Colleagues, it took a lot of persuading but eventually the women found that they could easily handle the heavy work so equal pay was achieved. In fact, it was better than equal pay because the men were disadvantaged because they just did

not have the dexterity to do the intricate work, the women's work, that needed to be done on the small bearings.

Colleagues, my 40 years in the GMB have allowed me to make many lifelong friends and receive help and inspiration from the best in the business. I must mention two men who have been mentors, friends, shoulders to cry on and major supporters of me and many colleagues. They are my former regional secretaries; John Cope and Paul Kenny, both of whom are legends in the trade union Movement.

John was a fellow engineering shop steward at Hoover in Perivale when I first met him. He gave me every support that I could wish for. He never failed to answer a question and he never failed to explain a procedure.

Paul was an up and coming officer when I first met him. He, like John, enjoyed making waves and was a wonderful inspiration and a good friend.

I have been very lucky to sit on the interview panels for the appointment of three regional secretaries. On the first, Paul Kenny was not successful although I could see enormous potential. In mitigation we did appoint John Cope instead and we appointed Paul some years later on the second panel. I think these panels made excellent choices.

On the third we appointed our current regional secretary, Ed Blissett. Ed has continued the excellent leadership of John and Paul and I want to thank him also for his support and advice. I wish him a long and successful period in office.

I must also mention Mary. We have worked together, fought together and sometimes we have argued but we have been very firm friends. I hope that you feel my support has been for you as you for me. Thank you, Mary.

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely.

SIS. E. ROLPH: I must also thank my branch members and the regional officers for their support over the years.

Colleagues, although I have had the privilege to represent the GMB at every level and every forum, there is a reason for all of us doing what we do, and that is not just public speaking or high office: it is representing members. None of us should forget the buzz we get from winning a case. That is why members join and that is why I did what I did and still do what I do.

President, in conclusion, I would like to say that although I have spent most of my working life fighting for equality, sadly, even today a married female trade unionist cannot fully commit to what is required without the support of her husband and family. To this end, I have been very lucky. My children, Janice and Graham, have backed me every step of the way. What can I say about my husband, Peter? He has sacrificed so much for allowing me to play such an active role in the GMB.

President and Congress, I thank you dearly for this wonderful honour and I also ask you to thank my family. Thank you, Congress. Have a great week. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I endorse the second part of Edna's speech in relation to her family and, in particular, to her husband, Peter. We do know that the time he gives up and his commitment to the Union is absolutely amazing. Congress, he does not know this yet, but I could not get you a Gold Badge, Peter, but I do know that it is your birthday and we would like to wish you a happy birthday from Congress. Happy birthday. Well done. *(Applause)*

Congress, it now gives me great pleasure to present the men's winner of the Congress Gold Badge, who is Albert Rollinson, Midland & East Coast Region. Welcome, Albert.

Albert has been a GMB member for over 50 years since joining the GMWU – I remember those letters as well – in 1944, but not that far back, when he says it cost him 4p a week in old money. He worked for a paint, varnish and colour factory for 46 years and was a shop steward and safety rep.

As branch president and in other roles, he has campaigned to oppose anti trade union laws and to support the dockers, miners and many, many others. He is a founder member of his local residents' association, and his many achievements include stopping a toxic burning incinerator being built within Hull City boundary; he was a school governor for many years, devoting particular attention to promoting equality of educational opportunities for all and he has also served as a lay member on the Corps Council of the Salvation Army.

Albert says he is "retired" now but he keeps to his own favourite motto:

*"Don't just count the passing days... Make the passing days count!"*

What wonderful words.

Albert, it gives me great pleasure to present to you Congress's highest honour, the Gold Badge, and it is justly deserved. *(Presentation made amidst applause)*

BRO. A. ROLLINSON (Midland & East Coast): President, excuse me because I am a bit emotional.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all right, darling. Take your time. There is no hurry. We've waited 50 years to bring you here so we can wait a few minutes longer. *(Laughter)*

BRO. ROLLINSON: Thank you. President, Congress, brothers, sisters and comrades, I really do thank you from my heart for this award, which is the highest award that anyone can get from the GMB. I thank you very much. Yet I am sure that many of you here today have done as much, and more, than I have done: shop steward, safety rep, delegate, members of the trades council, all sorts of things.

The GMB is a great and powerful organisation and I am very proud to have been part of it for more than 62 years. This honour does reflect upon the Midland & East Coast Region and also on my own local branch, the Hull Paint & Engineering Branch.

Hello to all the boilermakers. Hello. (*Laughter*) It was Edith Piaf who sang *No Regrets*. My only regret is that my dear wife, Kathleen, is not here today to share this moment with me. I would also like to say a big “Thank you” to my hardworking secretary, Bro. Shaune Clarkson. He has always given me good advice and practical help. Thank you, brother. I wish you all a jolly and enjoyable Conference at the seaside by helping each other and working together. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, they are great people, aren't they? They have given their lives to helping others. It is an emotional time, but such a proud time for this Union when we recognise those our members. We wish sometimes we could recognise everybody but we only have one Gold Badge in each section, but we are honoured to have such wonderful people who have helped to make this Union great. We have just followed them. They have shown us the road. Albert and Edna, thank you very much and well done. (*Applause*)

### **PRESENTATION OF GMB YOUTH AWARD 2007**

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I am skipping out of order to the next item. I know that the young lady in question is on the platform and I know that she is terribly nervous and I do not want to keep her hanging around.

Congress, it gives me great pleasure to present the GMB Youth Award for this year to Lucinda Yeadon from Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. Lucinda is 26 years old – oh, dear, how I wish I was that again – and has been a GMB member since 2002.

She is employed by MENCAP and campaigns with the GMB to promote the rights of people with learning and physical disabilities in work. As MENCAP does not recognise the GMB, Lucinda has to use unpaid leave to carry out her union and political roles. She started as a member of the National Young Members' Advisory Committee and has represented the GMB at countless events and on a range of TUC and Labour Party conferences and committees.

Lucinda is actively involved in promoting the “Hope not Hate” campaign across Yorkshire. Alongside the GMB she is also a member of Amnesty, Cuba Solidarity and the Yorkshire Disabled Cricket Team.

Congress, it gives me great pleasure to present the certificate and the cheque to Lucinda. Lucinda, thank you very much. (*Presentation made amidst applause*)

SIS L. YEADON (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President and comrades, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for this award and I am extremely grateful. I want to say how proud I am to be a GMB young member. I joined the GMB over five years ago when I was a student and in those five years I have gained so much from the union, not just protection in the workplace but I have made some great friends, especially Alex Sobel and Kath Owen. I have gained a greater understanding of the world around me and I have come to learn the vital importance of standing in solidarity with my brothers and sisters to effect real change. That is what this union means to me.

It is usually a bit corny to thank people, but I am going to do it, anyway. I would like to thank Bill Chard and Rachel Dicks from Yorkshire Region who have always endeavoured to keep young members' issues on the agenda. I would also like to thank the members of NAIRAC, Iris Walters and my branch, which is Leeds Apex back at home. I would especially like to thank our Deputy General Secretary, Debbie Coulter, who has been a constant source of support, advice and encouragement, which I am extremely grateful for. Thanks, Debbie.

A taxi driver told me yesterday that I was a bit too young to be in a trade union, but the truth is that in a year I am going to be too old to be a young member, but I am really pleased to see new young members coming through the union and actively challenging that stereotype and fighting for the rights of young workers. We saw many of those at our first Young Members' Conference in a very long time in November and also the delegation that came to the TUC Young Members' Conference earlier this year. There is so much hope for the future. So these young people are our future and they are the future of the trade union. So please give them the same support and encouragement that was given to me.

Now I look forward to returning here in future years not as a young member but as a member and I am really looking forward to it.

So thank you very much, enjoy Congress and have a great time in Brighton. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, that is the future and there is nothing I can add to Lucinda's words. Yes, we are only holding the seat, Lucinda, for people like young members to come forward.

Congress, thank you very much, and I thank everybody involved in the work which they have done to make three people very happy today.

Let me point out that we have two rostrums, with chairs in front of the platform. I will give you advance warning of your resolutions, motions and composites. If you would come down before to the chairs before you are due to speak because it is amazing how much time can be saved and given to you in Congress.

As to procedure in the first debate, where the CEC is supporting the motion I will advise Congress of the CEC recommendation. Where the CEC's position is something other than straight support, for instance support with qualification, support with statement, seek withdrawal or a reference, I will call on someone to give the CEC recommendation in a reply to the debate.

To save time, I will take motions in groups and ask for the CEC speakers, and rather than to deal with each motion individually, I will probably call them all and ask you to vote on them all en bloc.

The Congress Programme shows the groups. Let me remind you that where there is a large X in front of a motion in the programme, it means that the SOC has ruled the motion out of order.

Motions Passed at Congress: London Region. The CEC is supporting with a statement. Peter Foley.

Officers Disciplinary Procedures. Rules 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302 and 303. I will be asking the movers of those to come forward to start debate. Then I will be asking Malcolm Sage, our Vice President to reply.

Colleagues, let me say that I would like to thank Malcolm for all the work and help that he has given me in the last year. Thank you, Malcolm. I could not have a better right hand.

Then I will be calling Motion 17: CEC/Regional Council Elections: Midland & East Coast Region, and then Motion 19: Accountability: GMB Scotland. I will be asking Dave Clements from the Southern Region of the CEC to reply to both. Is that clear? (*Calls of "Yes"*)

## **UNION ORGANISATION CONGRESS**

### **MOTION 6**

#### **MOTIONS PASSED AT CONGRESS**

Congress is concerned that many motions passed appear never to be actioned. We demand proper feedback as to the progress of all motions adopted that ask the CEC to specifically do something i.e. Campaign or Lobby Government etc. Any motions not acted on should then be debated again at the following Congress.

ESSEX PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): Congress, I am moving Motion 6 – Motions Passed at Congress but never actioned. During the past few years many motions have been raised and passed at Congress which have involved many hours of work from many hardworking delegates. However, myself and other delegates are concerned that even though these motions get passed, nothing seems to happen after this point.

I call upon Congress to keep all delegates advised in the future as to the progress of their motions which, after all, is the lifeblood of the Union. One suggestion is that they be debated against next year as many already are. We would like confirmation that the CEC has escalated these issues and is doing something positive about them. Thank you.

SIS. A. POULTON (London): I am seconding Motion 6 – Motions Passed at Congress.

President, Congress expects motions carried out to be implemented or at least planned actions stated. We discover what has or has not happened when the General Secretary's Report comes out before the next Congress, which is two months.

Because of this, a multitude of activists feel frustration because there appears to have been little or no action. Due to the time factors, motions can be duplicated as motions have to be in six months before Congress. All we ask is for clear and concise progress of motions passed sooner to stop repetition of the same motions. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)*  
In that case, I call Peter Foley.

BRO. P. FOLEY MBE (CEC, Commercial Services): President and Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC on Motion 6. The motion is calling for feedback and progress of all motions adopted at Congress.

Congress, the CEC supports Motion 6 with the following statement. This is existing policy. There is a mechanism in place and a system to provide the feedback requested in accordance with Motion 52 passed at Congress 2005. Immediately following Congress, the decisions of Congress are sent out to regions. The September CEC then receives a report which identifies the senior officials and relevant CEC sub-committees who are then asked to progress the decisions.

Feedback is provided in the General Secretary's Report to Congress. You will see the Report on Motions carried at the previous Congress set out on pages 36-42 of the General Secretary's Report. The contributions from the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary, national officials and specialist department sections of the Report cover the progress of motions carried at the previous Congress.

The Report on Motions and CEC Special Reports and Statements Carried by the 2006 Congress is set out on pages 43-46 of the General Secretary's Report. So, Congress, motions are progressed and feedback is provided.

Congress, the CEC is asking you to support the motion with that statement.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Peter. I call for the vote.

*(Motion 6 was carried)*

## **OFFICERS' DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

THE PRESIDENT: Malcolm, can you please move Officers Disciplinary Procedure.

## **OFFICERS DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

CECRA293

Rule 17 – delete all.

CECRA294

Rule 17A

Clause A1, line 3, after " or otherwise", insert "save for disciplinary matters"

**CECRA295**

**Rule 17B**

Clause B2 – line 4, delete “17G”, insert “17F”

**CECRA296**

**Rule 17B**

Clause B3 - delete all

**CECRA297**

**Rule 17E**

Clause E2 – line 5, delete “17G”, insert “17F”

**CECRA298**

**Rule 17E**

Clause E2 – delete “On election any National Officer herein specified shall not be removed from office except for failure properly to perform his/her duties, grave misconduct or other sufficient reason as provided by Rules 17F and 17 relating to officials and the termination of their services.”

**CECRA299**

**Rule 17F**

Clause F1 – delete all

**CECRA301**

**Rule 17F**

Clause F3 – delete all

**CECRA302**

**Rule 17G**

Clause G2 – line 2, delete “(other than those officials elected prior to week ending 5th January 1985 under the Rules of the GMW Section of GMBATU then in force appointed as Organisers, and Organisers who were formerly Area Secretaries, Senior Area Organisers or Area Organisers of the Association)”

**CECRA303**

**Rule 17G**

Re-designate as 17F, and number clauses accordingly.

**The relevant Rules will now read as follows:**

**Rule 17A Officials - Authority over**

A1 Supreme authority over all National, Sectional and Regional Officers shall be vested in the Central Executive Council whose decision on all matters appertaining to their conditions of employment or otherwise, save for disciplinary matters, shall be final and binding on all such officials.

A2 The Central Executive Council may delegate its powers as to officials to Regional Committees provided that in so doing nothing shall be deemed to remove from the Central Executive Council its overriding authority, including the right to determine the numbers by grade of Senior Organisers and Organisers.

A3 No member shall be eligible for appointment, nomination or election for any National, Regional or Section office within the Union (except as provided under Rule 15 – General Secretary

and Treasurer, Deputy General Secretary) unless the Central Executive Council or (by delegation) the Regional Committee on receiving his/her nomination is satisfied that s/he is capable of discharging efficiently the duties of the office and is satisfied as to his/her fitness and qualifications for office.

### **Rule 17B Organisers**

B1 Subject to the approval of the General Secretary and the Central Executive Council, Regions shall have the power to appoint officers who shall be known as Organisers. The Central Executive Council may, from time to time, decide the procedure and method of such appointments. An Organiser shall, at all times, be under the control of, and work under the direction of, the Regional Secretary. S/he shall be a full-time paid employee of the Union and his/her terms and conditions of employment shall be as decided from time to time by the Central Executive Council. An Organiser shall not be eligible for election to any lay office within the Union.

B2 All Organisers shall within five years of appointment, and at a time to be decided by the Regional Secretary and the Regional Committee as approved by the Central Executive Council, be subject to an election in accordance with Rule 17F. Officers elected before week ending 5th January, 1985, under the Rules of the GMW Section of GMBATU then in force shall not be affected by this provision. When elected, such officers shall be known as "Elected" Organisers.

### **Rule 17C Senior Organisers**

C1 Regions, having had regard to the actual or potential membership, shall make recommendations to the Central Executive Council for the creation of a post of Senior Organiser to cover particular industries, sections of membership or grade of worker within the Region. In authorising Regions to make such appointments, the Central Executive Council shall have supreme authority and shall, likewise, have regard to the actual or potential membership to be covered by such appointments in each Region.

C2 The general duties of the Senior Organiser shall be as defined from time to time by the Central Executive Council, or by Regional Secretaries or Regional Committees under the authority delegated to them under Rule 17A2.

C3 Appointments of Senior Organiser shall be open to any Organiser from any Region or Section of the Union.

### **Rule 17D Regional Secretary**

D1 Notwithstanding anything in Rule 17D3, appointment of Regional Secretary shall be made by the Regional Committee on a vacancy arising. Such appointments and the procedure for such appointments shall be subject to the approval of the Central Executive Council.

D2 Appointments to Regional Secretary shall be open to any National Official, Senior Organiser or Organiser of any Region or Section of the Union.

D3 A Regional Secretary shall for the purposes of these rules be treated as if s/he were a member of the Regional Council for so long as s/he holds office as Regional Secretary.

### **Rule 17E National Officials**

E1 When a vacancy shall occur within the Union, for the office of National Official (except as

provided under Rule 14 or Rule 14A - General Secretary and Treasurer, Deputy General Secretary), or any new office shall be created requiring the services of an official to fill that office. The selection for a national office of a member who has not previously been elected, shall require election by all members of the Union.

E2 No member shall be eligible for nomination and election to any National or Regional Office within the Union, including that of a National Industrial Officer, unless the Central Executive Council on receiving his/her nomination, is satisfied that the member is suitably qualified for the office according to Rule 17A3. The election procedure shall be as provided in Rules 17F and 71, subject to any modification by the Central Executive Council.

### **Rule 17F Organiser Election Procedure**

F1 This Rule shall apply to Organisers.

F2 Under the delegated powers vested in the Central Executive Council by Rule 17A2, Regions shall arrange for Organisers to be subject to election at such time within five years of appointment as shall be determined by the Regional Secretary and Regional Committee, subject to approval by the Central Executive Council.

F3 No member shall be eligible for nomination at the election to a regional position unless his/her qualifications are in keeping with the standard required by the Union (such standard to be determined by the Central Executive Council in its absolute discretion) and unless the Regional Committee on receiving his/her nomination is satisfied that s/he is capable of discharging efficiently the duties of the office.

F4 Each Branch in the Region shall have power to nominate and vote for any member who is a candidate for a regional office (including that of Organiser), but no member shall be eligible for nomination or election unless s/he has paid 53 consecutive weekly contributions prior to the date of nomination and is fully financial, and is suitably qualified for office according to Rule 17A3.

F5 Nomination shall be made on the form provided which shall be returned to the Regional Office within five weeks from the date of receipt.

F6 Immediately after the closing date for the receipt of nominations by the Region, each nominee shall be communicated with and asked to state whether nomination is accepted or withdrawn. Seven clear days shall be allowed for reply, and failure to reply within that time shall be taken to mean that the member does not accept nomination and his/her name will not be included on the voting paper.

F7 Voting papers bearing the names of accepting candidates shall then be issued to each Branch and a vote shall be taken by show of hands at Branch meetings.

F8 The financial membership of the Branch, as shown on the last quarter's balance sheet, shall be counted for or against in accordance with any decision given by the majority of the members present at the meeting.

F9 Five weeks shall be allowed for voting and all voting papers shall be returned to the Regional Office not later than the date prescribed on the form.

F10 In the event of any officer (either National or Regional) dying, or being incapacitated from the efficient performance of the duties attached to that office, during the process of election, the

Central Executive Council shall have the power to determine whether the election shall proceed on the names of the candidates remaining, or whether the election shall be declared null and void, in which case new nominations may be made by the Branches.

F11 Any question on the method of voting shall be decided by the Central Executive Council or the appropriate authority named in Rule 71.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I am speaking on behalf of the CEC Rule Amendments 293 to 303.

Congress, the CEC seeks your support for Rule Amendments 293 to 303 which relate to the union's fulltime officials. One of the major projects undertaken since Paul Kenny took office has been the overhaul of the union's HR procedures. Too often in the past mistakes have condemned the union to expensive litigation and have led to rightful criticism from both inside and outside the union, and have exposed both employees and managers in the union to varying levels of unfairness.

Led by my colleague, Andy Worth, a team has now completed, in consultation with representatives of GMB officers and staff, a range of new HR policies and procedures of which the union can now be proud. Part of this project was to introduce a fair and robust disciplinary procedure for all employees. This replaces the previous procedure for officers and includes a substantial CEC involvement. This does not feature in the new agreed procedure partly because it often led to confusion and delays which helped neither the employee nor the union. All the changes to Rule 17 before you today remove from rule matters which are either contractual or are covered in the new law procedure.

Colleagues, please support these rule amendments which are aimed at improving the union's management and reinforcing the rights of our employees. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. Does anyone wish to come into the debate? (*No response*) Can I put the rule amendments en bloc to Congress? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? Thank you, Congress.

*(Officers Disciplinary Procedure: Rule Amendments 293 to 303 were carried.)*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: REPRESENTATION & ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **MOTION 17**

#### **CEC / REGIONAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS**

Congress, CEC elections are due in 2007, and Regional Council elections are due in 2009, both for a four-year period. With this two-year difference, continuity is difficult.

As the CEC and the Task group have proposed changes to both, Congress should therefore bring these elections in line with each other.

MANSFIELD CENTRAL BRANCH  
*Midland & East Coast Region*

*(Referred)*

BRO. D. HOCKING (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, the CEC elections are due in 2007 and the Regional Council elections are due in 2009, both offer a 4-year period. With this 2-year difference continuity is difficult. As a CEC Task Group has proposed changes to both, Congress should therefore bring these elections into line. Now is the perfect time to address the situation with the CEC elections due.

There are three possible solutions to this dilemma. One, elect the CEC for 2 years. Two, elect the CEC for 6 years. Three, elect the Regional Council for 2 years. Obviously, we have to consider the most cost effective and practical solution which will rule out solution one. Solution two would save the union money. With solution three we would have to wait a further two years before we could correct the situation. Task Force, you now have the opportunity and the solutions. Let's realign these elections. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Seconder?

BRO. R. WHILDING (Midland & East Coast): Congress, this motion makes common sense and fit for its purpose. It brings in line two elections. Please support the motion. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate?

BRO. K. FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): I am slightly confused, actually. In a sense this is a rule amendment you are suggesting. The actual elections etc. are covered by rules and therefore technically you are dealing with a rule amendment. I am just slightly confused by that and wonder if I could get some clarification on it. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kevin. Anyone else? *(No response)* Can I ask the mover from GMB Scotland to come and move 19, Accountability?

## **MOTION 19**

### **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Congress calls upon all National Officers, Negotiators and Representatives not to enter into agreements which are to the detriment of our members. The outcome of negotiations should always be put to the members concerned for their consideration prior to acceptance and in the absence of a mandate from the members to accept on their behalf.

Agreements should not be made for the convenience of Employers or to accommodate or comply with schedules. Our union must be seen by our members as a democracy run by our members for the benefit of our members. All elected groups, negotiators, representatives and committees must be accountable to the membership if we are to be seen as a democratic organising Union.

Accountability is paramount.

SCOTTISH SECURITY BRANCH  
*GMB Scotland*

*(Carried)*

BRO. J. DOLAN (GMB Scotland) Moving Motion 1, he said: Congress calls upon National Officers, negotiators, and representatives, not to enter into agreements which are to the detriment of our members. Outcome of negotiations should always be put to the members concerned for their approval and in the absence of a mandate from the members to accept it on their behalf. Again it should not be made for the convenience of employers or to accommodate or comply with schedules. Our union must be seen by our members as a democracy run by our members for the benefit of our members, and all elected groups, negotiators, representatives, and committees must be accountable to the membership. If we are seen to be democratic accountability is paramount.

Congress, with the new directions set by the document GMB@Work and Workplace Organisation we hope issues like this will become a relic of the past, a strong workplace organisation bargaining within, empowering our members, with more secure sustainability and growth. Colleagues, please support Motion 19.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

BRO. F. McNEILL (GMB Scotland) seconding the motion said: We realise that on occasions agreements in the past have been made due to our poor and terrible organisation of membership within companies. This motion is not intended as a criticism, rather a timely reminder of the principles we adopted in 2006: two of these are that our future is down to us and a bigger role in the workplace for our reps. Please support the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) I call Dave Clements and maybe before you do come up, Dave, Kevin, 17 is not stated as a rule change. The idea is that we are asking for reference so that the sentiments of the resolution can be taken up now by the working party that, as you know, is looking at all our rules and rule book, and so on. That is the reason it is there. If it is carried here it will go out to the regions for consultation and then, if necessary, would have to come back here for authorisation under rules. Is that another one that is as clear as mud to you?

BRO. K. FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. Thanks. All right, Dave.

BRO. D. CLEMENTS (CEC, Commercial Services): The CEC is asking you to refer Motion 17 and support Motion 19 with qualification. Motion 17 is asking for the CEC and Regional Council elections to be brought into line with each other to eliminate the lack of continuity created by the two-year gap. This issue was considered by the CEC Task Group and it was recognised that the current arrangement has both advantages and disadvantages, but there was no consensus on any way forward so the Task Group did not make any firm proposals. The matter clearly needs to be examined thoroughly and therefore the CEC is asking for this motion to be referred to the CEC organisation sub-committee for an in-depth examination.

Turning to Motion 19, the motion is asking for full accountability by national officials, negotiators, and representatives, and for them not to enter into agreements without the mandate of their members. Congress, this motion is sound in principle and the CEC supports it but with qualification. Of course, negotiators should consult their members prior to entering into agreements unless they have a mandate from members to accept on their behalf. However, from time to time there are matters which constrain negotiators from fully complying with this principle. For instance, in green field sites membership needs to be established before full consultation can take place and, of course, there may be legal issues to be considered, for instance, ones related to equal pay. Congress, the principle that accountability to members is paramount is sound.

The CEC is asking you to accept reference back on Motion 17 and support Motion 19 with the qualification I have outlined.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. Midland & East Coast Region, will you accept reference? (*Agreed*) Congress agree? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

*(Motion 17 was referred)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Motion 19, CEC support with qualification, GMB Scotland do you accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Good. Thank you. All those in favour please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

*(Motion 19 was carried)*

THE PRESIDENT: Now can I ask for the movers of Motion 12, the New Year's Honours List, Midland & East Coast Region to move.

## **UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL**

### **MOTION 12**

#### **NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST**

Congress, The New Year's Honours list should reflect the service, dedication and support for others without financial reward, giving the extra effort to help worthy causes, promote, and leading by example.

This Congress endorses that the CEC should also promote and endorse GMB Trade Union members who achieve this.

Congress agrees that the General Secretary, with the support of the CEC, nominate or support nominations to the New Year's Honours List from within the GMB.

MANSFIELD CENTRAL BRANCH  
*Midland & East Coast Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. M. COPPIN (Midland & East Coast): This motion asks Congress to confirm the New Year's Honours List should reflect the service, dedication, and support for others without financial gain or reward, giving the extra effort to help worthy causes,

promote, and lead by example. This Congress endorses that the CEC should also promote and endorse GMB trade union members to achieve this. Congress agrees that the General Secretary with the support of the CEC nominates or supports nominations to the New Year's Honours List from within the GMB.

The Royal Family and the British honours system are the root causes of the English class system. Many people consider both to be stabilising features in our national life. Many other people consider them hopelessly outdated and divisive. Many other people just do not give it any consideration whatsoever. So what do you think?

British honours are thought by the public to be awarded on merit and on the basis of exceptional achievement or service. Alas, this is not always the case. The Queen chooses the recipients of these honours and they have asked the Prime Minister and other relevant ministers to whom recommendations are made by their departments or members of the public. Private nominations, however, are made by individuals or representatives of organisations to the Prime Minister's office. These account for a quarter of all recommendations so there are a lot of opportunities here to get GMB members honoured.

In 1993 the automatic practice of conferring awards on holders of certain posts ended opening the honours system up to more individuals, particularly those in the voluntary sector who qualify on merit, like GMB members. The honours system recognises merit and service to the nation. There are several different types of award each one recognising a different field of contribution made by GMB members.

Honours lists are published twice a year, the New Year and in mid-June on the date of the Queen's official birthday. Anyone can receive an award if they reach the required standard of merit or service. An honours list contains a wide variety of people from different backgrounds just like GMB member: for instance, a knight or a dame awarded for pre-eminent contribution in any field of activity through achievement or service in the community but not exclusively at national level, or any capacity, which is recognised by peer groups, inspirational, and significantly nationally which demonstrates sustained commitment: one for Mary Turner, then.

The CBE or OBE are awarded to a prominent national role of lesser degree or a conspicuous leading role in regional affairs through achievement of service to the community, or making highly distinguished innovative contribution in his or her area of activity. I will move on. The MBE is awarded on achievement of service and in the community, responsible, kind, outstanding in its field, very local hands-on service which stands out as an example for others; in both cases these awards illuminate areas of dedicated activity, merit, and public recognition.

I nominate each and every activist of the GMB union, right here, right now. The GMB already recognises it has the best activists, organisers, and officers, of any union so why not assist our own to gain such accolades others will envy. These awards will inspire and uplift GMB members and advertise nationally and internationally. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder? You are going to wear that carpet out again, aren't you, this week?

BRO. D. HOCKING (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, it is long overdue that the GMB should use the honours system to recognise our unsung heroes, those who willingly make sacrifices in the line of representing our members, sacrifices like being sacked and overlooked for promotion. This method of award also gives headline advertising to the GMB. If we adopt nominating, remember that MBE stands for “my bloody effort”, OBE stands for “other buggers’ efforts”. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone want to come in on the debate? Other buggers’ efforts”! Right. I did not even have to look round there, Terry.

BRO. R. REEVES (Southern) supporting Motion 12 with a proviso said: President, Congress, I have an honour, an RBM, it was gained through long service to an organisation serving the Queen. I have mixed feelings about this motion, and they are about the first sentence. Yes, this is how it should be but it is not. The honours system is riddled with class division, patronage, and echoes of our imperial past. The system needs radical reform to be fair. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

BRO. T. FLANAGAN (London) speaking against the motion said: I thought two years ago in Blackpool we passed a motion saying we would abolish the Royal Family. How come we are supporting them? It is beyond me that we should actually even consider this. Where was the Standing Orders Committee when this came round?

Anyway, let’s go into the debate. I think the days of the grovellers and the lickspittles have gone. I think the day is when trade unionists stand up and recognise themselves for what they did for themselves. The people I have admiration for in the Trades Union Movement are the people who do not accept honours. The people who accept honours are parasites. (*Applause*) I have nothing but contempt for your Bill Morris, your Eric Hannamans, your Richard Brigginsaws. It is a disgrace. When we passed the motion at Blackpool, and it originated with my branch, we made the point we do not want anything to do with the Royal Family. We did not say get out the meat hooks and the piano wire but perhaps we should have made it clear. This society and this patronage, let’s not see the GMB besmirch its good name or any of its officers with this shower of inbred parasites. Reject this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Anyone else wish to come in? Did you hear that, Terry? You are mellowing. Usually you want to shoot them or hang them! Roger?

BRO. R. DARCY (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, the CEC is supporting Motion 12 but with the following qualification. The key to this motion is that the honours should be awarded primarily to honour people who made significant contributions to society without personal financial reward. The Labour Government changed the nomination rules to allow more ordinary people to gain recognition for their public service. The qualification is that the GMB only support the nomination of those people that have a long record of service over and above their normal work, not because they are rich and famous. Therefore, the CEC is asking you to support Motion 12 with that qualification. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Roger. All those in favour please show? Midland & East Coast, do you wish the right to reply in relation to Terry's kind words?

BRO. M. COPPIN (Midland & East Coast): I second everything the gentleman said and I quite agree, it comes from his heart, but this is not about the Royal Family the way this has been put forward. It is about rewards, the Gold Badge Award, for instance. We want to reward our own and give accolades to our own and since these awards are on the floor anyway and they are dished out every year.... For instance, in 1993 when it was reviewed last time, it was the bloody Conservatives that changed it and made more of us able to get an award. Yes, you are quite right, the whole thing wants reviewing and looking at again but all I want to do is get rewards and accolades for our own GMB members and activists who are out there doing all the good work, not for the ones that the gentleman referred to. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Roger? Right, all those in favour please show? All those against? It is carried. (*Calls from the floor*) I am getting the other glasses on now; hang on!

(*Motion 12 was carried*)

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now ask the mover of Composite 15, Economic Growth and Pay Inequality, GMB Scotland, to move, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region to second. Then I will be calling 173, Pay Freezes, GMB Scotland, and then Composite 7, Employment Policy: Rights at Work to be moved by Midland & East Coast Region, and the Northern Region to second.

## **INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: THE ECONOMY**

### **COMPOSITE MOTION 15**

(Covering Motions 171 and 172)

#### **171 – Economic Growth – (GMB Scotland)**

#### **172 – Pay Gap (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)**

### **ECONOMIC GROWTH AND PAY INEQUALITY**

Congress recognises the Government's success in maintaining a stable economy with record levels of employment and commitment to sustainable economic growth.

Congress further wishes to ensure a United Kingdom where the benefits of economic growth are shared with those who contribute to the creation of that growth.

It is therefore unacceptable that social mobility has decreased as income and wealth inequalities continue to increase and that the poorest pay a disproportionate share of their income in tax.

Compare this with an average FTSE Chief Executive who in 2005 earned an average 113 times more than the average UK worker.

Congress deplores the ever widening pay gap between the highest and lowest earners.

Congress believes that the UK Business Community must acknowledge the simple truth that a strong Public Sector is fundamental to meeting the economic and social challenges effectively.

Congress therefore calls for:

- A monetary policy that ensures growth in UK manufacturing rather than in inflationary bonuses for City Executives.
- A genuinely progressive fiscal policy aimed at supporting low paid workers.

- Fair and Equal Pay
- The mainstreaming of efforts to tackle inequality within society.

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. WALKER (GMB Scotland) moving Composite 15 said: Congress recognises the Government's success in maintaining a stable economy with record levels of employment and commitment to sustainable economic growth. Congress further wishes to ensure a United Kingdom with the benefits of economic growth shared by those who contribute to the creation of that growth. It is therefore unacceptable that social mobility has decreased as income and wealth and inequalities continue to increase and that the poorest paid have a disproportionate share of the income and tax. Compare this with the average FTSE Chief Executive who in 2005 earned on average 113 times more than the average UK worker.

Congress believes that the UK business community must acknowledge the simple truth that a strong public sector is a fundamental to meeting the economic and social challenges effectively. Congress therefore calls for a monetary policy that ensures growth in UK manufacturing rather than an inflationary bonus for City executives, a genuinely progressive fiscal policy aimed at supporting low paid workers, fair and equal pay, and the mainstreaming of efforts to tackle inequality within society.

Those who propose a future for UK manufacturing based on cost reductions rather than productivity improvement, and people and plants, are wrong. We do not safeguard manufacturing by privatisation, slashing protection for workers, consumers, and the environment. Congress, business conditions have been good over the last decade but few companies have taken advantage of this to invest. Growing our manufacturing base in the long term is both achievable and desirable.

What we need is a substantial balanced economy, a strong public sector as the engine house for growth in a UK economy, special emphasis needs to be placed on opportunities provided by public procurement, to promote local manufacturing jobs and skills, particularly meaning when Remploy will be debated this week. We need to analyse the current economic system and the Government need to discuss plans for reform. Congress we need to move the UK economy to a sustainable future providing growth and opportunity and not aimed at pursuit of inequality in the UK. Please support Composite 15.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Yorkshire & North Derbyshire to second.

SIS. P. ROSS (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, visitors, and guests, I was listening to the Chris Evans show and Rita the cleaner had sent in a question for Fox the Fox. What Rita wanted to know was, all those "whizz kids" in the City who get paid bonuses of hundreds of thousands and millions of pounds, where does that money come from. She said, "If it comes from me, I can't afford it any more." Maybe she should take comfort from the London Standard which reported that 43% of City "whizz kids" are unhappy with their bonuses and, besides, apparently a study has proved that people on less money are happier.

We have just appointed a new director at the council where I now work, his salary is £97,000. Yes, I know, it is shocking, we were shocked too, but our council is apparently so cheap that it is five times the salary of his PA and it was twice her salary to provide a recruitment package to attract the right candidates for an internal appointment.

I have never been able to understand men's fascination with balls. It seems unfair to me that you can get paid millions of pounds to kick or hit a ball around when nurses, teachers, and firemen, cannot afford to buy a house to live in. What does that say about our society and our values? It is still the Thatcher "loads of money" culture, heartily embraced by smoking Tony, leaving us in a world where ruthless ambitious entrepreneurs can end up being paid six-figure sums to be Alan Sugar's apprentice, but what happened to real apprentices, very few of them about. And who sets the wage rates? It is those earning the six-figure salaries who decide what to pay us plebs at the bottom. What hope do you have unless your boyfriend is something like the President of the World Bank and can give you instant promotion?

Percentage pay rises push the gap even wider, particularly when the lower paid get 2% and those at the top get 6%. There are also health implications from being on low or no wages. Researchers have found that a lifetime on a low wage physically ages a person eight years earlier than high earners and the rich seem to be getting richer. The Chief Executive of Barclays is earning £22m while his customers are fighting to get their bank charges refunded. Look at MPs, spending more on school fees than many of their constituents earn. How will such people ever understand what it is to be poor? It is time to close the gap.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Pam. Congress, the CEC is supporting Composite 15. All those in favour? Anyone against? That is carried.

*(Composite 15 was carried)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Motion 173, Pay Freezes, GMB Scotland to move and second.

### **MOTION 173**

#### **PAY FREEZES**

Congress calls for the GMB to oppose pay freezes either in the public or private sector when those proposing pay freezes vastly increase their own incomes at our expense.

Any attempt to artificially keep down pay in the public sector will only lead to discontent as workers see pay in the private sector overtaking them year on year.

With inflation expected to remain steady at two percent for two years, the public sector would be seeing virtually no increase in real take-home pay.

This is unacceptable.

A senior Tory denied that politicians were greed, as MPs faced a fierce backlash over calls for a sixty-six percent pay rise.

A leading Tory MP insisted MPs; £60,270 salary was substantially less than their public service counterparts, and defended calls for a significant increase in pay.

MPs were today reported to have called for a £40,00 increase in salaries, raising them to £100,000 a year.

Last year a major finance company in London awarded an executive a bonus of £10 million. Cleaners who work the graveyard shift at the company's plush offices take home just £6.20 an hour. The average annual wage at the same company is £260,000 – it would take a cleaner over 20 years to earn that.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH  
*GMB Scotland*

*(Carried)*

SIS. L. MILLAR (GMB Scotland): Gordon Brown has set the Bank of England target of 2% for inflation. The argument is that inflation is primarily driven by wage increases but even the Governor of the Bank of England admits that this is not the case. He has said the key factor driving inflation is rising prices rather than rising wages. Pay growth has failed to materialise. Wage settlements are not far above last year's levels and in the public sector are modest.

Every year top executives vote themselves rewards totally out of kilter both with what their employees earn and the success they achieve. This is justified even when it involves people who clearly have been failures. It is these same high-earning executives who will be eager to lead in curbing the pay at the bottom, our pay. It beggars belief to think what words and arguments they will find to justify such huge discrepancies. One thing is certain, they will not blush while wielding the axe. Twenty years ago the average chief executive officer of a FTSE 100 company earned 25 times the average worker's wage. Today the multiple is close to 120 times.

If Gordon Brown believes in a fairer society he should make top pay reform a priority for his personal manifesto. It is time to put the brakes on the gravy train. The Government say they are worried about directors' pay but are less sure what to do about it. The Institute of Directors, of course, are not worried at all. They reject criticism saying executive pay was ruled by "winner takes all". The reality is that people have been sickened by the excessive salaries that some executives have been paying themselves. We are constantly told that creativity and enterprise are deserving of reward. This reward so far has been restricted to those at the top. All we at the sharp end can look forward to being criticised for is – wait for it – excessive wage demands. You would think that they would be embarrassed when preaching to us; not a bit.

Congress, I believe Britain is a country where too many people are still denied opportunities, their potential not fulfilled, their aspirations unrealised, their dreams for themselves and their families frustrated. Congress, these are not my words, these are the words of our next Prime Minister. Gordon Brown cannot build a better Britain by asking us at the bottom of the pile to reduce our standard of living when those at the top of the pile pocket millions.

A Labour government has been running the economy for 10 years and we still have growing inequality with the poorest, a fifth of people, paying the greatest proportion of their income in taxes. The fairer society promised is as far away now as it ever was. Congress, do not accept a pay freeze. Please support this motion. I move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

SIS. C. LAVERY (GMB Scotland): President, Congress, a pay freeze never saved jobs and only applies to the shop floor in the main. We see the fat cat bosses who can award themselves high salaries, perks, and share options for under-performance. As the mover said, MPs are also into awarding themselves huge increases. I will tell you this, Congress, it is just as well they are not on performance related pay as they would in a lot of cases be owing us money.

Support the motion. Pay freezes are arbitrary, they do nothing to improve performance and de-motivate employees and cause hardship. Say no to pay freezes. Defend our members against the greedy fat cats. Please support.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, the CEC is also supporting 173. All those in favour? Against? That is carried. Thank you.

*(Motion 173 was carried)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We move on now to 19, Employment Policy: Rights at Work, Composite 7, Midland & East Coast Region to move and Northern Region to second.

## **EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK**

### **COMPOSITE MOTION 7**

(Covering Motions 95 and 96)

#### **95 – National Minimum Wage – (Northern Region)**

#### **96 – Wage Discrimination – (Midland & East Coast Region)**

##### **MINIMUM WAGE - AGE DISCRIMINATION**

Congress calls on the Government to abide by the provisions of their own legislation and outlaw all aspects of age discrimination in the workplace. Specifically, the GMB demands an immediate end to the age related provisions in the National Minimum Wage regulations.

The Government introduced the Age Discrimination Act for the protection of young and old alike. As a Union who lobbied hard and tirelessly for the Act, can we sit comfortably with the fact that rates of pay were not covered by the Act?

Congress calls upon the Government to recognise this inept inconsistency, abolish the two lower rates of the minimum wage, implement the higher rate from 16 – 22 or over and, therefore, ending this wage discrimination.

*(Carried)*

BRO. T. OWEN (Midland & East Coast): Congress, the Government introduced the Age Discrimination Act onto the statute books for the protection of the young and old alike, not only in the workplace but also in all aspects of living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, as a union who lobbied hard for this Act can we sit comfortably with the fact that rates of pay were not covered by the Act?

Congress calls upon the CEC to campaign for the abolition of the two lower rates and end wage discrimination. Young people today may have the same expenses as you and me, some may be doing exactly the same job as you and me, however because they are under 18 they only receive 61% of the rate the Government has set as the minimum that is required to sustain a basic standard of living. As for the development rate, don't 18 to 22-year olds have the right to earn a reasonable living wage as the rest of us? In some manual jobs where there is no development this is just exploitation and we are paying for it. Maybe if the Government realised that it is the employers who should be responsible for paying a decent living wage and not burden the taxpayer with subsidising low wage earners, then they may have more money to pay for fighting wars or development of a replacement for Trident, or a more radical idea, funding education or more housing services.

As stated in the TUC guide as to managing age, paying people less simply because they are above retirement age is direct discrimination. If you agree to allow an employee to work past retirement age doing exactly the same job, you cannot reduce their pay and/or conditions, so why is this not the case for young people in employment? I move. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

BRO. J. JONES (Northern): Congress, the GMB campaigned hard for a national minimum wage, campaigned hard, colleagues, despite the fact that in the majority of cases it is non-union members who are covered by the provision of the Act. In 1997 we demanded £4 an hour and a single rate for all workers regardless of age. To the eternal shame of New Labour and Tony Blair on coming to power at the behest of the CBI the provision of the Act was watered down and an even lower rate applied to young people.

The Government and leading Labour politicians are at a loss to explain why Labour is losing support at the polls, especially amongst young people. Congress, are they idiots? Do they expect young people to vote for a government that clearly believes that they are second-class citizens? Congress, the decision to exempt the rate from the provision of the age discrimination legislation is yet further evidence to young people of the New Labour's passion to serve the interests of the bosses. Congress, support the young workers, support Composite 7. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) No. OK, can we now ask the movers from London Region, 97, London Living Wage/Minimum Wage, and the seconders to come forward? Then, London on the Two-Tier Workforce.

## **MOTION 97**

### **LONDON LIVING WAGE/MINIMUM WAGE**

The elimination of poverty, especially child poverty, is a key priority for all workers and trades unionists and should form an essential part both of this Union's campaigning and of the London Mayoral and Assembly 2008 election strategy of social justice for Londoners.

This Congress therefore congratulates the Mayor of London in delivering on his manifesto commitment to introduce a London Living Wage for direct employees that more accurately reflects what is necessary and what is fair in our world city, currently a minimum of £7.05/hour. This Congress further congratulates London Boroughs such as Lambeth who have done similarly in relation to direct employees. This Congress encourages all London Boroughs to adopt the same. As a means of tackling the two-tier workforce this should be spread to all those working for suppliers or contractors to regional or borough governments so that no-one is paid less than the London Living Wage. A key benefit of the London Living Wage is its transferability to the private service sector. We recognize its use as a benchmark for pay in organising workforce campaigns. Ultimately, this Congress would like to see the London Living Wage adopted in legislation as a minimum wage for all employees in the Greater London area so as to reflect the reality of higher costs across the board in Greater London and particularly for those least well off. London weighting is used in many public and private sector pay deals, surely it ought also to be used in what we regard as the minimum requirements for working life in London.

LONDON CENTRAL GENERAL BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

**BRO. D. BYRNE (London):** President Congress, while the GMB welcomed the introduction of a national minimum wage several years ago, we would strongly argue that the actual hourly rates set so far are too low to make the legislation truly effective. Nowhere is this more true than in London. The living wage units within the Greater London Authority produced a report entitled, “A Fairer London, the Living Wage in London”. Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London, has said low paid workers in London have been affected by inflation and particularly the high gas and electricity price rises. This year the calculation shows that the living wage for London has risen to £7.05 an hour, a figure that accurately reflects the needs of Londoners living on poverty wages. Anything below £6.15 per hour is considered to be poverty wages in London yet around one in seven London employees still receive less than this. The national minimum wage is currently set at only £5.35 an hour rising to £5.52 in October.

Mick Connelly from the Southern and Eastern TUC has commented, “This scandal of low wages and in-work poverty that exists for so many working people is often overlooked in London.” This report highlights the fact that tens of thousands of workers in this apparently wealthy City earn wages that fall below the poverty line, the majority of whom are women and black and minority ethnic workers, often working in part-time employment. It makes a clear case for employers in the region to pay a living wage going beyond the national minimum wage requirements to take London’s workers out of the poverty that contributes to social exclusion, ill health, and exploitation.

So, colleagues, we congratulate the GLA and the other London boroughs that have already provided a living wage for their directly employed labour forces, the challenge now is to spread this further to encompass all those working for suppliers and contractors to regional or borough councils to ensure that in future no one is paid less than £7.05 per hour, the figure that has been calculated as a minimum wage for all those working in London. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny. The seconder? Colleagues, I want to remind you we have two rostrums and you can use both. Morning!

BRO. H. SMITH (London): Morning, Mary. The GMB must prioritise actions against poverty, especially publicise figures across Britain in the case of the notoriously high percentage of children suffering from social deprivation. Social injustice is not a prerogative of the rich and the middle classes. It is not the prerogative of Londoners. The GMB must move to ensure these principles apply to all sectors of society.

Introducing a London living wage for direct employees is a first step, guaranteeing the minimum wage to those working under contract to London's local boroughs would be considered significant, ensuring no Londoner gets paid less than £7.05 an hour at regional government level would be considered truly visionary. However, to make such an impacting change the private sector must also be convinced of their obligations to honour the labour force with a fair wage and not focus on their annual profit margins. We need to grab companies by the proverbial purse strings and shake them very hard.

Poverty is not a natural phenomena but a man-made state of being. Trade unionism is synonymous with the improvements in labour law, democracy, and equal opportunities. The GMB must ensure the same minimum wage standards are applied across Greater London because one of the basic human requirements is the right to have a good quality of life. London is expensive. The GMB must support the implementation of a living London weighted wage for all to alleviate social injustice and eliminate poverty, so let it be said by the sweat of our brow we shall eat good quality food and provide dry shelter for our families. Comrades, Congress, I second this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. London Region to move 98.

## **MOTION 98**

### **TWO TIER WORKFORCE**

Congress notes that the "Two-tier workforce" legislation is too little too late and difficult to enforce. Congress also notes that it is considered discriminatory to pay an individual less for doing the same job as a colleague on the grounds of sex, race, trade union activities, sexual orientation and so on.

Congress believes that this should be extended to the effect that it would be unlawful to have any worker doing the same job on worse terms and conditions than any other, apart from legitimate reasons such as incremental pay awards, and that the GMB should campaign for this to become law.

FULHAM 1 BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. L. ELVIN (London) moving Motion 98 said: Congress, despite the years of dedicated service in all sectors of employment thousands of workers have been left on some of the lowest pay and poorest of conditions. Those covered by a TUPE have transferred with their public sector pay and conditions intact only to see both their pay

and conditions erode over time. New starters have had to accept the worst terms and conditions offered and to work alongside better paid transferred staff creating a two-tier workforce. This can only be described as unfair and divisive. This could be a potential landmine with more and more private finance initiatives and public private partnership schemes competing for public sector services. It also creates a division within the workforce.

Unemployed workers are walking away from jobs as they do not provide a living wage, thus creating a poor recruitment and retention situation. A fair wages clause enshrined in national legislation covering all sectors, all types of contracts, would eliminate these gaps and ensure a level playing field for all workers, employers, and contractors, promoting policies that meet the Government goals of ending child poverty, closing the gender gap, and tackling social exclusion. A fair wage policy would support the Government's laudable objective of promoting equality.

We ask the CEC to support the GMB in lobbying for this to become law, to see a fair wages and conditions regulation that will protect the pay and conditions, and pensions, of all staff regardless of who employs them. Please support the motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

BRO. M. AKBAR (London): In October 2005 an agreement was made whereby all NHS staff, whether public or private, would be paid £5.65 an hour as a minimum. Although we welcomed the agreement in the Department of Health trade unions, NHS employees, and private contractors, we hoped that the agreement would have brought some comfort to the two-tier workforce in the NHS. However, I feel that the agreement does not go far enough in rectifying the problems that are present in the NHS today.

Let us exercise £5.65 in the real world. Where I live a portion of fish and chips would cost you on average between £6 to £7. Our members will have to work at least an hour-and-a-half in order to afford a meal without a drink. These are the people who do the most fundamental jobs of keeping our wards clean, cooking and providing nutrition for our patients, cleaning our dirty laundry, keeping us in touch with one another, I think it is about time we got the Department of Health to agree a respectable salary for all their hard work rather than the pitiful minimum payment. I also believe that the agreement does not protect the patient transport service which provides a fundamental service to the most vulnerable population. We should take this opportunity to throw out the cowboys and private contractors who have been spreading their services far too long for their own benefits. Let us provide the facility and service that the NHS and its patients truly deserve.

I call on Congress to vigorously put pressure on the Department of Health to get rid of the private contractors and bring back in-house services that will ensure equality for all. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Movers of 99, North West & Irish Region, and seconders, and then I will be calling 100.

## MOTION 99

### TUPE REGULATIONS

This Congress condemns the changes to TUPE Regulations introduced in April 2006. In particular the additional powers given to employers to introduce changes after the transfer date for the reason of 'economic, technical or organisational' renders in our view protection under TUPE substantially weakened.

8 ASHTON BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. Y. CARTEY (North West & Irish): President, Mary, brothers and sisters, we all know what TUPE means, it is to protect employees in the event of another business taking over their employment. In 2006 some new changes were brought into the regulations, basically to help our people. Those changes have been lobbied for by the Trades Union Movement, and particularly by the GMB. Most of those changes in fact have improved the regulations for our members. For example, in the local government that I work in if your area is outsourced, as they call it, nowadays your pension can stay within the local government scheme, which is an improvement, whereas before an employer could dispense with TUPE, basically, on the run-up or just after taking over if they could make a case that the company was liable to become insolvent; as if they would take it over if it was liable to become insolvent. They would declare that the company's first responsibility is to the shareholders and not to its employees. That regulation now has been tightened up and we are grateful for that, that is good and we are pleased that has happened.

However, as ever with these things, another get-out has been created, that TUPE can basically be ignored for economic, technical, or organisational reasons, ETO, something that I think lots of us will become familiar with. That can cover just about anything; economic, technical, or organisational reasons can cover anything that the employers choose to call it. The worst bit about it is that the employers can sneak that in at the last moment, really, with virtually no consultation. They can make the announcement on the 11<sup>th</sup> hour that they are going to do this. It is a real sleight of hand movement because they know that the trade union will not have the time to challenge the plan because they will not be able to get hold of the information soon enough to challenge it.

Therefore, we are asking Congress to support this motion and ask the Labour Government to revisit these regulations. Look at that bit again, please. We are happy with the other bits but please could you do it again? It is very detrimental to our fellow workers. I move. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Seconder?

SIS. A. MURPHY (North West & Irish): President, Congress, TUPE regulations are the protected rights of employees who are transferred from one organisation to another through no fault of their own to carry on similar work for their new employer. Conditions when this happens are traumatic, to say the least. I have had a lot of experience of this in my own right but at least in the past we have been able to rely on

the fact that an unscrupulous employer would not be able to impose worsening conditions on our members.

However, because of changes introduced in April 2006 employers may now be able to opt out of their responsibilities by claiming that they cannot afford to keep the employee conditions the same as when they transferred. This is a retrograde step and the continuing weakening of very fragile rights left to us workers. We must fight these changes and lobby the Government to point out the effect these changes have on our hardworking members. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. While our colleague is going back to her seat I would just like to say on behalf of Congress, welcome to the new North West Region of the GMB. Well done. *(Applause)* Also, I would like to inform Congress, and I think he is in the hall, that Tim Roach has been elected as the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Regional Secretary. Congratulations to Tim from Congress. *(Applause)* We wish both regions well. Thank you.

Can I now ask for the mover of 100, Trade Union Legal Support, Southern Region to move and second.

## **MOTION 100**

### **TRADE UNION LEGAL SUPPORT**

Congress recognises the excellent record of various TU solicitors in settling the personal injury claims of GMB members.

A number of measures are currently being proposed and lobbied by the Insurance Industry that would undermine the ability of TU solicitors to settle GMB member's claims successfully.

This would represent a grave injustice to GMB members who are the victims of personal injury. A successful claim represents a part recompense for the negligence of employers. As significantly in our experience, a successful claim motivates an employer to take its 'duty of care' seriously, improving the working environment not only of the victim but also of his or her colleagues.

Congress instructs the GMB to initiate a vigorous campaign against the current proposals of the Insurance Industry.

DOVER FERRIES X23 BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. P. GOODACRE (Southern): Congress recognises the excellent work done by trade union solicitors on behalf of GMB members. Through its solicitors the GMB currently wins millions of pounds a year in personal injury compensation for its members. Activists will be well aware of the invaluable nature of this legal support as a recruitment and retention tool.

This continued success is currently under threat from a number of proposals instigated by the insurance industry. Part of the threat is to raise the jurisdiction limit for the small claims track from £1,000 to upwards of £5,000. The significance of this is that defendants on the small claims track do not currently incur the legal costs of claimants. Claimants on this track must pay for legal representation out of any damages awarded, damages which are supposed to compensate for injury and other

losses incurred. It is easy to see the unfairness of this and how this places claimants on the small claims track in an unfair position against employers.

The successful implementation of these proposals would place more claimants in this position. This would represent a grave injustice to GMB members who have been injured at work due to his or her employers' failures. A successful injury claim serves to part compensate a worker for the injuries due to his or her employer's negligence. In my experience there is broader effect that benefits all workers in a workplace where a claim has been successfully settled. The cost of the successful claim motivates employers to treat their duty of care towards employees to the degree intended by legislation.

In this country we enjoy excellent health and safety legislation but as anyone who has tried to mobilise the Health & Safety Executive will tell you, there is no health and safety police. The only health and safety police that we have are trade union health and safety reps for whom the TU56 is an invaluable tool. The current proposals of the insurance industry are no doubt indicative of a greater ambition to be revealed in the not too distant future.

Congress instructs the GMB to campaign and lobby against changes to personal injury legislation that run contrary to the interests of its members. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

*Motion 100 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? (*No response*) No. Can I call Kevin Jones to reply for the CEC on 98, please?

BRO. K. JONES (CEC, Public Services): President, Congress, the CEC is supporting Motion 98, the Two-Tier Workforce, with the following qualification. Motion 98 seeks to make the two-tier code that applies in some sections of the public sector universal throughout the economy and have legislative status. While the CEC agrees with the aim of the motion to ensure equity in the workforce terms and conditions it is necessary first to take into account conditions related to equal pay legislation.

The motion also states that incremental pay awards constitute a legitimate reason for differential between the post holders. It should be remembered that service related benefits that exceed five years are potentially a breach of the wage discrimination legislation.

Congress can be sure that the GMB will continue to resist the two-tier workforce and challenge employers who try to reduce their costs by employing new staff on less favourable pay or with less pension provision. The GMB members have been at the forefront of campaigning against the closure of pensions schemes to new entrants. A major example of the two-tier system is in Rodi and British Gas, among others. GMB members stood up to the employers trying to create two-tier workforces through the two-tier pension provision. We remain committed to fight all examples of unfair discrimination against new employees wherever they appear. As this debate on right

to work shows the GMB is not prepared to accept that equality means reducing workers' terms and conditions.

Congress, the CEC asks you to support Motion 98 subject to the qualification I have just outlined. Thank you, Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Kevin. Does London Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I now ask Congress to endorse Employment Policy Composite 7, 97, 98, 99, and 100? All those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

*(Composite Motion 7 was carried)*

*(Motion 97 was carried)*

*(Motion 98 was carried)*

*(Motion 99 was carried)*

*(Motion 100 was carried)*

## **REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION (pages 117-127)**

### **MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION**

#### **1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT**

<b>Financial Membership</b>	<b>52,701</b>
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	15,944
MANUFACTURING SECTION	15,834
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	20,923
Grade 1 members	37,062
Grade 2 members	9,496
Retired, Reduced Rate and others	6,143
Male Membership	32,733
Female Membership	19,968
Total number recruited 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	7,497
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	+2,112
Membership on Check-off	32,184
Membership on Direct Debit	13,839

#### **RESPONSE TO ORGANISING AGENDA**

The Midland & East Coast Region has responded extremely positively to the National Organising Agenda - forming a Regional Organising Team consisting of three Organisation Officers led by a Senior Organiser and supported by a part-time administrator / co-ordinator who helps plan targets, arranges appointments and provides literature and resources to the team. Membership growth is now the measure of every aspect of our work. Effective, active and strong workplace organisation led and sustained by confident, trained GMB reps is our goal. Our purpose is to grow the Region and our Union in the workplace not just to achieve recruitment targets, but so that our members have more say in their place of work.

National Organising Objectives / priorities / projects are clearly and regularly communicated to all Officers, Branches, Activists and Members. Regional resources are delivered accordingly to ensure such projects succeed.

The Region has a clear view of what works – effective workplace organisation centres around the five main elements: campaigning, communications, contacting workers, credibility and commitment to succeed.

Mandatory GMB @ Work weekends have been attended by all Officers of the Region and subsequently delivered to Branches and new and established reps in the workplace. Regular one to one meetings between Senior Organisers, Organisers and the Regional Organising Team ensure National, Regional and Individual worksheet targets are supported, resourced and attained. Reps refresher courses have proved extremely worthwhile, reinvigorating and supporting our Reps in the workplace. New and coherent training and education has been designed to mobilise self sufficient reps to recruit and organise in the workplace.

## **RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS**

The Midland & East Coast Region is totally committed to the 3 National Project Targets – Schools, G4S and Southern Cross Care Homes. Inter-regional support has been provided to ensure that our regional expertise is shared so that success ensues for our Union as a whole. National targets are integrated into the Regional rolling recruitment weeks. Regional and National targets are displayed on Organising Boards in Offices across the region. Regional targets are encouraged and proposed by Reps, Branches, Organisers / Organisation Officers and then considered at Regional Organising Team Meetings and Regional Management Team Meetings where they are adopted.

Current Regional Targets supported by the three area teams include:

- All other (non school) Local Authority departments.
- Butlins
- NHS
- Ambulance
- Asda
- Consolidation on Officer's worksheet – using workplace audits and visits.

Development targets include Gala Casinos, Security /Door Staff, Wilkinson Stores, Further & Higher Education and Hotels.

Pro-active workplace campaigning is positively encouraged in every workplace and with every employer. Membership involvement, membership issues and leading the GMB Agenda in the workplace is an essential ingredient to successful workplace organisation.

Successful campaigning within the Region is something we can be proud of - South Kesteven Anti – Transfer Campaign, Campaigning to protect Remploy factories from closure both regionally and nationally, defending Local Government Pensions, keeping Public Services Public, promoting the welfare and interests of all pensioners to name just a few! Our campaigns continue with one aim in mind – to benefit every GMB member in the real world and to make their lives better.

One campaign worthy of special note is our award winning Migrant Workers Project. Thanks to national funding and regional initiative our Region has led the field to ensure that migrant workers in the UK are no longer treated as slaves and abused by disreputable employers and agencies. The Region now has two Migrant Worker Officers, one Polish and one Lithuanian who join the Regional Organising Team and specialise in supporting, advising and recruiting migrant workers into the GMB. Our Migrant Worker Officers assist Regional Organisers, Organisation Officers, Branches, Activists, Reps and the more far sighted employers to understand migrant worker issues, assist with integration within the workplace and supply valuable translating of information on workers rights, health & safety and community issues.

## OVERVIEW OF REGION'S ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The East Midlands is the third largest region in England covering 15,607 sq km and is the third most rural region in England (29.5% of the total population live in rural areas). Total population is 4.3 million. The region faces economic challenges in urban, rural and coastal areas that must be addressed. On some levels the regional economy is doing well, with high employment and relatively high economic growth – but such success is not reflected across all parts of the region, nor in all sections of society.

Major challenges that need addressing include:

- Rising energy costs
- Emerging Asian communities
- Impact on climate change
- Pressures on communities & localities rising from the pace & unevenness of change.

Additionally the East Midlands faces particular challenges of its own.

The effect of globalisation on an area with strong manufacturing tradition.

Demographic changes including an ageing population and migration.

Lower than average skills levels.

The manufacturing sector contributes significantly to the prosperity of the East Midlands and accounts for 27% of GDP within the region and 19% of total UK GDP. However, despite the regions heavy reliance on manufacturing, productivity per employee remains one of the lowest in the country at 6.5% below the national average.

Manufacturing businesses throughout the East Midlands are facing severe competition from overseas and exporting is becoming increasingly difficult for standard services and products. As the pace of technology change speeds up and new industrial economies develop, the future of the manufacturing sector within the region must be based on the recognition that innovation through the continuous introduction of new and differentiated products and services is key to regional competitiveness.

The manufacturing sector in the East Midlands is characterised by a heavy concentration of employment in traditional industries that tend to consist of low value, low skills activities like clothing & textile sub sectors. In the East Midlands 15.7% of the manufacturing workforce are engaged in the textile industry – over double the UK average of 6.6%. Conversely, the region is under-represented in a number of key high value, high growth activities.

The regions food and drink cluster holds particular opportunities – employment has been growing since 1990 – however, this sector is not without redundancies in the north of the Midland & East Coast Region. The competitive influence of the supermarket giants continues to bear down on suppliers and hence our Members' terms and conditions.

### MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT

The manufacturing sector employs approximately 383,360 people in the East Midlands, 10% of the national manufacturing workforce, but 22% of the employment in the region – compared to a national average of 15%.

Manufacturing employment in the East Midlands has been affected by the textiles sectors decline. Employment continues to decline reflecting the closure of a number of very large employment sites and the continued shedding of employment from firms of all sizes.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

In the East Midlands 76.3% of all working age people in the region were employed in 2005, up from 73.3% in 1992.

80.2% of working age males and 72% of working age females in the region were employed. The structure of employment in the East Midlands is very similar to the UK – with a slightly higher level of part-time employment and a slightly lower level of self employment. Female part-time jobs are forecast to account for the largest proportion of new jobs in the future, whilst male full-time jobs are forecast to decline.

## **SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

The key challenge for the Region is addressing the “low pay, low skills equilibrium”. The East Midlands has consistently recorded above average rates of employment. Although pockets of employment deprivation persist in the former coal fields, along the Lincolnshire coastline and in more remote rural areas and within the major towns and cities, many parts of the region can be described as at full employment. Therefore for much of the East Midlands, the largest group of individuals faced with limited opportunities for skill development and higher wages are those who are already in employment engaged in low skilled and poorly paid work.

## **2 GENERAL ORGANISATION**

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	0
Regional Organisers	12
Organising Officers	3
No. of Branches	97
New Branches	4
Branch Equality Officers	47
Branch Youth Officers	31

## **GENERAL ORGANISATION / CHANGES IN ADMIN**

The region is organised and managed into the three geographical areas – including the new intake of members from Buxton, Matlock, Darley Dale and Glossop. Three Senior Organisers have individual responsibility for each geographical area in addition to individual overall responsibilities.

The Senior Organisers then form part of the region’s management team, led by the Regional Secretary. The formulation of the Region’s Regional Organising Team (ROT) has seen the number of servicing Officers reduced to 12. The ROT consists of 3 Organisation Officers and a part-time administrator / co-ordinator led by a Senior Organiser. Thanks to national funding and regional support two new Migrant Worker Officers support the regional Migrant Workers Project.

## **3 BENEFITS**

Dispute	–
Total Disablement	–
Working Accident	£3,777.85
Occupational Fatal Accident	£15,870.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	£2,200.00

Funeral

£20,078.50

#### 4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

As the second 'C' in the five elements of Organising – communication is vital both internally and externally. At workplaces we ensure that everyone at work knows we exist and what we are campaigning for. All workplaces are encouraged to adopt their own workplace newsletters and websites are also encouraged. An extensive regional exercise to collect email addresses and mobile telephone numbers is part of the new regional strategy to communicate the latest up to date news, views and information to members at the very earliest opportunity whilst at the same time saving members' valuable contributions. Text messaging and emails are proving efficient and popular with members.

Industry specific journals and publications are widely circulated to branches, work places and members. The National Schools Support Staff binder is proving an invaluable tool for recruitment and communication in schools across the region. "GMB Direct" is the region's latest communication to all members – launching our new regional website, our new Member Get Member campaign and distributing valuable Public Services Equal Pay information.

Southern Cross Newsletters and Public Eye have also been invaluable tools for communications and updating members on key workplace local and national issues.

Media training has also been undertaken by all Officers of the region and regular press releases are encouraged on national, regional and local issues using newspapers, regional and local TV and radio as well as live interviews on industrial matters. The region is currently reviewing its publicity material e.g. car stickers, leaflets to include the new regional website and join online availability.

The Regional Membership Handbook is sent out to all new members and the "Frequently Asked Questions" document is issued to all new shop stewards for their use and display on workplace notice boards.

Regional / Community Sponsorship for worthwhile causes is encouraged and supported through branches.

#### 5 LEGAL SERVICES

##### (a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance  
945

Legal Assistance Granted  
921

##### Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
1091	354	0	737	0	£4,667,406.26

Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006                      1406

##### (b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union

181

### Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
213	80	2	129	2	
			£383,438.34	£107.90	£383,541.25

Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006 463

### (c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
2	2	£3,218.78	-

### (d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
21	7	6

Legal Services remain a crucial element of the Region's recruitment, organising and servicing objectives. By extending that service to also cover members' families this makes what we provide even more attractive.

Thompsons Solicitors continue to provide a full range of legal services to our members, including personal injury and employment law. We have also marketed that service as being the best, and it is now also completely free of charge to members as we have abolished once and for all, the administration charge on personal injury claims. Our solicitors regularly attend Branch meetings, Officers and lay reps seminars to update on the ever changing world of employment law, and areas recently covered include the new Age Discrimination legislation, TUPE and Equal Pay.

The 'burning' issue for 2006 has been, and still continues to be, equal pay. We have written out to our Local Authority and NHS members twice throughout the year to encourage them to pursue equal pay claims. Response was very slow at first but we are trying to keep up the momentum by encouraging new members, whilst recruiting in schools etc, to also pursue an equal pay claim. The returns have been encouraging.

The Free Will service continues to be very popular as does the advice helpline and conveyancing service.

The Region, in conjunction with Thompsons has run a poster and leaflet campaign to encourage members to pursue personal injury claims through Thompsons rather than through 'no win no fee' solicitors, who seem to be specifically targeting Union members.

There has also been an increase in the use of Thompsons' criminal law department in 2006, mainly due to the added pressure of our members who work in the care sector, facing allegations against them.

## 6 EQUAL RIGHTS

### REGIONAL EQUAL RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Region's RERAC has met 3 times this year instead of the usual 4 times.

There has been a change of our Region's NERAC member from David Lascelles to Dorothy Mills. Unfortunately David had to resign due to ill health. RERAC and the Region thanked David for all his hard work, support and commitment over the years on equality issues. Dorothy was elected as the Region's NERAC member at the Regional Equal Rights Conference, and is already doing a sterling job.

Once again the NERAC and RERAC members, along with Bob Grimley, Branch Secretary of Leicestershire 2000, attended the Leicester Gay Pride event in June 2006. There was a lot of interest in the Employment Law Leaflet we have produced in different languages.

In 2006 the Regional Secretary, Andy Worth, organised training for all Officers and Staff on Diversity, which benefited all those who attended. There was also training for Officers on Equal Pay and Age Discrimination.

The Midland & East Coast Regional Committee sanctioned regional support for the ACTSA Dignity Period Campaign. Cheryl Pidgeon, Senior Organiser, will be co-ordinating the campaign across the Region with the assistance of the Equal Rights Committee.

Our Region's delegates and the Region's Equal Rights Officer attended the National Equal Rights Conference and they all did an excellent job, moving and seconding the Region's motions.

To conclude, NERAC and RERAC members, with the full support of the Regional Secretary and the Region, are very keen to keep equality issues high on all agendas and to promote equality in all workplaces.

## **REGIONAL RACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Regional Race Committee has met several times and has also elected a new Regional Race Committee in September 2006. Four of these Committee members were elected delegates to the National Race Conference which took place in October 2006 in Manchester. All were first time delegates and they performed extremely well and did the Region proud both in moving and seconding motions that were supported by the Conference and in achieving being elected to Congress, TUC Black Workers Conference and Labour Party Conference, see below:

Jeffrey Bull – TUC Congress and Labour Party Conference

Doris Benjamin – TUC Black Workers Conference

Thelsa Jackson- TUC Women's Conference

Danielle Clarke was not only a new delegate but at the age of 17 was the youngest member at the Conference. Not only did she second a Motion on Ethnic Monitoring exceptionally well but she was also chosen by the Chair and Vice Chair to close the Conference with a vote of thanks, which she did extremely well.

The new Committee met in January 2007 and welcomed several activists who were new to the Race Committee structure. The meeting was extremely positive with the Committee drawing up an agenda/action plan for the year which included:

**BNP**

- A review of the communications network and information to Branches regarding BNP activity
- Establishing a forum in each of our regional 'areas' that focuses on strategies to combat the BNP political activity or affiliate to an existing group that is already involved in this type of activity

### **Migrant Workers**

- Seeking to establish 'English as a second language' as a campaigning strategy
- Exploring the potential for organising an event to celebrate the 200 years of the abolition of slavery
- To get agency/migrant workers and their rights permanently on the workplace negotiating agenda.
- The Regional Race Officer will be working with the Committee to assist them in these areas.

### **Ethnic Breakdown of the Region's Equal Rights Advisory Committee, and Race Advisory Committee**

	Black	White	Asian	Other
Male	1	8	1	0
Female	6	7	1	0

## **7 YOUTH**

For the Midland and East Coast Region 2006 marked a significant upturn in activity on behalf of young members which has certainly built on the GMB's commitment to engage with young people on the organizing agenda.

On the basis that activity generates progress there seems to have been a shift in the GMB to actually involve young members and bring them into the union's organisational fold from single issue politics such as poverty and racism. This movement really has been long overdue.

This Region is proud to report that it supplied the largest delegation of young members to the GMB National Young Members Conference in London in November 2006. This event was a truly vibrant affair and the commitment shown by the attendance and participation of the General Secretary shows that youth issues were firmly back on the GMB's agenda.

In addition to various speakers and plenary sessions there were participative workshops to look at issues surrounding organising young people in the workplace as well as combating racism in the community. On the back of this conference this region was also able to field delegates to the National TUC Youth Conference. It was felt that really positive strides were made that could be built on in 2007 in which I am sure this Region will play its part such as the establishment of better networking and communication facilities for young members.

Age discrimination legislation came into force in October 2006 but unfortunately it does not remove blatant discrimination regarding the minimum wage for young workers. Discrimination is never justifiable whatever the law says and the GMB must continue to campaign for equality in pay for young workers.

Finally, a recently published report highlights the dangers faced by young workers in relation to health and safety in the workplace. It is estimated that workers in the 18-24 age group are 50% more likely to be injured than more experienced counterparts. The HSE states that over 4,000 young workers suffer major injuries in the UK every year. These are truly shocking statistics that are often the result of placing an inexperienced young worker in what is a frequently hostile and often hazardous workplace environment without the necessary training and supervision. Unfortunately, many employers give young workers jobs beyond their capabilities and they tend to be seen as a lesser priority in terms of risk assessments.

GMB's job is clear. Health and Safety Representatives must use the full extent of the law to protect our young workers and constantly remind employers of their obligations to everyone on health and safety issues.

## 8 TRAINING

### (a) GMB Courses Basic Training

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	9	96	29	125	250
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	9	91	20	111	555
Branch Officers (please specify subject)	-	-	-	-	-

### (b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)

No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
-	-	-	-	-

### (c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)

No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days	
General	3	27	6	33	165

### (d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)

No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days	
Plum Conference (One Day)	1	28	20	48	48
Communicating with Confidence (weekend)	2	18	13	31	93
Discover GMB (weekend)	2	22	12	34	102
Union Learner Reps (Five Days)	1	9	3	12	60
Pensions (One Day)	1	10	5	15	15
Nottinghamshire General Branch Refresher (Three Days)	1	10	5	15	45
Northern College courses	12	11	1	12	36

### (e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses

No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
	83	29	112	

## 9 HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE

### WORKPLACE ORGANISATION AND VISITS

In the period since the last report to Congress the RHSO has been involved in a number of visits to workplaces; worthy of particular mention are visits to:

- Holgate School, Hucknall; suspicion of school caretaker suffering RSI being caused by putting out, stacking and removal of chairs
- RAF Cranwell; control of Asbestos in plant rooms providing heating to buildings
- East Riding District Council; wardens at residential homes facing altered shift patterns and duties concerned with exceeding working time regulations
- East of England Services and Procurement Organisation Leicester; training inspection to assist two newly appointed Safety Reps
- Redhill School, Nottingham; inspection of dust from boiler facility following conversion to wood pellet

The workplace visit service is fully explained to all new reps on the Regional Representatives course. It is also advertised in a regional leaflet called "Call on Us for Your Health and Safety" which was revised and updated in May 2006.

A major dispute, involving GMB members took place at the Engineering Construction site at Cottam Power Station in early 2006. The dispute centred on the conditions under which contractors on site employed their workforce and in particular the failure of contractors based in Europe to provide the agreed health and safety awareness training for employees - a pre-requisite for any worker on any site covered by the National Joint Construction Engineering Council Agreement. The dispute was resolved following negotiations which ensured that the NJC Agreement would be applied in all cases.

## ENQUIRIES

Enquires into the Regional office which are sufficiently non-routine are entered into a database. In the period since the last report to Congress the database shows that the following subject areas were raised:

- Working Time Regulations and the training and qualifications required by trainers on lift trucks and other vehicles.
- Safety Reps rights and facilities
- Risk Assessment procedures in arboreal work
- Confined spaces
- Fork Lift Trucks training and licensing standards
- Surveys and Inspections by Safety Reps
- Manual Handling
- COSHH and Exposure to dust

## TRAINING

A new format for Reps training was introduced in January 2006. The new Foundation and Workplace Reps 1 course now lasts a total of 7 days and includes a single day devoted to raising the awareness of Workplace reps to their role as a Safety Rep. There then follows an approximate 6 month gap before the 5 day Safety Reps 1 course is attended by the same cohort of students. To date three such 5 day courses have been held.

## INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

- During 2006 the following Health and Safety Matters have been distributed to Safety Reps and Branches:
- January 2006 Working at Heights
- Feb 2006 HSC Consult on New Proposals for Asbestos
- March 2006 New Noise at Work regulations
- April 2006 Obstructive Sleep Apnoea
- June 2006 Improving Worker Involvement – Improving Health & Safety
- July 2006 Considerations for the use of vehicles in the waste and recycling industry
- July 2006 Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- August 2006 Consultation on Legislation to Ban Smoking in Enclosed Premises and Vehicles
- October 2006 Managing Workplace Transport Risk – A Route Map
- November 2006 Working Outside in Cold Weather
- December 2006 Hand Arm Vibration

The Regional E-Mailing Service continues to be regularly used to distribute electronic versions of documents dealing with health and safety.

The Region's website continues to hold a great wealth of Health and Safety documents, including, in a members-only password-protected area, the full version of the GMB's Health and Safety Best Practice Guide, back copies of Health and Safety Matters, and a Safety Reps Toolkit.

A revision and update of the whole of the Regional Website is now complete including the health and safety pages.

*(Adopted)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I ask the Midland & East Coast Regional Secretary, Andy Worth, to move his report on pages 117 to 127. Formally, Andy?

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): Formally moved.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Formally seconded?

*The Regional Secretary's Report: Midland & East Coast Region (pages 117-127) was formally moved and seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: I will now go through the pages, if delegates from the region wish to come in – 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127. All agree those, colleagues? *(Agreed)* Thank you very much indeed. We are going great guns.

*(The Regional Secretary's Report: Midland & East Coast Region (pages 117-127) was adopted)*

**CEC SPECIAL REPORT: PROGRESS UPDATE – A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE OF THE GMB: MOVING FORWARD**

**CEC SPECIAL REPORT 2007: PROGRESS UPDATE  
A Framework for the Future of the GMB:  
Moving Forward**

In this Special Report to Congress, the CEC provides an audit of the progress that has been made towards implementation of the 23 recommendations set out in the CEC Special Report *A Framework for the Future of the GMB*, and carried by Congress 2005. The table reflects the position at the time of going to print. More detailed accounts of some of the actions reported can be found in the General Secretary's Report and other Special Reports.

## **Recommendations and Progress at February 2007**

**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**

*Implemented*

**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.**

*Implemented*

**3 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.**

*Work in Progress:*

*A GMB Young Members Conference was held on 4/5 November 2006 attended by 60 young members representing all Regions.*

*Recruitment of young members has been very successful via the on-line joining system. Of 3,000 joiners a third were under 35 and a quarter were under 25.*

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

*Work in Progress:*

*The CEC Services & Training Committee have been tasked with agreeing and implementing a national bench mark for shop steward training*

**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.**

*Implemented*

**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.**

*Implemented*

**7 [Developing new recruitment strategies]The CEC will refer these issues to the recently established Organising Working Group for its consideration.**

*Implemented:*

*The National Organising Team are targeting 3 national targets – Southern Cross, G4S and Schools.*

**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.**

*The CEC Recruitment & Organisation Committee is progressing this.*

**9 [Recruitment of GMB officials) The Task Group took into account that a Management sub-group had recently been established to examine the Union’s recruitment process and procedures. The CEC recommends that this sub-group should continue its deliberations and to report its findings as soon as possible.**

*Implemented:*

*Central Executive Council members, Regional Committee members and employees are now trained in recruitment techniques and the entry point for officers of “Organising Officer” has given Regions greater flexibility in servicing members.*

**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.**

*This is being prepared by Midland & East Coast Region. The principle of a “Community Branch” is to combine separate branches within the same town into one Community Branch serving all GMB members in that town. However, this model will not work in all instances*

**(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.**

*Implemented*

**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.**

*An update is required from the Recruitment & Organisation Committee, but this has been implemented for the AA membership*

**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.**

*Work in Progress:*

*The CEC has agreed boundary changes following the creation of the new North West & Irish Region.*

*Midland & East Coast Region and Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region are discussing their Regional boundary lines.*

**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.**

*Implemented*

**(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.**

*Implemented (see 14. below)*

**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.**

*Implemented as Congress is now annual.*

*The CEC Task Group recommends that Section Conferences are incorporated into Congress week from 2008 and thereafter in the years that Sectional Conferences are held in line with rule. Sectional Conferences will bring forward key issues for the main Congress to debate and agree policy.*

*In order to free up time for Section Conferences to be held within the 5 day Congress Programme the Task Group recommends that Congress is*

*asked to endorse Motions that the CEC determine are already in line with existing policy without the need for speakers.*

*The Senior Management Team will discuss a reduction in the number of officers who attend Congress*

*National Office will explore options for hotels and other locations which could accommodate all delegates and visitors in one venue with a view to moving the timing of Congress to February or March from 2010 onwards.*

**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.**

*Central Executive Council*

*The CEC Task Group recommends that with effect from the 2007 CEC Elections the CEC shall comprise (in addition to the General Secretary and Deputy General Secretary) elected members, as follows:*

*1 Seat per Section per Region*

*1 General Seat per Region*

*1 General Seat reserved for members in Ireland*

*1 Extra General Seat for Regions with over 75,000 members as at the May membership figures in the year of election*

*1 Women's Reserved Seat per Region*

*5 Nationally Elected Race Reserved Seats*

*The Task Group further proposes that:*

- vacancies arising on the CEC shall be filled by one round of midterm by-elections. Vacancies arising thereafter will not be filled.*
- the Quorum for CEC meetings shall be 50% of elected members in office*
- as agreed by Congress 2005, the current system whereby only members of Regional Councils are eligible to stand for election to the CEC should be maintained.*
- Regional Secretaries shall cease to be eligible for election.*
- CEC sub committees be reviewed and reduced in number.*

*Regional Councils*

*The CEC Task Group proposes that with effect from the 2009 Regional Council elections, Regional Councils shall comprise elected members, calculated as follows:*

*1 Section member for each 1,000 financial members of each Section of which:*

*10% of members (rounded up) of each Section shall be Women's Reserved Seats, but with a guaranteed minimum of 1 Women's Reserved Seat per Section*

*and*

*5% of members (rounded up) shall be Race Reserved Seats, but with a guaranteed minimum of 1 Race Reserved Seat per Section, elected from members of racial groups defined by the CEC.*

*These proposals to go out to Regional Councils for consultation with final recommendations to Congress 2008.*

#### *Regional Council Elections*

*Branch block vote to elect Regional Council will remain, but Regions will be consulted about adopting a common system of election without the present Regional variations.*

#### *Regional Committees*

*The CEC Task Group proposes that the existing Rule 20.8 on election of Regional Committees remains unchanged, but that this should be reviewed once it has been operated following the 2009 Elections*

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

*The February 2007 meeting of the CEC selected the membership of this Working Group which will review the rulebook and report back to the CEC, and subsequently Congress in due course.*

**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.**

*The Election Working Group will meet to adapt the election by-laws agreed by recall Congress 2005 for use in the 2007 CEC elections. Their recommendations will be placed before CEC in March 2007 for agreement.*

**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.**

*Work is ongoing*

**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.**

*Work is ongoing to identify further areas for cost savings.*

**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.**

*Implemented*

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

*In line with Motion 40 carried by Congress 2006 the Task Group propose that all Branches should have a fixed commission allocation of 10%. The CEC Finance Committee will discuss and progress this matter.*

**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.**

*The Finance Committee is reviewing the qualification for benefits and level of benefits*

**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.**

*Work is ongoing. Paperless direct debit has allowed us to introduce website recruitment and joining by telephone.*

Congress 2006 referred the following Motions and Rule Amendments to the Task Group to progress

## **20. RULE BOOK CLARITY**

**Congress believes that the Rule Book should be transparent not opaque and assist in the smooth running of the organisation it serves. Further it should be fully accessible to the membership. Congress accepts that our current Rule Book wording and format falls far short of delivering on these points. Therefore, Congress instructs the CEC to commission both the translation of the Rule Book into plain English and change of format to loose leaf files which will be easier to update following rule changes and far more cost effective.**

**136 ROSSENDALE BRANCH  
Lancashire Region**

*The Rulebook Working Group established by the CEC at its February 2007 meeting will include this motion in its review.*

## **24. BRANCH FACILITIES**

**Congress - recruitment and retention are the most used buzz words within the GMB, however, facilities to assist branches and its activists in ensuring recruitment and retention, does not appear to be a priority.**

**We call upon the CEC to end the GMB's discriminatory practices in respect of the facilities it provides to activists in different branches.**

**Colleagues, what we call for is a level playing field to allow activists to conduct the business of the GMB.**

**We call upon the CEC to undertake a review of branches to identify where the GMB is failing in the facilities it does or does not provide.**

**97 MANCHESTER BRANCH  
Lancashire Region**

*A review is underway which will be progressed by the Senior Management Team and the CEC Recruitment & Organisation Committee*

**C3 COVERING MOTIONS**

**35 EQUALITY AND SELF ORGANISATION (London Region)**

**36 LGBT EQUALITY (Lancashire Region)**

**EQUALITY AND SELF-ORGANISATION**

**This Annual Congress of the GMB welcomes the changes in legislation introduced by the Labour Government since 1997, providing legal protection and equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) members of the GMB. However, Congress recognises that many LGBT members still feel isolated in the workplace and are unable to tackle the discrimination they face.**

**This Congress notes the success of the TUC LGBT Committee and how other unions organise around equality issues with self organised groups.**

**This GMB Congress further calls on the Central Executive Committee to review with the women, black and disabled members how their equality issues are progressed in the GMB and report back to Congress 2007 with any recommendations for further rule changes.**

*An Equalities Review Group is reviewing this matter, but the proposals of the Task Group for changes to the CEC address this issue.*

**RULE 18 QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE AND DEFINITION OF OFFICERS**

**3 The third qualification for any member seeking election to the Central Executive Council under Rule 11 shall be that at the date of nomination and election s/he is a member of his/her Regional Council. This qualification shall not apply to any member seeking election to the post of General Secretary and Treasurer or Deputy General Secretary.**

**RA 352**

**Clause 3: Delete**

**Insert:**

**“Every member, in line with paragraph 1 can be nominated to stand for election to this Central Executive Council.”**

**NORTH KENT.ENG.Z37 BRANCH  
Southern Region**

**RA 353**

**Clause 3: Delete: “The third qualification for any member seeking election to the Central Executive Council under Rule 11 shall be**

**that at the date of nomination and election s/he is a member of his/her Regional Council. This qualification shall not apply to any member seeking election to the post of General Secretary and Treasurer or Deputy General Secretary”.**

**8 ASHTON BRANCH  
Lancashire Region**

*The Task Group propose no change to the existing rule, as agreed by Congress 2005.*

## **APPENDIX: RULE AMENDMENTS**

### **RULE 10 CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Clause 3, Line 5 Insert words “in office” so final sentence of clause 3 reads “One half of the total number of members in office shall form a quorum”

### **RULE 11 ELECTIONS TO THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Clause 1a, b, c and Clause 2: Delete clauses and substitute

“1. One member shall be elected as a Section representative in each Region in respect of each Section.

2. Members shall be elected as General representatives as follows:

a. One member shall be elected as a General representative in each Region having 75,000 or fewer members as at 31<sup>st</sup> May in the election year

b. two members shall be elected as General representatives in each Region having more than 75,000 members as at 31<sup>st</sup> May in the election year

c. one member shall be elected as a General representative from members resident in Ireland.”

Clause 5, Lines 4-7: delete “ Only Branches in Ireland may nominate for the Clothing & Textile Section Seat under clause 1 (c) (ii), and such Branches shall not be entitled to nominate for a Clothing and Textile Seat under clause 1 (c) (i)”, and substitute

“Only Branches in Ireland may nominate for the General seat under clause 2c and such Branches shall not be entitled to nominate for any other General seat.”

Clause 6: Delete clause and substitute:

“6. Each member in a Region shall have one vote for each of the Seats to be filled from that Region PROVIDED THAT

a. only members resident in Ireland shall be entitled to vote in the election of the General representative under clause 2c and such members shall not be entitled to vote for any other General representative

b. each member of the Union shall also have one vote for each of the Race Reserved Seats”

Clause 7, Line 2: Delete “1995” and substitute “2007”.

Clause 7, Line 4: Delete “A casual vacancy shall be filled by by-election under this Rule and a member so elected shall hold office for the remainder of the above period of four years” and substitute

“Casual vacancies occurring during the first two years of the term of office

shall be filled by by-election at a time to be decided by the Central Executive Council. Save where the Central Executive Council decides otherwise, casual vacancies occurring during the last two years of the term of office shall not be filled. Any member elected to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the above period of four years.”

*(Adopted)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, we now move to the CEC Special Report, which is Number 21, A Framework for the Future of the GMB. I will be asking the mover and the seconder to the platform and then I will be taking the debate round to the region. I will give each region the opportunity of putting one speaker up on the report. OK, colleagues? Is that agreed? *(Agreed)* I will then take the vote, all those in favour – no, I will not take the vote. I will ask those who oppose the framework to come to the platform and then I will take the vote for and against. OK? Thank you. Mr. PK you are not going up there. He is flashing! They are for sale on the stall out there, 50p a time for charity – a flashing GMB badge. I make no other comments. Can I have the movers of the Special Report, please, and the seconders?

BRO. B. GOULDING (North West & Irish): President, Congress ----

THE PRESIDENT: Hang on, hang on. We are moving the report first. No, you are not moving it. I know Andy Worth is. You will have your say in a little while. You are getting so excited to get up there! Come on, Andy, and Billy Hughes to second. Don't fight over the rostrums! *(To Billy Hughes)* I didn't ask you to make yourself comfortable! Go on, Andy.

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and privileged once again to be moving the progress update, A Framework for the Future of the GMB: Moving Forward.

Congress, in originally adopting this report in 2005 Congress unanimously recognised that as a union we cannot simply rest on our laurels agreeing that we must confront the challenges that face the union. We have been doing that since we last met. At all levels and on behalf of the CEC I thank everyone for their involvement in bringing about the much needed changes.

In the last 12 months, colleagues, we have again achieved much. The document before Congress details what has been done and more detailed accounts of some of the actions are contained in the General Secretary's Report. Congress, we should be proud of what the GMB does and of its achievements on behalf of its members. Too often do we focus on the negative and keep quiet about our successes. Make no mistake, colleagues, the CEC is serious about its business and is seriously looking at what we do, what we could do, and what we should do, and indeed what we must do better on behalf of the members. The central question remains how best to organise the member and prospective members. Possibly if we do that we will ensure the growth of the Movement but also we want to ensure the participation in the Movement as well. We need to encourage activists to be confident, focused, committed, and to go forward.

So what is new this year, Congress? To comply with the recommendation 13.2 and recommendation 14, the report recommends that section conferences are incorporated into Congress week commencing from 2008, and thereafter in alternative years. This way, Congress, section conferences can indeed take on a new life and it will give them the ability to bring forward industrial issues for debate, agreement, and get that policy into the mainstream. Further consultation has to be undertaken on exactly how that can be achieved and that is detailed in the report that will be going out for further consultation.

In order to free up time for debate at Congress you will see that the report recommends that in future where motions simply restate existing policy Congress should be asked to endorse these motions without the need for speakers. Many of the motions this year, last year, the year before, simply reinstate policy. By freeing up time at Congress we can get more debate about the things that we need to do.

Congress itself costs a huge amount of money to stage and you will see in the report the options on the timing of Congress which could lead to major cost savings, even if they involve us all buying a coat for February, need to be examined. If we are looking truly at doing what it says in this document, shifting resources to the front line, then we may have to take some difficult decisions that involve ourselves as well.

In recommendation 15 the CEC was charged to examine the size and effectiveness of itself, no mean task, something that would never have happened in the past but shows how we are moving forward. The Task Force re-examined that, the CEC has debated it, and following much debate where various options were explored the CEC's proposals and the subsequent rule changes are before you today.

You are asked to agree that from 2007 CEC elections the CEC will comprise of each region having one seat per section, one general seat, one women's reserve seat, and the race reserve seat provision to remain at present, so five elected nationally, and one extra general seat for Northern Ireland and that is because of the legislation, and one extra general seat for regions which have more than 75,000 members, which now includes Southern Region, colleagues. Regional Secretaries like myself will no longer be eligible for election. It establishes a quorum that is a workable quorum, to be 50% of elected members in office. It talks about how we will fill vacancies in respect of regional councils. It then goes on to say there will be further consultation and another report to Congress in 2008.

Recommendation 16, Motion 20, talks about a rule book working party. Much work is under way translating into plain English, and hopefully that will be complete for 2008.

We continue to look at all areas and there is much more to be done, more to do on behalf of the CEC and the senior management team, but I hope that we have shown we are serious in our intent and that we are not resting on our laurels.

Congress, we are building on the organising agenda, preparing to meet the challenges of the future. Our aim must be to ensure that the GMB grows. We are the best union, but we want to be the biggest and the best. The CEC is determined to achieve this

and with your agreement, help, and assistance, we are confident that together we can achieve this aim.

Congress, I have pleasure in moving this report and the accompanying rule changes. Thank you, President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Andy. Now my worthy president, Billy.

BRO. W. HUGHES (Northern): Did you notice the lack of equality on here? When you are invited by the CEC, which I am, you usually get a cup of tea but what did I get? "Get to the rostrum, Billy, get on with it."

THE PRESIDENT: That was part of the savings, Bill, that you recommended!

BRO. W. HUGHES: Never mind, go to the back of the book! President, Congress, on behalf of the CEC seconding the CEC Special Report on Framework for the Future of the GMB: Moving Forward. What a mouthful! Worthy President ----

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

BRO. W. HUGHES: -- were you not listening?

THE PRESIDENT: I am.

BRO. W. HUGHES: What a mouthful. Can you not just put "GMB as it should be"; that would be more appropriate than that mouthful.

THE PRESIDENT: Will you ruddy well get on with it ----

BRO. W. HUGHES: I am using up my time. Keep quiet.

THE PRESIDENT: -- else those lights will be coming up!

BRO. W. HUGHES: Colleagues, seriously now, I have to raise my hat to the CEC. I know these lads and lasses have come in for a lot of criticism but what they have done with this document is grasp the nettle. They have had the courage to do what has been talked about in the bars, in the branches, "We should be doing this, we should be doing that," and until now nobody has had the courage to say, "We need changes in this organisation." So, let us say to the CEC, well done for that job. Although I am not nor have I ever been a member of the CEC, I do not want to be, I have good representatives on the CEC from the Northern Region, believe you me, but once again I have the honour of being invited to second the CEC Report which sets out the progress made on a unique exercise in the history of our union.

I will tell you something. This exercise did not cost us a penny, not a penny piece. What we did was listen for the first time to what the members wanted. We did not hire any professors, consultants, think-tanks, we created a task group and we said, "See what the grassroots are thinking and get on with it," and that is what we have done.

In 2005 Congress carried out the first Special Report setting out 23 recommendations, setting out for the framework, the steps forward, and so far now in 2007 this report sets out the progress being made. Congress, you can see just how far we have come in such a short time, point after point implemented or progressed. The report puts forward important recommendations on the format for the Congress from 2008 onwards, and for streamlining the size and the effectiveness of the CEC and Regional Councils. That is a very important thing. It sets out our future, a strong, modern, campaigning and successful union with the lay members at its heart. Always remember what the GMB do today the rest of the Trades Union Movement will do tomorrow.

I had the occasion before my worthy President opened to come up here and I had a look round and there was something of a buzz around the place and I thought, "What is it", and then I looked and I said, "My, what a nice crowd of intelligent, sensible people are sitting out there." Colleagues, use your common sense and support the document. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Billy, that buzz was the bees that we left last night up here! Thank you. Now I am going to go round the regions and I am starting off with - I cannot even see it – Birmingham & North West – Birmingham ----

A SPEAKER: Birmingham & West Midlands Region.

THE PRESIDENT: Ah, it's all right, I'll leave the "Midland" out.

BRO. G. HARVEY (Birmingham & West Midlands) speaking in support of the document. I would just like to make a couple of comments on point 3, how to raise trade union awareness among young people. I would just like to say my wife actually said to me yesterday, and she works in the Shire Hall in Shrewsbury, that a couple of young girls in her office asked her whether they are getting a pay rise this year. They had no idea how they got this pay rise, or where it came from, or anything because Unison are not doing anything. She tried to explain to them about being in a union and she had a feeling that in the Shire Hall now it is a class thing, and some of them think that they are above being a member of a trade union, and that they are having it bred into them. I am a bit worried about that so I hope that we are all going to support Composite 2 on Tuesday afternoon to get across to young people what is happening.

On point 7, again we were looking to go into schools. I used to do this when I was the president of APEX Gas. I used to go into schools and speak to them about the history of the Trades Union Movement and give them a questionnaire, and none of them knew that we had to fight for holidays, for sick pay, for not having to work every day except Christmas Day, none of them knew any of this, and we really have to get it across to them.

On point 15 on the CEC, we have heard what Andy said and while we are in full agreement I would just like to say that the sub-committees do a lot of work and a lot of good work and I hope that by reducing the size and number it does not affect the work that they do.

On point 17, which is the final one, the CEC and the election working group, it says they were going to come back for the 2007 CEC elections, they were going to let us know what is happening. Is Andy going to let us know what is happening? The reason I put so much into the young people is because while I might have to grow old I do not have to grow up. (*Laughter*)

THE PRESIDENT: GMB Scotland? Then I will be calling - it says down here the media but I do not think so - London Region, North West & Irish Region, so if you would like to come forward.

BRO. C. ROBERTSON (GMB Scotland) speaking in support of the document. GMB Scotland welcomes the progress and update presented today, A Framework for the Future of the GMB: Moving Forward. Where work is ongoing we would ask that this is completed as soon as possible with continued feedback and updates to regions. Congress, we have set ourselves a huge task, challenging, yes, achievable, yes, these decisions and the framework in creating change not for the sake of it but for the future of the GMB. This audit is a welcome update. We need to push ahead by completing all of the recommendations ensuring our future is a modern and dynamic trade union equipped to meet the challenges of this century. GMB Scotland agrees with the recommendations as set out in the document. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. London Region.

BRO. V. WEST (London) supporting the CEC Special Report and progress update on the Framework for the Future. Yes, Billy, that is a mouthful. Congress will remember two years ago when this was first agreed, we faced an uncertain future as a union, outdated structures, financial difficulties, disputed elections, a potential merger. At least year's Congress much progress had already been made: finances back on an even keel, the election inquiry and its recommendations had been implemented, structural and authorisation changes beginning to bite, a merger voted into touch. We started to look forward as a growing, progressive, and independent organisation. The CEC, the task group, the officers, and the staff, are to be congratulated on the progress made to date. We have travelled a long way in the last two years but if we are to continue to move forward, if we are to continue to be a progressive and growing organisation, then now is not the time for complacency. Let's be proud of what we have achieved. Let's also be proud of what we can and are about to achieve for our members, for our future members. If we fail to provide them with a viable, strong, and vibrant structure we fail as a union. Much done, much more to be done.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. North West & Irish Region, then I will be calling Southern, Yorkshire, and Midland.

BRO. W. GOULDING (North West & Irish): Not moving the report but speaking on it! President, Congress, sisters and brothers, North West & Irish Region support the CEC Special Report 2007. Many recommendations have been fully implemented and work is in progress on the remainder. We would just like to comment on a few.

Contact with young people in the union is vital and if we do not succeed here our future is bleak. Understanding the way people think is a bit of a challenge for most of us in this room. They have grown up with the worldwide web, cyber space where

communication via email, texts, blogs, tweets, and goodness knows what else, is the norm. We must listen to the young people who are already involved in the union and, even more important, we need to act on their suggestions. Unless we communicate effectively with young people we will not get off the starting blocks in trying to convince them of the benefit of a trade union membership.

The online joining system is a good start and we need to build on this. Sticking to the view of moving with the times we welcome the setting up of the working group to review the rule book. This is long overdue. Our rule book has been amended on a regular basis to accommodate mergers and other changes but this has been done on a bit by bit basis, adding rules and clauses here and there as needed but not looking at the book as a whole. Parts of it are more interesting to students researching the history of the union than our current membership. Now is the time for a thorough overhaul.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Southern Region.

BRO. B. MODLOCK (Southern): President, Congress, speaking in support of the motion and of the recommendations that have already been implemented, the work done to date has already delivered significant improvements to the organisation, and I would just like to give some examples or offer some examples of that.

The raised priority of retention and servicing of members is now being reflected as a GMB priority. This includes closer scrutiny and monitoring of the movement of members in and out of the organisation. This approach provides a safety net to prevent live members becoming lapsed.

The initiative to focus on attracting more new members, who are the lifeblood of our organisation, includes encouraging increased participation in union activities; improved training offers generic training across the activists of the whole of the union pulling on the resources of the combined union and their training departments; tapping into best practice across the union aiming to improve the recruitment and retention strategies in GMB; improving the recruitment policies and procedures including training of regional committees, and this is providing for greater accountability and fairness; also the changes in the entry point for officers to organising officers, rather than recruitment officers has provided much more flexibility with the servicing of members.

Looking forward, good work is being done to bring the rule book up to date and also to improve the language and the interpretation of the rule book in a style that is clearer and less contradictory, a review of spending to cut out expenditure that is unproductive and to redirect funding to the essential functions of servicing the membership. We support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Yorkshire, and then I will be calling Midland, Northern, and South Western Region.

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Having read the report, which is a fair report on the report of 2005, there are a number of matters that have been

implemented and that do need to be followed through where we have a duty to make sure that we do that.

We particularly welcome the establishment of the National Organising Team and the focus it provides on organising activity and the correlation it has been able to guarantee across the union with recruitment in schools, Southern Cross, and other areas, where the training does need to be fulfilled and to make sure the next generation of reps get the correct training, if anything better than the current generation of reps.

This committee does need to be active where more courses are needed in the Equality Department with the role of diversity reps coming into workplaces, and the matter of community branches where this could be used to entice more unemployed people to join the union and a way of servicing the members. Where a workplace closes and affects communities we could involve community groups, such as unemployment centres and the RNIB.

The boundaries need deciding where it is not really acceptable to have different companies in a town that have come under different regions. I know my own region and the Midland & East Coast have worked together to agree boundaries and so avoid any confusion for members about where they belong and, more important, where to go for help.

Regarding the Congress and the section conferences it sounds like a good idea. Regional secretaries not standing for CEC is the right direction and supports the moves on how the CEC will operate, and we believe it will make the CEC a much more focused executive body in the business of governing the union. I accept what has been said about the regional council and I personally believe it needs to meet more than twice a year.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. That is wicked. Did you hear what Paul Kenny said? He said sorry about Sheffield United! That's mean, isn't it? Wicked!

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: We'll miss the points, tell him!

THE PRESIDENT: Mind you, Fulham is not doing that ruddy good either, so.... Carry on.

BRO. S. CLARKSON (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, and visitors, the GMB Midland & East Coast Region is proud to support and be a very active part of the Special Report to Congress 2007. This is a living document. The document has progressed a long way towards implementation of the 23 recommendations put before the CEC. We can already start to see things actually happening. Actions always speak louder than words. A higher priority to service existing members has now been accepted; 25% of members joining the GMB online are under 25; 60 young members attended a conference, all regions participated; new recruitment ideas with targets set nationally, all positive, colleagues. Who knows, we may even get the rule book in good old-fashioned ways of English.

One word of caution, colleagues, the Task Group recommends that Congress endorses motions that the CEC say is already union policy without the need for speakers. We have to keep telling ourselves, as well as the rest of the world, what we stand for and what we want. Please do not silence us. We have had 10 years of a Labour government, our government, colleagues, and I see no signs of any repeal of the anti-trade union laws but we must keep reminding them. I support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Congress, I understand that this is Shaune's last Congress because he has just been elevated with the OBE to become a Midland & East Coast Regional Organiser. Well done, Shaune, and good luck.

BRO. S. CLARKSON: Thanks very much, Mary. Thanks, colleagues. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Now, you wait the other side when they give you hell! Northern Region.

BRO. A. WINTER (Northern): Congress, the report gives us a clear and detailed account of the progress that has been made over the last 12 months. We welcome the significant progress made in reference to the young members in our union. This is very important to us moving forward as we need young members to join and become activists of the future. In the Northern Region we once again have a committed group of young members meeting regularly, planning campaigns and activities.

The reorganisation of the boundaries of the union seems to have gone smoothly. We in the Northern Region welcome our members who have joined our region from the Barrow and South Cumbria areas. We have already established a good working relationship with these members. The introduction of the three sections means that we can organise in a much more streamlined and effective manner. It means we can spend more time recruiting and organising and less time working within outdated structures. The introduction of online recruitment appears to have been a success, particularly in the younger age range. This is a very good way of recruiting as it is people coming to us to join so, hopefully, it is members who are actively wanting to join our trade union. Any moves to make it easier to join the union should be welcomed as it helps us in our overall aim of growing as a trade union.

Overall, the Northern Region welcomes the report and supports its conclusions.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. South Western.

BRO. K. SCOURFIELD (South Western): Congress, quite frankly, there is not too much for me to say in the form of a speech about this report but, nevertheless, it is imperative we have a set of ideals to follow and implement. It is no good setting ourselves goals if we fail to implement them. By following these ideals we will ensure the GMB remain in the premiership at the top and not in the sinking ship, like other unions around us. Congress, the South Western Region fully supports. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Andy, do you wish to come back on anything? Come on, then. While Andy is coming up, colleagues, I have asked the Southern Region, because we are all staying in hotels, there are all young workers in there, and

older workers, and so on, and, you know, when you speak to them they do not know very much about trade unions, so we may be able to recruit. Sorry, you have to put them in Southern Region, but there you are, we all have a price to pay, don't we, Richard! Only too proud to do so; I recruited a couple yesterday. All play our part and hopefully we can increase while we are here this week. Thank you.

BRO. A. WORTH (Regional Secretary, Midland & East Coast) I think there are a couple of points, really, worthy of taking up Congress time in replying. There has been talk about young members and I think it needs stressing, I did not have time earlier to say it so thanks for the opportunity. The youth will never be forgotten by the CEC. I am not that old that I cannot remember I was young at one time and the purpose that I am actually working for the organisation is to make sure my daughter, who follows me, will have a strong union movement to protect her when I am gone. So, I think we will follow through on that, and we are seeing a lot of work starting to happen. Northern mentions stuff going off and other people have mentioned it starting to happen; perhaps too late but better late than never, Congress. It is starting to move like many things in the GMB.

In terms of the sub-committees of the CEC, there is no intention, so far as I understand it, to reduce or devalue the number of sub-committees in that way. It is about making it more effective. It is not about silencing the sub-committees and it is not about reducing influence. In fact, it is my belief if you make something more effective they have a greater influence.

The CEC guidelines that one region mentioned about the working party, I think it is number 17 in the shopping list we have been going through, the working party has actually moved on since that report that you have in front of you and the guidelines for elections have been completed and endorsed, and byelaws are agreed, as I understand it, by the CEC. Progress from when that report was printed has actually occurred.

On those points I think I would just urge Congress to support unanimously the report and the necessary rule changes with a commitment that the CEC, the SMT, and the regions will follow through because that was the main thing, we are going, so let's follow through. Thanks, President.

THE PRESIDENT: Andy, would you like to mention the rule book, Plain English?

BRO. A. WORTH: I would love to mention the rule book, Plain English. It is a good job you put the light out, Mary, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: That was not me, that was your other half here, this fella.

BRO. A. WORTH: I know. He is a bad lad to me in region as well, but there you go.

There is major work being undertaken in terms of transferring the rule book into plain English. In the document one of the motions rather than the Task Force talked about it. We have actually had a working party set up. We have had the Plain English Campaign and some of you may know about the Plain English Campaign. They have actually translated the existing rule book into plain English. We are working through

that bit by bit and again we should be in a position to come back next year and put something forward that actually achieves what the motion says, that the rule book is plain, opaque, transparent, and easy to follow.

There is of course always a train of thought that when we have actually converted it into – and I love this one – plain English we should give it back to the lawyers for them to check it! (*Laughter*) Well, we better stop doing it now then, hadn't we, because they will only turn it back to where we bloody started! We are turning it into plain English; that is actually happening. Who would have thought we would have ever done that in the GMB; when I came to Congress as a delegate years ago then I would never have dreamed that they were going to turn it over.

THE PRESIDENT: Your memory is getting longer and longer.

BRO. A. WORTH: So is my bloody age and my teeth, Mary. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Andy. Just for the delight of Congress, next year when the rule book comes back in plain English Andy is going to take us through it line by line, aren't you, Andy? OK, colleagues, can I put A Framework for the Future of the GMB: Moving Forward to the vote? All those in favour please show? Those against? That is carried.

*(The CEC Special Report: progress Update – A Framework for the Future of the GMB: Moving Forward was adopted.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, before we break for lunch I just have a couple of announcements to make, that is, please visit the exhibitors' stalls outside. They are very kind to be here because it helps us to keep our costs down and provide you with free tea and coffee by their presence here. Please look and see what all of them do for us out there as they have given up their time to do so.

This afternoon we will be starting at 2 o'clock sharp and we will be doing the Special Report on GMB@Work at the start of Congress and I will be reversing the way round and will be starting at *this* end of the regions as I started at *that* end, and so on.

I will see you all at 2 o'clock. Congress is adjourned.

*(Lunch break)*

## **AFTERNOON SESSION**

*(Congress reassembled at 2.00 p.m.)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Bro. M. Sage): I call Congress to order. While we are settling down, I would like to make a few announcements. There is free tea and coffee throughout Congress for all credential holders. This is in the Lounge Bar

which is in the Hewison Hall Exhibition Area. This has been sponsored by Liverpool Victoria and we would like to thank them for this. (*Applause*)

I want to give you one reminder. The whole of the Brighton Centre is a no-smoking area.

The Congress delegates' gift this year is a GMB@WORK T-shirt and you can pick that up from the GMB shop by showing your credentials as on page 3 in the Congress Programme.

We will now begin the afternoon's session.

## **REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: GMB Scotland (pages 147-162)**

### **GMB SCOTLAND**

#### **1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT**

Financial Membership	62,071
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	16,112
MANUFACTURING SECTION	10,885
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	35,074
Grade 1 members	43,324
Grade 2 members	13,972
Retired, Reduced Rate and others	4,775
Male Membership	34,046
Female Membership	28,025
Total number recruited 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	7,542
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	+133
Membership on Check-off	51,265
Membership on Direct Debit	6,325

#### **Response to Organising Agenda**

GMB Scotland continues to prioritise the Organising Agenda as our principle strategy for growth and is fully embracing the CEC Special Report to Congress 2006 GMB @ Work Workplace Organisation. The Region is working to ensure the embedding of the strategy, drawing up Regional recommendations while ensuring that the National Organising Team's adopted three targets are integrated into GMB Scotland's Workplan.

Some reorganisation and restructuring within the Region has been undertaken following the resignation of an Organiser 2006. This coupled with long term absence continues to impact on resourcing.

Our campaigning agenda during 2006 on Public Sector Pensions resulted in one of our biggest ever monthly increases within the Region proving that a proactive Campaigning Agenda responding to our members issues, and taking these issues out into their communities was significant in capturing the hearts and minds of the members.

Developing stronger workplace organisation remains a key priority in delivering the Organising Agenda underpinned by the training, development and mobilisation of our key resource, our Shop Stewards.

Servicing our membership is now seen as part of an holistic approach in ensuring that this is seen as an opportunity within the workplace to ensure that our organisation is robust and ensuring growth with retention.

The National Meeting of all Organisers held in Birmingham on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2006, and addressed by the General Secretary was met with a positive response by GMB Scotland Organisers. This was followed up with a further meeting held in the Region by Martin Smith, National Organising Officer, Organisation, taking us all through the role of the National Organising Team and setting out the significance of the changes endorsed by Congress 2006, again this received a positive response.

Currently all recruitment activity in the short term is focused on the National Organising Team's adopted three targets of Southern Cross, G4S and Schools. Southern Cross is now starting to deliver membership growth within the Region following a slow start and given this initiative is fresh the Region has implemented the Organising model within Southern Cross by ensuring that we have created over a dozen Shop Stewards, created a dedicated Southern Cross Branch and are driving an issue based agenda which is membership led. Schools in Scotland fall within a different structure from the South and as such we do not have the same opportunities however, we are now picking up on this area as a growth target with ongoing induction recruitment being undertaken within G4S.

Branch Structures continue to be reviewed within the Region encouraging Branch Activity within the area of growth and organisation. Branch development plans have still to be fully implemented and established across all Branches.

Equal Pay continues to dominate the employment landscape within Scotland as stated in my report to Congress last year. Falkirk Council has been in the news significantly as GMB members combined with Unison and TGWU members continue as of the time of writing to embark on industrial action following the Local Authority implementing the imposition of a new pay package which we believed continued to preserve pay inequalities between men and women including the continuation of pay protection led GMB with Unison into seeking a Judicial Review against the Council for failing to carry out a full equality impact assessment of their proposed new pay and conditions package. However, the Court of Session in Scotland ruled that the matter was primarily one of a contractual employment dispute and as such should be pursued by the Tribunal process. Again we have been using this key issue as a recruitment opportunity within the Region.

Representation to the Scottish Executive supplied by way of evidence by GMB, TGUW and Unison put forward the proposition that additional funding should be made available from Central Government given the financial implications of the local authority "Single Status Agreement".

The Region has also recently completed Diversity Training as has all GMB Regional Organisers and Staff, this awareness training will assist in our growth agenda for the future.

One of our hidden assets within GMB Scotland has been the Scottish Professional Football Players Branch which has not been fully promoted to date as part of the GMB Brand. 2007 will see a high focus on using football and football players as a marketing brand for GMB to assist in focusing on youth within Scotland and in creating a Sports Development Section which will encompass all sports and ancillary areas within the world of Sports across Scotland. This is a longer term strategic development which should add a significant value to GMB Scotland's strategy for growth and contribution to the National Targets.

## **Recruitment Targets and Campaigns**

Recruitment Targets within the Region are presently focused on the three main National Organising Team targets of Southern Cross, G4S and Schools. These, combined with the Community District Nurses Association as a Regional Target with Community Integrated Care are being targeted.

Consolidation within existing workplaces where we are recognised is a major initiative in delivering our contribution to a National Growth Target. Training and developing local Shop Stewards and the creation of supporting local hubs of stewards are vital in ensuring growth. A mid to longer term Growth Strategy for the Region is currently being developed involving all our Organisers in determining the future areas of potential. Cluster areas are being set up across Scotland due to the geographical spread of the Region.

Migrant Workers are another area where we are currently trying to tap into this group however; this is an area where all the Unions are seeking growth. Significant Polish migrants have moved to Scotland over the passed 12 months however statistics have shown to date that the majority of these workers only stay in Scotland for a short period of time before returning home to Poland. However, this is one area of our campaigning at Regional level which we hope to generate membership growth.

Communicating our Campaign on workplace organisation is being highlighted to members and stewards through the Regional Magazine and also implemented through the delivery of Training for all new Shop Stewards within the Region.

The Region's Action Plan for growth continues to adapt to a changing industrial landscape within Scotland where the shift away from Manufacturing into the Service Sector of the economy continues to grow at a pace. Public Services may well receive less investment following the Local Council elections and the elections of Members of the Scottish Parliament, the Political Landscape may well also change creating some difficulties for us.

The Public Services and NHS are areas where there still exists opportunities for growth as the level of Trade Union Density is still nowhere near its potential.

Developing our network of lay activists will be key in developing and extending our targets and campaigns for growth and will include the delivery of Organising Seminars aimed at improving both Organisers understanding of the National Organising Strategy and our Shop Stewards in moving them sequentially from a servicing to an organising model, developing their collective skills.

Workplace mapping needs to be universally adopted across the Region as a means of empowering our reps to ensure that they are in control of workplace information by ensuring we have Health Checks for each and every workplace as a process to deliver growth through our brand GMB @ Work. This approach will play a major role in delivering Congress endorsement of the Special Report.

## **Overview of Region's Economic & Employment Situation**

Recent redundancies across Scotland have served to highlight the ongoing fragility of manufacturing employment in Scotland. GMB have however not been exposed to major membership loss as a result of these recent announcements, and indeed has seen major investment by Diageo the world's most profitable spirits company of £100 million a significant amount of which has been invested in GMB recognised plants.

Currently manufacturing provides employment for some 225,000 people which is a reduction from 2006 of roughly 8000. Exports in 2005 accounted for over £13billion however recent years has shown a continual decline in our manufacturing base with the shift to the Service Economy, though it appears clear from recent figures that the decline in Trade figures for manufacturing have not been compensated by the growth in Services. It is currently estimated that 93,000 jobs in non-manufacturing industries are related to the manufacturing sectors purchasing.

Manufacturing within the Scottish Economy is still important and has been highlighted by Scottish Enterprise as one of 6 key priority industries with Food & Drink, Energy, Aerospace, Shipbuilding, Marine and Chemicals being strategically important. Tourism & Leisure industries, notorious for its transient labour force still offers potential growth as does Commercial Services in Scotland.

The Scottish Executive have focused on meeting the productivity challenge through skills and innovation however concern is being expressed by GMB that the CBI and the Federation of Small Businesses continue to promote the arguments that the public sector is "crowding out" the private sector and that businesses are hamstrung by levels of new regulation and that business taxation is too high. Evidence however flies in the face of these claims as the UK is ranked sixth out of one hundred and seventy-five countries, in the World Banks ease of doing business, with the UK being ranked by the OECD as the most flexible economy and other surveys have indicated that the UK has the fourth lowest total tax burden out of twenty-two OECD countries. The evidence therefore does not support these claims by the business community.

Scotland's productivity challenge is still significant in the face of globalisation with figures produced to date indicating that to meet the measures of labour productivity commonly used Scotland's workforce would need to increase their GDP per hour worked by seven per cent.

The focus on promoting the skills development is being championed by GMB Scotland as investing in skills is a necessary condition for higher productivity in today's knowledge based economy. However, Scotland's main explanation for the productivity gap with Germany, France and the USA is our poor record on investing in physical capital, R&D and infrastructure.

Within the Public Sector we continue to challenge public sector bodies to ensure that women workers are paid fairly and to address within Single Status the persistent undervaluation of women's work. The GMB is engaged with the Scottish Executive along with other affiliates of the STUC with regard to ongoing discussions to deliver high quality public services.

GMB Scotland is also playing a key role in promoting a Balanced Energy Policy for Scotland based on a diversity of fuel sources in order to ensure security of supply. The investment in wind, wave and solar power should provide GMB with additional opportunities for growth as a major part of protecting the environment in the face of Climate Change.

Scotland faces many potentially serious economic and social challenges, a declining and aging population, a low rate of R&D investment, retaining its manufacturing base in the face of increasing global competition, tackling the levels of persistently high levels of people economically inactive. Combining this with a major investment in upskilling today's workforce will be the only way forward for a vibrant Scottish Economy.

A strong public sector coupled with a vibrant manufacturing base and dynamic commercial services sector is what GMB Scotland is promoting in discussions with the Scottish Executive.

## Commercial Services Section

Scottish Power, Longannet Conveyor Housing Failure - On Sunday afternoon, 21 January 2007, Longannet Power Station's main coal conveying system into the main boiler house suddenly failed. The station's full emergency plan was executed including evacuation and shut down, and emergency services were present. Fortunately, all staff and contractors were safe and accounted for and there were no impacts on the environment. The cause of the incident is not yet known. A Panel of Inquiry has been convened and is investigating. The region (southern Fife in Scotland) had been experiencing storm winds in recent weeks although it is not yet known whether this was a significant contributory factor. Failure was reportedly sudden and is likely to have commenced at a non-redundant point, ie at a connection with foundations, connection to the top of the supporting trestles or at a mid-span connection of the conveyor gantries. As a precaution, ScottishPower is progressing structural surveys of similar equipment and facilities.

Scottish Power, Iberdrola - The following is the text of a letter sent to Jack McConnell MSP, First Minister at the Scottish Parliament by the Senior Organiser. I write to express extreme concern over the potential takeover by the above Spanish company of Scottish Power UK. Over a number of years we have faced difficult situations on behalf of all the employees regarding restructuring of the Scottish Power Businesses and protecting the job security of those involved. The GMB along with our respective Trade Unions, UNISON, PROSPECT, AMICUS and T&G have built up a relationship and understanding which is in the interest of a cost effective business. The GMB now feels that this is under serious threat. Scottish Power is one of the most successful UK companies within the energy market and really is in a position not only of continuing growth but are strong enough to look elsewhere for potential mergers within the UK. Once again however we see ourselves subject to a foreign competitor being allowed to make a move on a UK company which for the first time in years has now established itself within the market that it covers. The GMB and other Unions following a presentation by the Company on the necessity for a restructuring exercise to be carried out to give Scottish Power a competitive edge within its businesses and the need for change accepted the position which would allow several hundred employees to leave on voluntary severance terms between 2005 and 2007. Alongside that, there have been negotiations of the closure of the final salary scheme to new employees. There has also been long term pay arrangements taking place and job evaluation and performance pay exercises carried out. This we believed was to give Scottish Power another competitive cutting edge. However, like some of my other colleagues, who no doubt will be in correspondence with yourself, this now stinks of betrayal and goes against totally the working relationship that we had for the businesses and all the employees.

### Energy Retail Limited, New Bargaining and Consultative Framework – 2006

Introduction - The Integrated Approach to Pay and Performance Management Agreement, July 2005 created a new collective bargaining structure for employees with the Energy Retail Business. Section 7 of this agreement sets out the requirement for the cessation of existing arrangements and the introduction of a new framework for bargaining and consultation. A key principle for Management is to ensure that the Business is compliant with the Information & Consultation of Employees Regulations 2004 ("ICR"). Accordingly a new framework will be introduced which will provide facilities for all employees, regardless of their contractual status to be represented for the purposes of collective consultation. The elected employee representative will represent all employees within the constituent area, who are not affiliated to one of the signatory Trade Unions. The Trade Unions will be represented by the shop stewards in each of these areas for whom the employees who are trade union members have already had an opportunity to vote. The Trade Unions faced the problem of non-union employees being at the table it was understood this would be for information purposes only and they would not be involved in any form of negotiations this will be monitored by the Trade Unions.

Scottish Power, Energy Retail Collective Agreement. Negotiations on terms and conditions of employment for employees covered by the Business Sales, Manweb, Dataserve UK (also known as the Metering Agreement), Professional and Staff Grades Agreements. As a result of a number of meetings with the Energy Retail management team and the signatory trade unions to the proposed Energy Retail Collective Agreement, the following agreements were reached relating to the machinery of negotiation and consultation along with the single agreement. In order to comply with the Information and Consulting Employees Regulations (ICE Regs) it was agreed that all current business councils eg, Business Sales, Staff Grades, Manweb will cease to exist. To replace them a negotiating and consultation Council (JNCC) and four Joint Consultation Councils (JCCs), to include Customer Services, Customer Collections, Operations Sales & Marketing Finance & Commercial/BT, will be formed. The Energy Retail JNCC will provide a forum for both consideration and communication of matters of common concern or interest to Business Management, employees and the Unions with a view to reaching agreement with the recognised Trade Unions on all aspects of terms and conditions for staff covered by this Agreement. The JNCC will be the single recognised negotiating forum for the business and employee elected representatives will therefore only actively participate on items of consultation.

British Energy - High performance workplaces through culture change - terms of reference. The Company/Trades Unions Joint Working Group is to be formed to help identify ways to a High Performance Working Culture in BE Nuclear Generation. The purpose/style of these discussions will be: open and exploratory, to ensure a full understanding is achieved by those involved based on overcoming existing obstacles to improve productivity and personal development. Will take into account barriers to high performance and remove them. Will consider the use of employee focus groups to ensure input from the widest spectrum to ensure all views are captured and considered. Will focus on identifying recommendations and improvements in company procedures and working practices to deliver the perceived outcomes from the Terms of Reference. Will form a report to be considered by the Trades Unions at a senior level and the BEGEN Board.

British Energy - Joint Company and Trades Unions Statement, Good progression on new agreement talks. Company and Trade Union Officers/Representatives in the forum known as the Negotiating Team have continued discussions on proposals for a single New Agreement to replace the NEJC, SNJC, SNJIC and SNJB Agreements, which cover staff employed in the Nuclear Generation part of the business. Further progress has been made and many issues have been addressed to the satisfaction of both parties. As previously indicated, the New Agreement will involve; a new pay structure which combines NEJC and SN pay structures. Much wider application of Competency Based Pay which is also supported by an Appraisal Scheme. A single approach on overtime payments, shift payments, holidays, etc (they are currently different in the NEJC and SN Agreements). Understandings to ensure no detriment. Updated procedures, such as disciplinary, capability, grievance, etc. The discussion has also involved specific proposals as a result of the Operate & Maintain Technician Review, and once these have been finalised and agreed, further information will be published. Similarly the Negotiating Team has been considering the most appropriate committee structure to support the New Agreement and wider aspects of consultation, etc. In order to finalise the key aspects of Competence Progression, a joint team, reporting to the Negotiating Team, are meeting regularly. They will also, in due course, be drafting briefing material which will be used as part of staff briefing.

DHL – Now that the three year agreement has been signed and accepted by our members we hope that the Company can turn things round and fully consolidate the business going forward. It has been a very difficult time over the last two to three years with the UDW trying to encourage GMB members to leave and opt for them. We had to get some stability and confidence into the business going forward and now believe we have been successful in achieving that. The Shop Stewards

have played a major part in delivering the message across the depots in GMB Scotland and have to be congratulated on their hard work and endeavours.

Group 4 Securicor – The new structure for the Company will be in place over the next few months within GMB Scotland. The Company has been particularly helpful in our attempts to maximise recruitment within the Security Industry. We have in GMB Scotland got an opportunity to have a membership application form in the hands of every security employee within G4S. We will be utilising the Company to do this for us hopefully sending out the right message that will encourage security guards to join in the future. As G4S is one of the targets for the NOT team it is believed this approach will be very helpful in meeting our targets in the future.

Aviation – British Airways decision to sell of the BA Connect routes to Flybe has caused some great concern amongst our members within the Company. There is a real uncertainty as to what the future may hold for all the BA staff in the four airports affected in Scotland namely; Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Inverness. There are upwards of four hundred jobs at risk with no guarantees that TUPE transfers will apply. The situation will hopefully be resolved to a satisfactory conclusion and redeployments could be the answer to that.

Servisair – The Company are restructuring their business needs in Scotland which could mean a mixture of job opportunities and redundancies. It's likely that there will be more redundancies than job opportunities though their plans will unfold over the next few months. They have been going through quite a difficult period with the loss of a few contracts in some of the Scottish Airports.

Asda Distribution – The new Agreement between GMB and Asda was well accepted by our members in GMB Scotland. It will be through good working relationships and satisfactory achievements within Grangemouth the sister Distribution Centre that will effectively ensure that the employees in the Falkirk Site will see that the only way to enjoy any successes through negotiations or consultation is going to be only with GMB Scotland.

Asda Stores – We welcome the Agreement between the Distribution Centre and Asda and hopefully that will extend to a better relationship with Asda and GMB Officers across the country. This would obviously allow more flexible access into Stores in order for us to recruit. We know the National Secretary and the General Secretary are involved in trying to get a firmed up agreement to allow us this facility. It would be a blessing for all if we were given the opportunity to recruit heavily within Asda and it has to be seen as a major target for the future.

Casinos – GMB Scotland was particularly disappointed that the award for the Super Casino did not come to Glasgow. It would have been seen as a major investment within the area of Glasgow which could be seriously developed creating job opportunities and prosperity. The only worrying thing would be the possibility of a migration of casino users who might well fancy the two or three hour trip down to Manchester to use the Super Casino facilities which could in turn see the casino industry in Scotland suffering greatly with the loss of jobs in the process.

Whisky Industry – the major announcement over the last twelve months within the Whisky Industry was the merger between Chivas and Allied Domecq. This was a major business decision which in the long term could see great benefits for the company and hopefully for our members. Like all major acquisitions and mergers there are normally casualties along the way. It is hoped that this does not impact on any of the members of the two former companies and that operations can and will run smoothly over the years to come.

Burton's Biscuits – The venture capitalist; Hicks, Muse, Tate and Furst are at this moment in time looking at the possibility of selling on the business. This would be of obvious concern to GMB Scotland where we have a major plant employing more than 600 people in Edinburgh. It is hoped

that if there is a buyer that investment will come into the Sighthill Plant in Edinburgh which may lead to some job opportunities. Burton's has a long history and association with Edinburgh and it is hoped that whoever takes over the business continues in that basis.

United Biscuits – There is current speculation as well as to the future of UB and who may or may not be running the business in years to come. Again speculation is that the business could be sold on though we will just have to wait and see how things develop over the piece. When announcements like this are made there's a great uncertainty for our members and their futures.

The Clothing & Textile industry in GMB Scotland has as everyone will know went through a very difficult period with mass redundancies over the last five – ten years. Things seem to have quietened down and the industry has stabilised and is running at its current level without any major redundancy announcements. GMB Scotland is still involved in the Scottish Textile Forum where we have input into the future of the industry with an obvious interest to protect the niche markets that we currently enjoy. This will be an ongoing situation as we will do everything that is possible to maintain a textile manufacturing base within GMB Scotland. Textiles still remains one of the Scottish Executives targeted areas within their Manufacturing Strategy.

BAE Systems (Sub-Contractors) - Following the recent wage settlement with BAE Systems negotiations then took place to achieve the rate of pay for the sub-contractors. This was achieved through separate negotiations with the following companies:-Interserve, Vinci, On-Plan and Tycon. One company, Frankin, have still to comply with the other sub-contractors and the Organiser is still pursuing this company. The yard settlement was 3% this year, and 5% come October. There was a further increase of £1,000 for the alteration of the tea break arrangements. There will be a 3% increase in January 2007 and this completed the 2 year deal for BAE Systems Sub-contractors will not receive the lump sum payment of £1,000; however, our members will receive an additional £15.00 per week for the length of their Contract. We have just recently signed a new recognition and partnership agreement. Currently both yards have a full order book and are progressing in all areas financially. It would be fitting to say that for the first time in many years that employment in the yards on the upper reaches is secure.

Ferguson Shipyard - The yard accepted a pay freeze for 2005/06 because the company showed losses of £900,000 in 2004 and £750,000 in 2005. The management have decided to change the role of the yard. Whilst still being a shipyard they intend to break the yard into various divisions – steelworks, electrical engineering, construction, etc. This will allow the company to tender for outside work in the Engineering Sector. The shop stewards have now submitted a wage claim for 2006/07. The company had intimated that because of the change in strategy they wish to review the out working allowances which the workforce currently enjoys. The Organiser has informed the company that depending upon the work and location of the work they may have to apply the National Agreement in Engineering which will be the NAECI Agreement in some cases. Wage negotiations 2006/07 have been resolved. Members accepted 3% across the board increase. However, some allowances on the periphery were negotiated away as part of the wage increase.

Henry Technology - Following recent wage talks the Organiser has managed to increase the welders claim for parity to bring their rate up to £8.43 per hour.

Innovene (Previously BP Grangemouth Oil & Chemical) - Failure to Agree on the issue of shares valued at approximately £6000 per year, Ballot result was over 90% in favour of industrial action (Unions – GMB, T&G & AMICUS) management requested talks and the issue is now resolved. The agreement is for 1 year, taxable payment of £3000 this year, £3000 next April & £3000 onto the basic rate of pay for unions members only as from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007. Annual equity plan also put into place with a minimum payment of £1200 investment.

Wood Group (Mossmorran) - AMICUS & GMB recognised by the company for all negotiations and procedures covered under NAECI.

Offshore – Wood Group - A meeting is to take place in Aberdeen to discuss redundancy procedure and other associated issues. A further meeting took place to discuss redundancies on the Apache rig and a new Redundancy Policy for the Wood Group was agreed.

Offshore – Amec - A meeting is to take place in Aberdeen to discuss a wide variety of outstanding issues.

Offshore Contractors - Two meetings have taken place in Aberdeen. There are no formal proposals from Management yet. Discussions are mainly on the Working Week (Annual Holidays).

Faslane/Coulport - The management of this Company intend to introduce in their words "a suite of policies". It is their intention to consult with the Unions and then implement their policies. The Trade Union Side take the view that were the policies to impinge upon our members, consultation is not adequate. It is required to have consultation and agreement. Further that the procedural arrangements must be triggered. The management reject this view; consequently they refuse to accept the status quo ante.

Sullen Voe (Shetland) - The Organiser has recruited a number of new members and has sought recognition with the Wood Group. We are now awaiting a response. Unfortunately, AMICUS have refused us a place on the negotiating table. Further discussions will take place.

Clydeview Precision Engineering - We have gained recognition within this Company. A meeting took place with ACAS, the Company, and GMB in late October and the Recognition Agreement was resolved. The election of shop stewards will take place once the Recognition Agreement is signed off.

Mitsui Babcocks - This Company will be taken over by the end of the year by Doowah Engineering of South Korea. The Company state that they will complete the consultation period with the recognised Trade Unions. Company H.R. state at this time the Company does not envisage any changes or job loss.

Mod/Babcocks Naval Services – Faslane and Coulport - We have difficulties in two areas. Firstly, the Company's approach to the agreed procedures. There will be a meeting involving the National Officers on this matter. Secondly, wages 2006/07 - Negotiations are ongoing. Company offered 5% with strings, i.e. productivity and flexibility. However, our members are of the opinion that the flexibility required is too far for the money offered. Talks still ongoing.

Rosyth Dockyard - Members placed in Devonport and the West of Scotland are hopeful of some movement in the Carrier Programme, they are also bidding for the Longannet job.

Longannet (Contractors) - Project Joint Council to be held monthly. Two bidders are in for the fabrication job (1 year's work) Rosyth and Burntisland.

UKAEA - 2006 Pay Settlement - following negotiations between UKAEA management and unions, agreement has been reached on a pay settlement which covers the basic rates of pay for all UKAEA employees except Senior staff.

Dounreay, NDA Funding - At the Dounreay Stakeholder Group meeting on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2007 a statement was read out from members as follows: "Over the last fifty years the local community has supported the nuclear industry in the good times and the bad. All the people that work on the Dounreay site – from the hard working catering and cleaning staff to the operators,

support staff, tradesmen, scientists, managers and all the contracting staff – that support the decommissioning on the site have all fallen into line with the new way of working introduced by the Energy Act and the formation of the NDA. The move into this new world of privatisation has not gone by without some pain to all the parties concerned. It has involved companies merging and new partnerships being formed. A new way of working has come into play with deadlines, milestones, targets set, fee earned against plans set out. UKAEA and other contractors have met the targets set by the NDA and performed well over the last year. Therefore it came as a great shock to all of us on the Dounreay site a few days before Christmas that we learned via an article in the Times that there were shortfalls in the NDA funding. The fact that we heard this through the media is beyond belief. The shortfall in funding has come about as the planned income stream from the generating reactors and the THORP plant has not materialised. This has the potential to have a devastating affect on all the hard working and loyal people that work on the Dounreay site with redundancies a strong possibility. This will have a knock on effect on the local community with the butcher, baker and the candlestick maker all suffering. The brain drain that has already started with workers and families relocating down south into other industries which offer a more secure and stable future will now gather pace if the funding issues are not addressed. This issue has been raised at previous meetings. Whilst the NDA have supported the infrastructure in other communities, reference to the £18 million to the Cumbria Health Service, they were not seen them knocking on our door when our community campaigned for support for the Maternity Unit and the lack of NHS Dentists. There were no bags of money delivered in helicopters to support our community.

Hunter Rubber (Dumfries Rubber Company) - We have had further redundancies within this company. They have also sold off the Diving Suit Division with the work going to Lithuania. As previously reported, we have serious concerns about the future of this company. All redundancies became voluntary following negotiated enhanced payments (Eighteen in total).

Interfloor (Dumfries Distribution Centre) 2007 Pay Offer - Following negotiations; base rates increase 6.2%, Salary scale - £6.45 factory/warehouse worker, £6.20 trainees/cleaners, shift allowance increase from 10% to 12.5%, annual holiday entitlement increased by 2 days from 20 days to 22 days (plus statutory holidays of 8 days), Reduction in the working week to reduce hours from 50 hour week to 46 hour week, no loss of earnings.

The Public Sector in Scotland has seen further growth in Financial Membership since the last Congress Report. Whilst there has been a continuing Campaign of Recruitment within the Section the real drivers this year have been the issue led initiatives around Pensions and Equal Pay. The Section is also working in the areas targeted by the NOT Team such as Schools and Southern Cross Homes. The Section will continue this work in the months ahead.

The year started with the Industrial Action on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2006 on Local Government Pensions and the removal of Rule of 85. Following that very successful day a series of meetings were held with COSLA, SPPA, the Scottish Executive, and the Trade Unions. Agreement was finally reached that all Scheme members who qualified for Rule of 85 could still take that option up to 2020. The Trade Unions are currently in discussions about a new Scheme to commence by April 2009.

Without doubt the big issue for the Section this year has been Equal pay, Job Evaluation, and negotiations on new Pay Models and Terms and Conditions packages. GMB Scotland has negotiated with every Local Authority on historical pay inequality with every Council making Offers to predominantly women Occupational Groups for past inequalities. GMB Scotland was the main driver on this issue and our action has resulted in thousands of women receiving tens of thousands of pounds for past inequality. We still pursue Equal Pay claims for those Occupational Groups where we believe there is inequality and have not received an Offer. GMB Scotland has

also lodged Equal Pay claims in every Health Board where we have members subject to Pay inequality.

Organisers are involved in negotiations in every Council on a new Pay and Grading Structure under the Single Status Agreement. The Employers on every occasion have included Terms and Conditions and have made proposals that in the main reduce the current package of Conditions. This has made negotiations difficult for Organisers and Stewards. We continue to negotiate for non discriminatory pay systems that have the least impact on current Terms and Conditions, but deliver equality for those predominantly female Occupational Groups that have been denied that in the past.

## 2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	0
Regional Organisers	19
Organising Officers	2
No. of Branches	184
New Branches	2
Branch Equality Officers	32
Branch Youth Officers	0

Changes have been implemented as to the inputting of information providing more up to the minute information as to membership recruitment providing a more robust process than had previously existed. Reaction time is improved, measurements are delivered more speedily, we can assess successes earlier and in doing so adapt and demand.

## 3 BENEFITS

Dispute	0
Total Disablement	0
Working Accident	5,819
Occupational Fatal Accident	0
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	0
Funeral	22,452

## 4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

Insight, GMB Scotland's Magazine will be going out direct to all our members prior to the local authority council elections and also the Scottish Parliament elections. This is to maximise the voting of GMB members in these elections and to remind them of the links between Labour and the Trade Union. The journal will also be updating members as to Equal Pay within the Public Sector and of GMB's position. The journal will ensure that our agenda and vision reaches out to all our members.

## 5 LEGAL SERVICES

### (a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
572	572

### Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
750	261	0	488	1	
			£4,360,643	£2,372	£4,363,015

Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006 1,095

**(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)**

Claims supported by Union 1,593

**Cases in which Outcome became known**

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
109	45	6	54	4	
			£192,000	£32,063	£224,063

Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006 2,339

**(c) Other Employment Law Cases**

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
1	1	£0	0

**(d) Social Security Cases**

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
25	17	29

Equal Pay Campaign - Throughout 2006 there was heavy demand on the Regional Legal Service in relation to the issue of Equal Pay and Equal Pay claims to the Employment Tribunal from members in the public sector.

Through negotiations many members' claims for back dated Equal Pay settled by Compromise Agreement or COT3 However we still received an unprecedented number of Equal Pay claims which we were required for most of the year, to process to the Employment Tribunal, in house. Currently we have just under 2,000 live Equal Pay claims for members mainly employed in Local Government and NHS Trusts or who are leavers. These claims represent just the start of a mass campaign of litigation that we have embarked on to tackle pay inequality for our members. Processing such a high volume of claims was extremely difficult and time consuming. However towards the end of 2006 our Solicitors Digby Brown introduced a highly sophisticated computer system to enable them to process our claims see comment from Solicitors below:

"We have continued to support and assist GMB Scotland to deal with the challenges faced with the wave of equal pay claims. The administrative burden of dealing with equal pay claims has been transferred from GMB Scotland to Digby Brown. We have developed our case management system to deal with the large volume of equal pay claims GMB Scotland has received from members. In doing so we have developed our system to enable the automatic production of fully completed Forms ET1 appropriate to either Local Authorities or NHS cases with accompanying letters to members and to the COET. The system is paperless".

This new case management system for processing Equal Pay claims has eased the burden on the Regional Legal Service as we approach the end of the internal administration of wave 1 (backdated Equal Pay claims) of the Equal Pay Campaign.

Ahead in 2007 however we will need to continue to litigate "interim" claims, that is claims that cover the period between the date of settlement/compromise up until the implementation date of the new pay and grading structures. Also given this Region's concerns that any job evaluation scheme and

or its implementation is not equality proofed, we expect to litigate many more Equal Pay claims post single status on behalf of thousands of our members. We are confident that the new computerised system will enable our members' claims to be processed quickly and efficiently.

Regional Solicitors - In September 2006 GMB Scotland struck an excellent three year deal with Regional Solicitors Digby Brown for them to deliver exclusively a Regional Legal Service to all our members in Scotland covering new claims for personal injury, employment tribunals (including all equal pay claims) social security, and the extended legal service. Regarding the latter, it is proposed as part of the deal, to widely and actively republicise the extended legal service and its provisions to encourage greater take up by existing members and to assist in recruiting new members. By instructing only one firm of Solicitors rather than two, to deliver our legal service we will need to ensure that a high quality, professional and successful service continues to be delivered to our members and that monitoring task will be the responsibility of the Regional Legal Officer. GMB Scotland continues to promote GMB membership and services as an ongoing commitment to the organising agenda.

## 6 EQUAL RIGHTS

In Scotland we continue to be at the fore in Equal Rights campaigning, others will report on GMB's high profile Equal Pay Campaigns in both NHS and Local Authority, which is wholeheartedly supported by our Equal Rights Committee. St Andrews Day Anti-Racism event on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2006 has now established itself as a Trade Union supported celebration in Scotland's proud vibrant culture, a culture recognising the contributions of all Faiths, Colours and Nationalities that make up "the greatest wee country in the world". Last years event was stronger than ever with hundreds of people attending and GMB Scotland's Pipe Band leading the delegation.

The STUC organised this event to unite against Racism and Fascism and to celebrate our diversity and shared humanity. Entertainment was provided after the Rally from "Makossa" an Edinburgh group playing Reggae, African, Latin, Funk and Rock music. A range of exhibitions and solidarity stalls including "Show Racism the Red Card" with participation from GMB Scotland.

The Regional Equal Rights and Race Committees now meet jointly bi-monthly as it was agreed by the Committee members that it would be more beneficial. The Committee recognise the need to be more active in Recruitment and Organisation issues where the Committee have an interest and hopefully encourage more Black and Ethnic Minority members to become more involved.

The main topics the Committee will focus on will be Challenging Racism, Race Awareness, Domestic Violence and Equality in the Workplace. Cathy Murphy, Committee member, Chair of the National Equal Rights Committee and CEC member was one of the GMB delegation that went to Costa Rica to visit the Banana and Pineapple Plantations. She reported to the Committee the scenes she witnessed, it was so dreadful that she cried at night when she go back home. The plantations are so massive that the workers, some still in there teens, had to wake up at three am to walk to work for a five or six am start. They get paid for an eight hour day around £4.50 but work around eleven or twelve hours to meet targets, most not returning until at least eight in the evening. The working conditions being so awful it was hard to believe a country where lots of tourist visit still treat worker like slaves. Cathy has built up a friendship with one of the workers and as most orkers travel to work cycling, she actively collects money in her workplace, where she works as a Shop Steward, to help purchase a bike for her new friend and the Committee will also help out.

Regional Equal Rights Conference - The Equal Rights and Race structure responsibility within GMB Scotland was taken over early last year by Louise Gilmour. Due to the timescale difficulties Louise was unable to organise the 2006 Conference. It was agreed however that the current

Committee would carry on for the forthcoming term. The delegates to the 2006 Equal Rights and Race Conferences were elected by the Committee.

National Race Conference 2006 - GMB Scotland had a full delegation present with Georgia Cruickshank, Regional & National Race member, as Vice-Chair. The delegates were; Elizabeth Debruyn, Food & Leisure; Caroline Campbell, Public Services; Annette Drylie, Public Services; three being of Ethnic Origin. The delegation made excellent contributions Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October morning session had motions on "Show Racism the Red Card" with GMB Scotland delegation wearing Show Racism the Red Card Scotland t-shirts to highlight our very successful campaign in Scotland.

National Equal Right Conference - GMB Scotland had a full delegation with Cathy Murphy Equal Rights member chairing the conference, the delegates were: Senga Hodgson, Cathy Lavery, Patrick Quinn and Cathy Quinn. Cathy Murphy chaired the Conference for the first time and was so good I think in the future she will be asked again.

## 7 YOUTH

The responsibility for the Youth Committee had been taken over by Louise Gilmour early last year, Louise found her self in the position of the members moving on as they had reached an age that they would like to hand over to younger members. Just now with the help of the old committee we are kick-starting and looking to Branches and others to rebuild and continue the good work the youth committee undertook in the past. We will be seeking to establish a campaign to recruit, retain and organise young members into the GMB.

## 8 TRAINING

### (a) GMB Courses Basic Training

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	12	107	31	138	276
GMB/Induction (5 days)	4	48	12	60	300
GMB/TUC Induction (3 days)	2	30	6	36	108

### (b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)

N/A

### (c) Health & Safety Courses (TUC)

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Accident Investigation & Reporting (5 days)	3	6	1	7	35
Health & Safety Stage1 (10 days)	10	22	5	27	270
Health & Safety Stage 2 (10 days)	2	4	0	4	40

(c) Health & Safety Courses (continued)

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Risk Assessment (3 days)	1	0	1	1	3
Health & Safety Update 2006 (3 days)	1	1	0	1	3

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
N/A					

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Union Learning Reps (5 days)	3	1	3	4	20
Union Reps Stage 1 (10 days)	1	3	1	4	40
Stepping Up Adv. Course for Reps (10 days)	4	3	3	6	60
Handling Disciplinarys & Grievances (3 days)	2	2	0	2	6
TUC Certificate in Employment Law (36 days)	1	1	0	1	36
Trade Unions & the Environment (3 days)	1	1	0	1	3
Introduction to Italian For Trade Unionists (15 days)	1	1	0	1	15

## 9 HEALTH & SAFETY

Due to the long term sickness of the Region's Health & Safety Officer, we have been operating on the basis of communications, briefings on Health and Safety and the importance that we should all place on Health and Safety.

None more so than in the workplace where our Health and Safety Reps are daily contributing to ensuring that our members see both the relevance and importance of Health and Safety and that it is integrated into the Organising Agenda.

The Region's work with the Clydebank Asbestos Group and our involvement in discussions with the Scottish Executive concerning Corporate Culpable Homicide has been significant.

Continuing on these matters are taken into the Workplace ensuring that there is a visible sign of GMB making a difference and making the workplace a healthier and safer environment.

The message being that only a well organised workplace can ensure a safe working environment.

*(Adopted)*

**BRO. H. DONALDSON (Regional Secretary, GMB Scotland):** Formally move.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Harry. I will just have a run through the pages: 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161 and 162. Do you accept that report, Congress? (*Adopted*)

I call on the Deputy General Secretary, Debbie Coulter, to move the Deputy General Secretary's Report, pages 48-51 of the General Secretary's Report.

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY TO MOVE THE DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT, pages 48-51 of the GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.**

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Last years Congress adopted as its theme *For Justice and Equality* and the tone and content of the debates and discussion at that conference bore testimony to the fact that as a union, we valued our role as champions in the fight for fairness and equal treatment for our members and all vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society.

As such, equalities issues continue to form a central plank of GMB's campaigning, organising and bargaining strategy and my report of activities for 2006 is therefore dominated by these issues. Furthermore, due to the absence of the National Officer for Equalities - Rehana Azam is on maternity leave following the birth of her son - this report also incorporates the formal Equality Report. However the Review of Equalities that I was tasked with carrying out by the General Secretary will be presented under separate cover.

For numerous years, GMB Congress has debated issues concerned with promoting fairness and equity, opposing discrimination and injustice and promoting ways of engaging and representing excluded and vulnerable workers. Last years Congress however brought all of these issues to the fore and the unprecedented Equalities session hosted by our partners and training providers, Ionann, brought together lay representatives from all groups representing disadvantaged members to discuss proactive ways of promoting equalities and reinforcing the message that *Equalities Matters*. This session was not designed to segregate equal rights from the mainstream of the Congress agenda but more to impress upon delegates and activists the absolute requirement to place equalities at the heart of everything that we do.

Organisationally, we have hopefully led by example and have driven through the Union Modernisation Fund sponsored Equality & Diversity Project which picks up many of the outstanding recommendations from the Elizabeth Henry Report and many of the aspirations expressed by the National Race Conference, particularly in relation to training which has now been successfully completed for all officers and staff across the regions.

The National Equal Rights Advisory Committee and the National Race Committee both held successful conferences in 2006 and I have met on several occasions with both bodies to discuss our internal review of equalities. Peter Foley, CEC Race Reserved Seat member, has declared his intention to stand down from the TUC Race Relations Committee and he is to be replaced by Dotun Alade Odumosu who was elected unopposed. Our thanks go to Peter for representing GMB on this committee.

Responsibility for the Disability Forum has reverted back to Phil Davies in Rehana's absence and following a forum meeting at which the subject of the Remploy Campaign was high on the agenda, we are assured to have our usual full compliment of delegates to the TUC Disability Conference

and we will continue to be represented on the National Disability Committee by Les Woodward, Remploy Convenor.

The LGBT Shout! Forum has, as a result of the commitment and determination of a handful of activists, made impressive progress in developing a network of LGBT members and a framework for activity. A small but vocal group, Shout! has played a key role in successfully campaigning to amend the Equalities Bill to cover sexual orientation in the provision of goods and services and more recently have campaigned with vigour against the proposals from religious organisations that they should be exempt from legal obligations with regard to adoption of children. I have met with Shout members to discuss growth strategy and a future programme of events.

The RMA, appreciative of the decision at Congress 2006 to provide branch funding to finance activity, have continued to be active in the broader pensioner movement and GMB are well-represented on the National Pensioners Convention. RMA Secretary Monica Smith's report to this Congress, no doubt delivered in her unique and insightful fashion, will provide further details of on-going campaigns and activity.

Over the last 12 months a number of regional projects focused on improving union support and representation for migrant workers has been rolled out across several regions and the results of these initiatives are encouraging and need to be developed. In 2005, there were 1,505,000 documented foreign migrants working in the UK and although in the past, migrant workers have secured employment in both professional and routine jobs, recently arrived migrants are now more likely to be employed in vulnerable employment with little or no union organisation. I have been appointed onto the TUC Commission on Vulnerable Employment (CoVE) and will ensure that the GMB experience is promoted, shared and developed with colleagues involved in this crucial area of work.

However it is perhaps the progress that has been made in relation to our young member activity that has been the most note-worthy development. Congress will recall the recommendation from the CEC Task Group Report calling for an examination of how to raise trade union awareness amongst young people, how to attract more young people into membership and how to increase the participation of young people into the union. I therefore organised a young member conference in Central London in November 2006 to begin the process of reengaging with young GMB workers. We had planned to attract 5 delegates per region but in the event had 60 young members participating in a weekend of workshops, plenary discussions, and social activity. The event was also addressed by a number of speakers including the General Secretary who was also delighted with the success of the event and impressed by the vibrancy and positivism of the young delegates. One of those attending was Jo Batke, a young ASDA worker from the Southern Region and breaking with tradition, Jo will be the first of many young members who will address and report to Congress each year.

Following on from the conference young members officers have met and agreed to regenerate activity, share best practice examples from across the regions and promote the GMB to young workers via the recently developed young member web page and also we propose to organise a similar national event in autumn 2007 with a view to developing an organisational framework for future activity. Young GMB members attended the Labour Party Young Member Conference and will form the largest delegation to the TUC Young Member's Conference.

Thanks go out to Yue Ting Cheng a young member activist who was seconded to work with GMB from the Changemakers Project Yue Ting, now an active London Region member, will continue to play an active part in the development of a young member structure.

A significant proportion of time has been spent on handling internal industrial relations matters but this past year we have developed and strengthened our Human Resource Department and are working through revised personnel policies and procedures which should simplify, modernise and streamline our current practices. Additionally, as Chair of the GMB 1961 Pension Fund, I have been involved with fellow Trustees in extensive discussions which have resulted in the implementation of a new Investment Strategy aimed at increasing investment returns and reducing risk to our employee's pension fund.

The President, Mary Turner and I, continue to spend a considerable time representing the GMB on the Labour Party National Executive Committee and regular reports are provided to the CEC. Further, we are actively involved in a number of other various sub-committees and policy forums and co-convene the Joint Policy Commission and the Health Policy Commission respectively. 2007 will be a defining year in terms of our relationship with the party. The Hayden Phillips report into the future of party political funding will undoubtedly bring into sharp focus the nature of the Labour/Trade Union link and will impact on discussions on the future role and influence we have within the party going forward. Additionally, as we prepare for a new leadership team operating from No.10, GMB needs to ensure that the future leader and deputy leader are in tune with the expectations and aspirations of GMB members. As we commence our Congress I have no doubt that these aspiring leaders will already be fully aware of what GMB expects from the future leaders of our party – if not, the message will unquestionably be delivered by delegates in our traditional fair but forthright style!

*(Adopted)*

**THE DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY:** Thank you, Chair. Congress, it gives me great pleasure to move my report to Congress 2007. The year 2006 did not exactly get off to the best start for me. I was subjected to forced recuperation at home following surgery and, believe you me, after a couple of months of Jeremy Kyle on *Ready Steady Cook*, I was desperate to get back to work. However, it did turn into a fairly eventful year and it was dominated, for the large part, by our continued commitment to and investment in the equalities and diversity agenda.

Following on from Congress 2006 it was agreed that our focus as Britain's most progressive union would remain fixed on justice and equality for all in Britain's workplaces. It was reported at that Congress that the Union was about to embark on an ambitious programme of training for our officers and staff in recognition of the need to respond effectively to the challenges of an increasingly diverse membership and workforce base. That programme has been successfully completed and we are now continuing with our project which aims at identifying, monitoring and developing members and activists throughout the organisation, which will help us cultivate a truly inclusive and reflective organisation.

The venture has taken place with the full co-operation of our national equality bodies and with the involvement of the National Race Committee, who are appreciative, at long last, of the fact that we are addressing some of the recommendations in the Elizabeth Henry Report.

Simultaneously, the equality committees have been participating in a wholesale review of our equality structures and operational effectiveness. Full details of that review will be discussed by Congress on Tuesday, but I would just like to record my thanks to all those who have been involved in this process throughout the past year.

Change is really openly embraced and, naturally, there are those who are apprehensive about this review. But these anxieties, I believe, were soon overcome and everyone engaged in the process is committed to achieving our common goal, which will be the best outcome for the GMB.

Our national officer with responsibility for equalities, Rehana Azam, has been on maternity leave for most of the year. Rehana gave birth to a healthy little boy and is returning to work next month. But throughout this period I have continued to meet with the equality committees and, thanks to added assistance from Kevin Brandstata from Southern Region, and Martin Badan from Birmingham Region, both NERAC and the National Race Committee held successful national conferences.

Additionally and encouragingly, we have also held our first Young Member National Conference in November 2006 which was highly successful and young member activity has since flourished. We sent the largest, best organised and certainly most vocal delegations to both the Young Labour and TUC Youth Conferences, and we plan to hold a second national conference in November 2007. The problem, of course, with young members is, as Lucinda pointed out this morning, that they grow old, but when you have got delegates to these conferences who are 16, 17 and 18 you can be fairly confident of our planning a longer-term strategy.

A further indication as to how the profile of the Union is evolving can be found in reports from the regions involved in the recruitment and organisation of migrant workers. As a member of the TUC Commission on Vulnerable Employment, I have been travelling around the country meeting the UK's most vulnerable workers whose tails of exploitation have shocked even the most hardened trade unionists.

I have been a trade union official for 20 years this year and I have never heard such vivid testimony from workers who were treated no better than slaves. The employer of a woman home worker in Rochdale delivered a van load of work for her to do on the day of her son's wedding and threatened if she did not do that, she and her entire family would be without work for the rest of the year. Another woman homemaker who was expecting her weekly pay slip was told that that had been withheld because she had to pay for repairs to her employer's sewing machine. Also a Nigerian security guard, who worked 12 hour permanent night shifts, was paid less than £2 an hour, and he was threatened physically by his employer if he complained.

As many of our regions can now confirm, thousands of migrant workers are denied both employment and basic human rights. I am proud that it is the GMB which is at the forefront of reaching out to those most in need of support and guidance. The past year has certainly been eventful within the Labour Party following the Prime Minister's announcement of his intention to resign. What seems like the longest leadership contest is about to close with the GMB's hustings meeting tomorrow. Regardless of who the victor is, our focus must remain on ensuring that the new leadership team begins to deliver for trade union members.

The report from the Hayden Phillips Review on party funding has the potential to change fundamentally the relationship between the party and the unions forever. Therefore, discussions at national level will be critical in the months ahead. Myself

and Mary will be heavily involved in this process and, as always, will represent the views of our members on the NEC.

Congress, as the General Secretary will no doubt testify in his address to you tomorrow, we have had a tremendous year in maintaining fiscal discipline, internal reorganisation, improved membership gains, continued high value service and achieving a fantastic public and media profile. We achieved all of that with the most meagre resources compared with other unions. Paul and I often comment, when we visit the headquarters of other trade unions, on seeing the armies of staff that are struggling to achieve a fraction of what we achieve. So it is a credit to our staff, officers and activists throughout this Union that we are here for another year proudly marching from strength to strength.

President, I move my report. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Debbie. Page 48, 49, 50 and 51. *(Agreed)*  
Does Congress accept that report?

*(The Deputy General Secretary's Report, pages 48-51 of the General Secretary's Report, was adopted)*

## **UNION ORGANISATION: EDUCATION & TRAINING**

### **SHOP STEWARD TRAINING – GMB@WORK – ORGANISING FOR GROWTH**

#### **MOTION 33**

##### **SHOP STEWARD TRAINING – GMB @ WORK – ORGANISING FOR GROWTH**

Congress calls upon the Union to ensure that all new and existing Shop Stewards in delivering our Organising Strategy within the Workplace.

Growth within the GMB will come from ensuring that our Shop Stewards are trained and skilled in effective workplace organisation as set out in GMB @ Work. Workplace Organisation CEC Special Report detailing the five key elements:

- Campaigning
- Communications
- Contacting Workers
- Credibility
- Commitment

Congress this is the template for today, not tomorrow and I urge Congress to ensure that it will be the responsibility of Regions within the GMB to deliver this reality as soon as possible.

GLASGOW 28/51 BRANCH  
*GMB Scotland*

*(Carried)*

SIS. E. McLAUGHLIN (GMB Scotland): I move Motion 33. Congress, the future of the GMB Union will be judged on our ability to ensure that we invest in all of our

newly elected and existing shop stewards through appropriate and effective training in delivering our Organisational Strategy.

The only way that we will sustain growth is by building a strong workplace organisation, thus ensuring that we deliver power back to our members. Growing the Union is key to our long-term future but for this to be successful we need to ensure that mobilising and motivating members is key and this can only happen by giving our stewards the tools to achieve this strategy. The workplace is where the power rests, the power to influence, the power to challenge and the power to change workers' lives. Recruitment, representation and retention are indivisible. Stewards' training, Congress, is vital to our future sustainability and we need to deliver training on the five Cs: campaigning, communications, contacting workers, credibility and commitment.

The 2006 Congress endorsed and adopted a clear set of principles. Support this motion and secure the future. As the advert states: "The future is orange", but it is GMB orange.

In moving this motion, we note that the Special Report to Congress: GMB@Work and Workplace Organisation will be an important debate this week. Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

SIS. J. COOPER (GMB Scotland): Congress, I would like to second Motion 33. I have recently been elected as a branch secretary and charged with helping to set up and source local training for our branch. I have found the benefits of GMB@Work a tremendous help, pulling stewards together where they can share experiences, debate and learn whilst giving each other much needed support. The effects of the training have produced a network of stewards who are motivated, re-generated and much better able to tackle their frontline role for the GMB. I second this motion.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, the CEC are supporting Motion 33.

*(Motion 33 was carried)*

## **BRANCH TRAINING**

### **MOTION 34**

#### **BRANCH TRAINING**

Congress instructs the CEC to put in place training for all Branch Secretaries, Chairpersons and Auditors - training in all aspects of branch organising, but more importantly on how to keep proper financial records and recording systems so better and more useful data can be shared between Regions and Branches.

NO 2 BRANCH  
*North West & Irish Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. D. SUTCLIFFE (North West & Irish Region): I move Motion 34. This motion instructs the CEC to put in place specific branch secretary training and financial recording. I accept that the GMB has outstanding training for branch officers, which we have had for many years. We should help officers to carry out their job. But given the accountability required by the union, branch secretaries need specific guidance and training in how to account for branch funds. I am not asking that any branches which already have a tried, tested and good system in place alter their procedures, but I am asking that those good practices be part of a system that is transferred to other branches.

However, some branch secretaries have issues around accountability. I have tried various methods of getting my accounts to balance. I know where the money has gone, but when you come to trying to arrive at a correct balance takes a lot of time. It can be very frustrating. I ask that the CEC look to put training in place. This guidance would help members, auditors and regions to know how the branch funds have been used, giving more accountability to our members and more security to our members feeling that their money has been used properly. I ask you to support this motion. Thank you.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, colleague.

BRO. S. BODEN (North West & Irish): I am speaking in support of Motion 34, Branch Training. This motion asks the CEC to put in place training for branch secretaries, chairpersons and auditors, most importantly with regard to financial records. As we all accept, money made available to branches belongs to the GMB members. Therefore, it is vital that we have proper accounting and auditing procedures in place. For these procedures to work branch auditors must be properly trained in how to manage branch accounts in an honest and transparent way for all its members.

Unfortunately, some of our branches have failed badly over the years in not being able to account for branch funds. In some instances, money has gone missing from branch funds because of a lack of credible and robust procedures for managing branch funds.

I call upon Congress for the introduction of this vital area of training for branch auditors and all branch officers in future. I second this motion.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, the CEC is also supporting Motion 34.

*(Motion 34 was carried)*

## **UNION LEARNING PROJECT – POTENTIAL:**

### **MOTION 35**

#### **UNION LEARNING PROJECT – POTENTIAL**

This Congress notes the potential that exists if the Union Learning Project is properly utilised.

Skills for life learning in basic education from literacy and numeracy through to post graduate certification courses could benefit hundreds of thousands of GMB members. It could also benefit similarly, if not more, those not yet belonging to a union.

Union Learning Representatives, active in education projects, encouraging members and non members in adult education would: raise the profile of the union

Help raise self esteem and confidence in members and, by this stage the not too many, non members.

If organised successfully and correctly this leads to recruitment and increased activity at branch level with ULR's going on to take up Steward, Safety Rep and Branch Officer positions.

Congress therefore resolves to continue to support Learning projects, but only if they are Trade Union orientated and bringing positive benefits to our members and future members.

GMB PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS BRANCH  
*London Region*

*(Carried)*

**BRO. H. VAIDYA (London):** Congress, in Wembley we started from the basis that union is the membership and that the elected full-time representatives are to serve the membership. The members have made it clear to us that the English language is their priority so that they are able to understand industrial issues like the minimum wage, health and safety and other important issues. It is important to know the language first. It was also made clear that our members wanted these courses to be organised outside of the workplace because of the fear and pressure otherwise created. Our members made it clear that they would like the courses to be held at the Wembley Indian Association at weekends and at other times when they are not at work. We had to find money for rooms, to sort out the details and advertise for the courses. Once that was sorted there was a new problem when the provider said that she could not teach people at so many different levels. So we sorted out an assessment for our members and potential members and three more courses were set up at different levels.

However, education can never take place in isolation. It must be linked to industrial issues and, therefore, we started to run industrial courses on Saturdays. We gave initial industrial advice. We now hold regular branch meetings and our General Secretary also came to present certificates at a special GMB certification group at the end of the first set of courses. When we started some people were not in the Union but now all are in the Union and more are joining and they are attending ESOL classes. Please support. I move.

**BRO. T. FLANAGAN (London):** I am seconding the motion, although actually it originated from my branch, the Professional Drivers. Many of my members are from the ethnic minorities, namely, chauffeurs, minicab drivers and cab drivers in various parts of the country and they all have similar problems. When we are aware of their problems, we can get them onto the courses. When they are on the courses – it is not rocket science – you stick a membership form in their hands and they go back to the factories where they are working, where their relatives are working and what we are doing spreads throughout the community. We persuaded Hiten to move the motion because he has been extremely successful in Wembley, north London, and the results following what he has done are absolutely phenomenal.

This is the finest recruitment tool that the taxpayer is likely to present you with. You can get money for the courses from the taxpayer. The other week I was at the GLA, and we just mentioned it in passing. Ken's people wanted a meeting on it immediately. Within two weeks I organised meeting with the education people from London and Southern Regions with the GLA and that could lead to immense possibilities. The Union Learning Project as a recruitment tool cannot be beaten. Martin Smith is here. Martin, get on to this one. This is the way to recruit members. Be it in ASDA or wherever you have an ethnic minority, it is a recruiting tool.

Let me make one final point. It is, and I keep saying so, subsidised by the taxpayer.

Please support the motion.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, the CEC is supporting Motion 35.

*(Motion 35 was carried)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I have been informed that Motion 36, standing in the name of Birmingham & West Midlands Region, has been withdrawn. Do you accept that withdrawal? *(Agreed)*

*(Motion 36 was withdrawn)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Before I go on to the next item, which is the Commercial Services Report, I have an announcement to make.

The Retired Members' raffle. The brandy is a white ticket, numbers 166-170, and the Champagne is a yellow ticket, numbers 556-560.

Colleagues, we move on to the Commercial Services Section Report.

## **COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION REPORT:**

### **FOOD AND LEISURE SECTION (pages 59-65 of the General Secretary's Report)**

#### **FOOD & LEISURE SECTION**

Following the decision of Congress 2006 to move to three Sections, the Food & Leisure Section is subsequently in a transitional phase of moving the Section into the new Commercial Services Section. In due course, further discussions will allow for the Food, Drink and Tobacco Manufacturing to move as appropriate into the new Manufacturing Section. For the purposes of reporting to Congress this year, the old Food & Leisure Section is covered in this Section.

#### **SECTION NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

As such, the existing Food & Leisure Section National Committee has only met once since last Congress previously to deal with resolutions passed at the Food & Leisure Conference and Congress 2006. These resolutions appertaining to Asda Stores and Asda Distribution have subsequently been referred to the appropriate National Shop Steward Committees and are being pursued via the Stores National Forum and the Distribution NJC.

The Committee currently comprises:

Junior Robinson, Chairperson, Southern Region  
Jean Foster, Southern Region  
Lena Sharp, London Region  
Margaret Clarke, Birmingham Region  
Rachelle Wilkins, Midland & East Coast Region  
Richard Robinson, Midland & East Coast Region  
Paul Grieve, Northern Region  
Cathy Murphy, GMB Scotland  
Kath Manning, Yorkshire Region

Vacancies currently exist for South Western and North West regions and would remain so until elections for the new section takes place.

### **FOOD MANUFACTURING**

The emerging crisis facing food manufacturing continues to grow at an alarming rate with many household names closing factories and moving production abroad. In the last 8 months alone we have seen some 2,400 quality jobs lost as a result of multi national companies moving production on a global basis often to seek cheaper labour costs, but also because of a lack of investment in UK plants, buildings and technology.

### **UNITED BISCUITS**

October 2006 saw United Biscuits change ownership again to another private equity consortium of Blackstone (number one global investment firm, USA based) and PAI (existing shareholders and leading European equity firm). The change of ownership came on the back of the sell-off of United Biscuit's Southern European business to Kraft, who has now relinquished other interests in the Company.

Consequently, negotiations have been ongoing to ensure the business remains stable. GMB have pressed hard for the manufacturing sites to remain UK based. The new shareholders are looking to achieve £10 million in savings over a 2/3 year period in a way that avoids any factory closures and return some monies back for reinvestment in the factory infrastructure.

At the time of writing this report, those negotiations were in the early stages via 'Project Moments'. Negotiations via the project will be a mixture of local and national discussions and therefore, new structures have been established to ensure shop stewards and regional officers are involved throughout the process. The project involves all divisions under United Biscuits.

As part of the sale deal, the new owners agreed to inject a lump sum contribution to the Groups' UK pension funds to clear the running deficit and to add an accelerated repayment programme to clear the remaining deficit. However, the company have indicated they intend to re-open negotiations in relation to further changes to the Scheme as problems still remained. Industrial action was averted last year when the company backed down from a radical plan to drastically change the Scheme benefits and impose a substantial increase to member contributions.

#### **1. McVities**

Within the McVities division of United Biscuits, the job evaluation scheme has been suspended due to the new ownership and Project Moments and will be revisited sometime later in 2007. Pay negotiations for 2007 settlement were still in progress at the time of writing this report.

#### **2. Jacobs**

Within the Jacobs division of United Biscuits, the 2007 pay settlement was implemented at 4% as part of the second phase of a two year deal.

## **NORTHERN FOODS**

Elsewhere in the market, Northern Foods also announced its business was up for sale. They also announced the full closure of Trafford Park Bakery citing 'supermarket' pressure to reduce the cost of production as one of the reasons for not being able to secure a rescue package.

Despite a robust GMB campaign, and an emergency motion being tabled at TUC Congress, the factory could not be saved and closed with the loss of 700 GMB jobs.

## **RANK HOVIS MCDUGALL (BRITISH BAKERIES)**

2006 also saw the acquisition of RHM by Premier Foods through a share sale. The change of ownership now makes Premier the UK's largest food manufacturer with a huge portfolio of brands and businesses within the Industry. At the point of acquisition, Premier also announced it would be looking to achieve £85 million of savings over a three year period by removing duplication in manufacturing, administration and procurement. At the time of writing, the Company were undertaking a series of workshops to consult on the immediate future.

The trade unions have also sought discussions in particular to the pensions. RHM have confirmed that the previous agreement for funding will remain in place. Trustees were currently seeking a financial understanding of Premier's ability to fund both Premier and RHM Pension funds for the future.

## **NESTLE**

September saw the devastating announcement by Nestle that they would transfer the production of Smarties from York to Germany with the loss of 645 jobs. This followed a previous announcement of 234 job losses in their HQ earlier in 2006.

Intensive negotiations have taken place over the last six months to find alternative solutions and keep production in York. Despite GMB putting forward counter proposals, lobbying Downing Street and submitting an emergency motion on "The Crisis in Food Manufacturing", to the Labour Party Conference and working through the IUF on an international basis, production could not be secured for the UK. We will now sadly see the manufacturing of Smarties transfer to Germany, whilst assortments move to Spain and Czechoslovakia.

Drifter and Matchmaker will be retained in the UK but will be produced at Fawden (a GMB organised factory in the Northern Region).

Whilst some jobs have been saved, negotiations are still ongoing in respect of the total number of job losses which will be in the region of 500. The joint unions are confident that there will be no compulsory redundancies.

## **UNILEVER**

Unilever: Birdseye closed its two factories in Grimsby and Hull with the loss of 620 jobs in total. The Birdseye brand has subsequently been sold to Permira a private equity company.

Elsewhere within Unilever, the company has moved to a new national structure for consultation purposes and for negotiations on corporate policy, health and safety and pensions. Pay negotiations will remain at a local level. GMB continue to have membership within Unilever in London and North West regions.

## **HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

## **CORCA – NJIC**

GMB continue to be the lead Union across the CIU clubs affiliated to CORCA and hold the Trade Union Side Secretaryship.

2006 pay negotiations concluded the following rates:

- category 1 stewards £6.04
- category 2 stewards £6.44

This equates to a 6% increase. All other grades and workers over 18 years of age including doorkeepers remain on the National Minimum Wage of £5.35.

## **RETAIL SECTOR**

### **ASDA DISTRIBUTION**

The campaign within Asda Distribution to win national collective bargaining rights continued throughout 2006 with the ballot for national industrial action closing on June 21st 2006. The vote for the strike was overwhelming with 74% of the valid vote for strike action and 84% for action short of a strike.

The National Shop Stewards Forum (NSSF) unanimously agreed to stage an initial 5 day strike from midnight on 30th June to midnight on 4th July 2006 followed by a comprehensive programme of industrial action. The pressure of an historical national strike within retail distribution and the continuing media campaign eventually brought Asda back to the negotiating table.

On 28th June 2006, national talks were facilitated by Brendan Barber, General Secretary of the TUC between Asda and GMB and following extensive negotiations, a new agreement was signed in principal to establish:

- a National Joint Council (NJC)
- a programme of ballots to move to collective bargaining across the Distribution sites
- a new collective bargaining and recognition agreement for sites voting for collective bargaining
- an agreement for access for recruitment

The detailed work of the above agreements was conducted over a three month period and completed in early October. All agreements have been endorsed and voted on by the National Shop Stewards Forum.

The NJC has subsequently met on four occasions, primarily to deal with the new arrangements for the above agreements. The NJC will now continue to meet four times a year to deal with the national issues affecting GMB members.

The NSSF continues to meet on a regular basis and remains a strong and robust Committee. As GMB begin to recruit and organise in new sites, the Committee also expects to reflect the national network of Asda Distribution. At the time of writing, the NSSF were discussing a new constitution to ensure the right structures were in place to take the Committee forward and to secure a cohesive national strategy to deal with key issues affecting GMB members.

The Asda Distribution Newsbrief continues to be produced and circulated to shop stewards and members. Now that the NSSF and NJC are meeting on a quarterly basis, the newsletter will also follow the same pattern to keep members up to date with key events and national developments.

Of significant importance following the signing of the new agreement was the first set of ballots to achieve collective bargaining at Erith depot (Southern region) and Chepstow depot (South Western region) which were conducted in November 2006 via the Electoral Reform Society (ERS). Both sites produced a resounding 'yes' vote for full GMB recognition and collective bargaining rights with Erith voting 85% in favour and Chepstow 90%.

Thanks and recognition for the tremendous results and hard work must go to the shop stewards and regional organisers involved.

Work is now ongoing to 'bed in' these new agreements; 2007 will see the first pay negotiations for GMB members at these two depots.

Of the 24 Asda depots, GMB now has 11 full recognition agreements and two partnership agreements. In the remaining sites, GMB continue to establish union membership and a further 4 sites have now, for the first time taken the initial steps of electing shop stewards. Despite the new agreements and attempts to move industrial relations into a more stable arrangement, the overall relationship with Asda remains a difficult one with various attempts in recent months by managers to frustrate the agreements and undermine the GMB position.

Despite this, work continues to consolidate membership and move forward to achieving further ballots for recognition during 2007. Work continues on the key areas of pick rates and safe working practices. To this end, GMB commissioned a three month ergonomics independent study which was carried out at the Wigan depot. At the time of writing, work was being undertaken within GMB to establish a national strategy and negotiating agenda in which to engage Asda at national level.

New GMB materials have been developed 'Supporting Professional Drivers'. These are about to be launched in Asda Distribution as a pilot before being made more widely available for other logistics companies that GMB is organised in.

At the time of writing, a similar pack was being developed for warehouse workers.

## **ASDA STORES**

The relationship within Asda Stores remained a difficult one with the company still frustrating the access arrangements under the Partnership Agreement. High level talks with the company are ongoing to seek improvements to the current access difficulties.

In the meantime, the National Shop Stewards Group (NSSG) continue to meet on a regular basis. A strategic national meeting was held in November 2006 to develop a clear agenda for growing membership, improving communications and to establish a wider shop steward network. A new national newsletter for members in Stores has been agreed which will be produced four times a year. Other materials to promote GMB and improve support for shop stewards are currently being developed in conjunction with the National Shop Stewards Group.

The National Forum meetings with the company also continue although the meetings have moved to four longer meetings that will now rotate again around the Stores, giving GMB more profile in Stores.

During 2006, and as an ongoing process, Asda announced the outsourcing of their Customer and Colleague Cafe facilities to Eurest. Employees in these areas have subsequently transferred under TUPE to Eurest. GMB are in the initial stages of talks with Eurest to secure recognition.

Pressure continued on GMB members to move to Asda 'top rate' contracts whereby the basic pay was marginally higher but no premium payments existed for weekend and bank holiday working. Pressure also continues to move employees to working weekends as a conditional requirement.

A number of cases had been challenged and won with some members demonstrating outside stores to keep their "rights for free weekends".

In February 2007, Asda announced that the annual bonus payment totalled £15million and that all stores would qualify this year for a share in the bonus; unlike last year, when only 105 stores qualified despite massive profits.

### **3663**

This company continues to be one of the largest food distribution operators in the UK. The GMB is the largest Union in the company and we are seeking to grow our already significant presence with the assistance of the National Organising Team.

Last year's pay negotiations – the outcome of which was endorsed by a GMB consultative ballot – produced a settlement of a one off lump sum and a basic rate and related allowance increases of 3.7%. The settlement date remains 1st July and as this Report is being prepared, we are preparing a pay and conditions claim for 2007/08.

For some time, the company has been including conducting a job evaluation exercise aimed at rationalising the haphazard pay structure within various divisions. Our members have been hanging fire pending the outcome of this exercise for many months. However, that latest indications are that in reality, the company has abandoned this exercise in favour of something much simpler.

Finally, in the middle of last year, 3663 lost its largest single contract to supply the Ministry of Defence food for the military. This resulted in job losses on a large scale at Basingstoke and of significance in Scotland and Yorkshire. Thanks to the efforts of our regional officers, and above all to our lay reps, the effects of this were minimised with redeployment for some to the incoming contractor and the re-establishment of the Basingstoke site for other purposes.

It is true to say however, that during the difficult negotiations there was little evidence of 3663 living up to their aspiration to be a model employer.

### **ROADCHEF**

The relationship with Roadchef has improved to an extent since last Congress. Our membership has stabilized rather than grown in part at least as a result of the company taking steps to reduce its labour turnover. We have also been able to sustain and assist our–small–number of shop stewards.

The 2006 pay round produced a settlement accepted by our members in a consultative ballot as follows:

#### **1. Basic Rates**

- an increase in the national minimum basic rates of 3.3%
- an increase of 4.7% on those on £5.21 per hour to give a new rate of £5.46
- the National Minimum Wage increased by 6% with effect from 1st October 2006.

#### **2. Christmas Day Working**

Employees required to work on Christmas Day will be paid triple time plus a day off in lieu.

In the course of negotiations, it became clear that there was a need for a thoroughgoing overhaul of the company's pay scales. At the time of writing this report, this process is about to start.

The outstanding issues surrounding the Employees Share Option Scheme (ESOPS) continues to be bedeviled by legal and technical problems. Progress continues to be made but we are still not in a position to consult our members. We hope to be able to do so later this year.

Finally, the company changed hands at the end of 2006 and is now owned by an Israeli based property and petrol retailing company. We are obviously, keeping our members informed as to what the change of ownership may mean to them.

## **CASINOS**

### **Introduction**

On 30<sup>th</sup> January this year the Casino Advisory Panel (CAP) produced their long awaited advice as to the location of the 17 "new wave" UK casinos as provided for under the 2005 Gambling Act. This of course involved the creation of a Regional (or super) casino in Manchester. By the time we get to Congress it is expected that the government will have taken the necessary Parliamentary steps to give effect to this recommendation. It is fair to say that many people were surprised by the CAP view that the super casino should be in Manchester, but that is the nature of independent advice – sometimes it produces unexpected results.

### **GMB Response**

Hard on the heels of the CAP announcement the GMB contacted all 17 "successful" local authorities seeking the opportunity to make our views clear as to the track record of would be operators of these 17 "new wave" casinos. We have also proactively contacted the potential operators seeking agreements in anticipation of them being successful in securing one of the new sites. At the same time all relevant Regional Officers with responsibility for casinos have been fully briefed and all Regional Political Officers asked to carry out local lobbying. In short we are doing all that we can as a Union to ensure that the jobs to be created by the 17 "new wave" casinos are:

- Not low pay/low skill/ low status jobs
- Provide real training with real career development
- Recognise the Union as the legitimate voice of the workforce

### **"Old Wave" Casinos**

The interest generated by the 30<sup>th</sup> January announcement rather masked the fact that the UK already has around 145 operating casinos employing about 16,000 people. Since last Congress, GMB continued to push forward the organising agenda amongst this group of workers. Apart from Stanley casinos where we have a single union deal (see separate report below) we are continuing via the casino officers and the National Organising Team to try to recruit in the two other major UK casino operators – Gala (see below) and Grosvenor – and amongst the relatively small number of independent operators.

From the outside this industry looks glamorous. Behind the façade however we find the usual problems of the hospitality sector:

- Low pay
- Long hours
- Anti-social shift patterns
- Employers that would shame the Victorians

These features exist in all types of casinos from those catering for mass markets to the “exclusive” Mayfair. Operations aimed at relieving the super-rich of their wealth. We continue the campaign to expose the truth behind the front and to point to the shabby treatment often dealt out to workers in the industry.

### **Stanley Casinos**

At the end of 2006 Stanley casinos – where we have a single union deal and about 30% membership – was bought by the Malaysian based gambling multi-national Gentings group. The impact of this change of ownership on our members is at the time of writing, not clear but the early indications of a new owner with money to spend are vaguely encouraging. In the meantime the 2006 pay negotiations produced an above industry average settlement of 3.5% with a measure of underpinning for the lowest paid. In more recent months, a lengthy meeting with the company progressed our view of the need for a proper NNC structure and I anticipate that by the time we arrive at Congress this will be in place.

### **Gala Casinos**

This group has successfully kept unions at arms length and pay bargaining on a collective basis is limited to and conducted by GMB London Region. Our colleagues in that Region are to be congratulated for achieving a two year deal which sets the target for our organisation efforts elsewhere in the group.

### **Conclusion**

The UK casino industry – new and established – presents a clear growth opportunity for the GMB. It abounds with challenges for us as a union and over the next year we have to respond accordingly. Throughout the period since last Congress I have benefited from the expertise and hard work of Ida Clemo from the Research and Policy Department at National Office. Our members in this industry owe Ida a great debt.

### **PRISON SERVICE**

The GMB plays a role in the Prison Service Joint Industrial Council (PSJIC) which negotiates for around 3,000 miscellaneous grade employees in the publicly run prison service in England and Wales.

The history of collective bargaining in this group is not a happy one. It is characterised by inter-union rivalry, employers negotiations detached from the operational reality of the service and low morale amongst the employees concerned. The 2006 pay round was absolutely typical. The increase was due to be effective from mid year. The employer brought the implementation date forward (always welcome) but the “negotiations” were effectively ended in December because the PSJIC TU negotiations ran into treasury imposed buffers. An offer of 1.6% (in reality 2.2% because of the change of date) was imposed by the employer; this is not the first time that the settlement has been:

- Months late
- Imposed by the employer
- Derisory by nature

A GMB Delegate Conference was held in Manchester in December last year and Delegates were given the opportunity not only to identify the shape of the 2007 claim but to give their views as to a strategy to break the log jam given our industrial weakness. Our thoughts on this are being channelled to the other unions and progress will be reported back to the members by briefings and by their “Nick News” newsletter.

### **Job Evaluation**

HMPS is currently carrying out a large scale job evaluation exercise allegedly due for implementation next year (2008). Of course like any cost issues in the public sector if this falls foul of the Treasury's wishes at the critical time then funding will be an issue.

The GMB has punched way above our weight on this issue thanks to efforts of our colleague Mick Hubbard from Productivity Services who has done a great deal to keep the job evaluation exercise on track to operate fairly.

### **THOMPSONS SOLICITORS**

The GMB has continued to represent Thompsons Solicitors employees for the last year. Pay and conditions negotiations for 2006 produced an above average increase of 4% on all basic salaries with effect from 1 October 2006. A similar increase was applied to the Practice Childcare Allowance. During the course of the year other issues resolved included:

- The practice termination of the Long Service Award (a consequence of the Age Discrimination Regulations)
- The practice withdrawal of their proposals to change (cut) pension contributions following intensive discussion (see below)
- Maternity Leave Provisions
- Flexible Working

Since last Congress the NNC has been reinvigorated and now meets the practice on a regular, scheduled basis.

### **Pension Issue**

Thompson pension arrangements have for a number of years provided for enhanced employer contributions to match enhanced employee contributions for employees over 45.

Under the governments botched first draft of the Age Discrimination Regulations this would have had to change and the practice advised us accordingly. Needless to say this potential change caused considerable anxiety amongst our members. The Governments subsequent about turn on this issue – anticipated by some excellent advice I received from National Office Pensions Department was subsequently reflected in a welcome reversion to the status quo by the Practice.

*(Adopted)*

**SIS. J. BRIMBLE (National Officer):** I move the Food and Leisure Section of the General Secretary's Report.

President, I would like, first, to address the difficulties that we have been facing this year in food manufacturing. We are still feeling the pinch from the powers of the supermarkets as they try to drive down the costs of production and with more and more production going abroad.

Despite the work that went on in Manchester last year, we were unable to prevent the closure of the Trafford Park Bakery with the loss of 700 jobs. In Nestle we have seen 500 jobs going from York as Roundtree has moved its production to Germany, Spain and the Czech Republic. The GMB moved an emergency motion at the Labour Party Conference last year and we are still pursuing the issue with the Government about the crisis in the food manufacturing sector.

In United Biscuits we have seen the equity owners, Blackstone, take over. We have successfully negotiated an alternative plan to stop the proposed closure of two major factories with some 2,500 jobs at risk. The shop stewards and officers are working now on the project called *Project Moment* to try and move that agenda forward to secure long-term viability of all 11 factories within the UK.

We have been in protected negotiations about the pensions scheme. We are currently dealing with major and wholesale changes as Blackstone try to set-off the liabilities of the pension scheme in order to make a quick buck and a massive profit when they sell UB in a couple of years time. Work is still going on in Asda and that is our key priority within this area at the moment.

Turning now to the current issues, this time last year Congress will recall that we were in a bitter dispute with Asda, balloting our members in distribution for industrial action. We were fighting for access to organise, fighting for full recognition, fighting for collective bargaining rights and fighting for fairness and dignity at work. Well, what a difference a year makes!

Within weeks of leaving Blackpool Asda could take no more of the GMB campaign machine. They signed the first national agreement with the trade union anywhere in the world. That agreement paved the way for three months of intense negotiations and GMB, I am very pleased to say has secured an agreement for a national joint council, access to organise a collective bargaining agreement, new recognition agreements for the sites to adopt when we organise and move to ballots for recognition. Congress, we have adopted those agreements at Chepstow and Erith, landslide victories for full recognition with full bargaining rights, and we are now starting the process at the Skelmersdale depot in the North West. More will be following later on this year.

Every Asda depot is now GMB organised. We are steadily growing the membership. There has been a 20% increase in the figures in the past 12 months. There is a raft of new shop stewards coming through, a National Shop Stewards' Committee now 50 strong in number, organising, recruiting and representing on the ground.

Congress, this is a fantastic achievement. This is a success story and this is GMB at work in Asda. I want to pay tribute to the members and the shop stewards for their courage and sheer determination in the battle that they fought so courageously last year, to win what has actually been an historical victory, a victory that has changed our relationship with Asda forever. We are now building on that industrial strength within the distribution sector, moving it across so that we can campaign within the store. We will grow and organise our members in the stores and we will gain our rightful place around the negotiating table.

The position is really quite simple. If Asda can sign up to a full recognition agreement in distribution, then they can do the same in the stores. Full access to organise, full recognition and full collective bargaining rights are what our members expect in the stores, that is what our members deserve in the stores and that is what the GMB is committed to deliver. Yes, it will be difficult; yes, it will take time and, yes, we will have our setbacks, but this is a long-term plan and the rewards are huge. It has a potential of 150,000 new members into the GMB. Our fight at the moment,

Congress, is on the imposed changes of contract across Asda in the stores. Asda is forcing, bullying and intimidating. They have not changed. They have tried to get 18,000 long-serving and loyal members to give up premium rates for weekends, premium rates for Bank Holidays, loss of lieu days and, yes, forced to work Bank Holidays. In fact, if you work for Asda you can expect to work every day except for Christmas Day. Only in Asda, where they know the price of everything and the value of nothing, would they deem to call this “top rate”.

GMB members have said “No”, they will keep saying “No” and, come August 5<sup>th</sup> when the company tries to impose those changes, we will still be saying “No”. The question is what will Asda do on 5<sup>th</sup> August when thousands of women workers up and down this country stand together in the name of the GMB and say “No”. The point is that we know what the GMB will be doing come August 5<sup>th</sup> and I hope that Steve Pryle has got nothing booked up for a while, because if we are saying “No” and the company is saying “No”, then we have got a battle to win for the women workers in the coming months in Asda.

At some point soon Asda are going to have to face the fact that the shelf life of their bullying tactics and the culture of fear is passed its sell by date. GMB is a campaigning and a growing union, we are campaigning and growing in Asda and in a few months time we will hold our first joint national conference for distribution and store, bringing together both strands of our campaign, bringing together both strands of our shop stewards and activists on the ground.

Conference, we have much work to do and it will be a tough challenge, but the GMB has the talent, the vision and the determination. We now have just got to get on and do it. We need everybody, at every level in the union, to come and support the campaign for Asda stores workers to get them proper rates of pay, proper terms and conditions and proper long-term job futures with decent contracts.

President, I move my report. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jude. Do we have any delegates in the hall who wish to speak to Jude’s report? *(No response)* Do you accept the report, colleagues?

*(The Commercial Services Section Report: Food and Leisure Section was adopted)*

## **INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION (FOOD & LEISURE)**

### **RECRUITMENT IN THE RETAIL SECTOR**

#### **MOTION 121**

#### **RECRUITMENT IN THE RETAIL SECTOR**

Congress welcomes the new National Organising Team and the role they will play within recruitment and retention. We therefore call for a national campaign within the retail sector, with particular reference to Asda, Wilkinsons and B & Q.

*(Carried)*

SIS. V. YOUNG (North West & Irish): I am moving Motion 121 – Recruitment in the Retail Sector.

President and Congress, the wording of this resolution needs no explaining, I am sure. We have in place the new National Organising Team and we must support the work which is on their agenda. To this end, I, for one, work in the retail sector or, to be more precise, Asda, where many of my colleagues have some sort of fear of joining the GMB when I approached them. I can only assume that this is because of the events of recent years when nobody was allowed through the door to represent our members, let alone recruit colleagues.

It is time for change. There must be thousands of prospective members in Asda, Wilkinsons and B&Q. We must put in a concerted effort in establishing good relations with these companies. Only then will we recruit new members.

Colleagues, please support.

SIS. L. RYAN (North West & Irish): I am seconding Motion 121. President and Congress, I call upon Conference to support this motion. The fastest growing area of our membership is predominantly women and it is growing. With a large percentage of these members working within the retail sector, I urge Congress to focus its resources on a disciplined and structured approach to recruitment within this sector. Thank you.

## **RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION IN ASDA STORES**

### **MOTION 122**

#### **RECRUITMENT & ORGANISATION IN ASDA STORES**

Congress calls on members, activists and officers to continue to recruit and maintain pressure on Asda to observe the Agreement.

Asda Stores continue to apply the Partnership Clause relating to election of shop stewards (that 75 members are required in store), while failing to comply with the Clause allowing GMB access to recruit.

ASDA GROUP 2 BRANCH  
*GMB Scotland*

*(Carried)*

SIS. J. GAULD (GMB Scotland): I am moving Motion 122 on Recruitment and Organisation in Asda Stores.

Today within Asda we continue to have everybody put in the way of the GMB in being able to access stores for recruitment. Members have little or no access to

inductions in stores and are provided with little or no information on new starts in stores and we are actively discouraged by managers from recruiting.

Asda has set a threshold of 75 members in a store before they would recognise and elect a shop steward. They set about ensuring that reaching that target became impossible to meet. Congress, it is the Devil's army, you could say, and you would be right.

However, recent events within Asda has now raised awareness in our members and non-members that within the stores their union is the GMB. Asda's callous attempt to force long-serving members of the GMB and non-members into signing new contracts worse than their current hardworking contractual terms. It is a step too far. More than 18,000 employees will be affected by the supposed enforced changes. Congress, the fight-back has started. It started in distribution and, at long last, we are in the driving seat.

We entered into partnership but Asda would not honour it, so why should we? We will recruit in stores or in the community. Please support.

SIS. B. CARSON (GMB Scotland): Congress, in relation to this motion the mover has set out the arguments. Asda has set a threshold of 75 members in store before we can elect a shop steward. Then they deny us the opportunity to recruit. They hope that they will wither on the vine. Well, Asda, we have news for you. The patient is alive and well and is now on the road to a full recovery. We will recruit and we will have stewards. We are in this battle to win, to grow our organisation and to protect our members. I second.

## **ASDA: HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **MOTION 123**

#### **ASDA : HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We call upon Congress to ensure GMB Safety Reps are allowed to form a Health & Safety Committee.

Within Asda stores we are at present denied this right and are informed by Asda that the colleague circle deal with health and safety issues.

This is proved not to be a true fact. Our members are at risk due to the inadequate health and safety facilities.

A15 - WOLSTANTON BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. M. CLARKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): I move Motion 123.

President and Congress, every day accidents happen. In Asda stores and depots minor and serious injuries have taken place in the workplace, even fatalities. It is unbelievable that even tragedies have not persuaded Asda to take its health and safety seriously. Asda's apathy is unbelievable. The company is not doing anywhere near

enough to prevent accidents from happening. All too often it tries to absolve itself of its responsibilities when colleagues have been hurt on its premises.

Health and safety issues have, maybe, five or ten minutes allocated to them in a one hour meeting which is dominated by a company focused agenda. This meeting is called a 'colleague circle'. The main topics discussed are company sales and what pictures to hang on the canteen wall. Managers dictate the agenda and handpick colleagues, many of whom would not say 'boo' to a goose. Even if these colleagues were encouraged to ask questions about urgent health and safety matters, which they are not, the managers just would not have the knowledge to answer them because health and safety is an afterthought. But because it is an agenda item during these meetings, Asda boasts that it has been regularly discussed. So there you have it. Health and safety is a tick box exercise. It is because Asda says that the subject has been discussed that the GMB is prevented from exercising its fundamental right to form a health and safety committee.

Let us remember that this is the company that has just been fined £80,000 for selling out-of-date food to its customers. If it can treat its customers this way, can it be expected to care about the welfare of its employees? Asda has a duty of care to both its customers and workforce. It is a company that champions respect of the individual but which is failing to prevent workplace accidents through its own self-interest.

Congress, we ask for your staunch support. We move that health and safety committees in all stores and depots consisting of properly trained people, dedicated to their roles, be introduced at the earliest possible opportunity. I move.

SIS. S. TANNER (Birmingham & West Midlands): Congress, I am seconding this motion on behalf of the union's membership in Asda, although I do not work there myself. Health and safety committees are an important way for employers and employees to discuss and improve health and safety in the workplace. They are a partnership and they work well wherever they are implemented. Only an uncaring and complacent company would ignore its duty to form one, but this is exactly what Asda is doing. Employers are required to work under health legislation and to consult with their workers about health and safety issues. Asda has a very poor track record in these matters as it has proved time and time again. It has been negligent and incompetent. Asda is at fault for not complying with regular workplace inspections. Neither does it review regular workplace inspections. Numerous accidents have occurred and Asda is only fortunate that these accidents have not been reported in the national press. How many more accidents are waiting to happen?

Congress, I urge you to support our motion for health and safety committees in every Asda store and depot. If Asda cannot apply common sense, then it has to be taught how to. Asda needs to be taught the less that they cannot take health and safety shortcuts. They cannot avoid this issue. Asda needs to understand its duty of care to colleagues. Our members deserve health and safety committees and the sooner the better.

## **EASTER SUNDAY TO BE A PAID HOLIDAY FOR SUPERMARKET EMPLOYEES**

### **MOTION 124**

#### **EASTER SUNDAY TO BE A PAID HOLIDAY FOR SUPERMARKET EMPLOYEES**

Congress calls on the CEC to set up a campaign and to lobby the Government to make East Sunday a paid holiday for supermarket employees.

HULL RETAIL & DISTRIBUTION BRANCH  
Midland & East Coast Region

*(Carried)*

SIS. C. CLARKSON (Midland & East Coast): I am speaking on Motion 124 – Easter Sunday to be a paid holiday for supermarket employees.

President and Congress, in 1994 the Government made Sunday working in supermarkets legal, but they still recognised Easter Sunday as a holiday and do not allow the supermarkets to open for business. Prior to the law changing on Sunday working, there was no need to make Easter Sunday a paid holiday as we were not requested to work because it was not a contractual day.

I have been raising the plight of our Sunday workers since we first opened, illegally, may I add, prior to the law changed when Asda opened with Sunday only contract workers for checkouts. These contracts were our first two-tier workforce. If you worked during the week, you got double time for Sundays. If you worked only on a Sunday, you got time-and-a-half for doing the same job. When the first Easter Sunday came up, the Sunday only workers were offered three choices: book a holiday – they only got four days holiday in a year – take time out without pay or come in and clean. The Sunday only workers took the third option as they could not afford to take the time off. They had to leave families at home and go to work. The majority of Sunday only workers were young women with young families. They work for a company that prides itself on its family friendly policies. I think this sounds like a joke, doesn't it? Easter Sunday should be as much a paid holiday as Christmas Day and Boxing Day. We need to lobby the Government to go the whole hog and make Easter Sunday a paid holiday for supermarket workers. Thank you.

BRO. ROB WHILDING (Midland & East Coast): I second Motion 124.

Congress, our country recognises Easter Sunday as a public holiday and will not allow Asda to open, yes, one of the three days in the year, when Asda cannot open for business. Because both Christmas Day and Boxing Day fall on different days each year, the Union campaigned and won Bank Holiday status for the two days. We believe that we need to campaign again to win Bank Holiday status for Easter Sundays.

## **MULTI-NATIONAL TAKEOVERS**

### **MOTION 125**

#### **MULTI-NATIONAL TAKEOVERS**

Congress urgently seeks the Government to exercise firmer control over Multi-National Takeovers of companies within the Scottish Whisky Industry and other industries in Scotland to safeguard future economic and employment security for Scotland's Heritage Industries and other vital industries set up in Scotland by foreign companies beneficial from national subsidies and cheaper labour costs provided by the Scottish Tax Payer, thus ensuring the future employment prospects for the people of Scotland and the nations wealth.

DUMBARTON 2 BRANCH  
*GMB Scotland*

*(Carried)*

SIS. C. LAVERY (GMB Scotland): I move Motion 125. Scottish Whisky jobs are our heritage. It is with great concern that I am speaking to you today. The Scottish Whisky jobs are disappearing before our very eyes. The takeovers that have happened have seen hundreds of jobs disappearing as well as companies being sold to other countries. We ask the Government and other trade unions concerned to start safeguarding our jobs within the Scotch Whisky industry and stop selling off our Scottish Whisky industry.

Our concerns are over the only protection at present that Scotch Whisky needs to be distilled, matured and bottled in Scotland. However, this is not a legal requirement. Bottling plants across Scotland provide thousands of jobs across Scottish communities. Ownership of the industry is shifting away from Scotland to global companies whose only business plan is to reduce costs of production and getting their goods to the market at lowest cost. The bulk shipment of Scotch to other bottling plants across the world is a distinct possibility. We need to ensure that we take our campaign to government making our case and protecting a national asset – the amber nectar. Please support.

BRO. J. DOLAN (GMB Scotland): I second Motion 125. The Scottish Whisky business is a very important part of our heritage. It would appear that we are the only country in the world which would allow any part of its indigenous assets to pass outside of its own borders.

Congress, think about this. Would the Italians allow their Parmesan cheese to be packaged outside of Italy? Equally, would the French allow their Champagne to be bottled outside of France? The answer to these questions is, quite clearly, no.

Congress, what is the impact of bottling Whisky abroad? The simple answer is the loss of jobs in the Whisky industry with the resulting demise in our communities. Please support.

## **UNFAIR TREATMENT**

### **MOTION 126**

#### **126. UNFAIR TREATMENT**

Congress calls on GMB to seek a Recognition Agreement with Ladbroke Bookmakers - "Unfair Treatment to there workforce".

BEITH ENGINEERING .BRANCH  
*GMB Scotland*

*(Referred)*

BRO. T. COPELAND (GMB Scotland): Congress, I call on the GMB to seek a Recognition Agreement with Ladbroke Bookmakers – "Unfair Treatment to their workforce".

Congress, in view of the fact that other unions are involved in Ladbroke's, GMB Scotland realises that a recognition agreement on a national basis will or would be a long-term approach. On the basis that we take the view that any recruitment issue of a national nature should first be assessed by the National Organising Team, we would be happy to accept reference to the NOT on this motion. Unfair treatment is unacceptable in any employment. Congress, I ask for your support and look to this motion being formally seconded. Thank you.

## **CONTRACT CHANGES IN ASDA**

### **EMERGENCY MOTION 1**

#### **CONTRACT CHANGES IN ASDA**

On February 27<sup>th</sup> 2007, ASDA announced that from August 5<sup>th</sup> 2007, standard rate colleagues would have to go over to a top rate contract that means all premium rates of pay and bank holiday entitlements will be lost.

Previous to this announcement ASDA have always stated they would never at any time force this to happen, always insisting that there would be a choice. This is now not the case.

Meetings are taking place in the stores where members are being informed that the change will happen on August 5<sup>th</sup> 2007.

We ask for your support on this matter to maximise a campaign to protect our members.

A15 ASDA BRANCH  
*Birmingham and West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

SIS. M. CLARKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): I move Emergency Motion 1 – Contract Changes in Asda.

President and Congress, in the past Asda has offered a two-tier system of payment to its colleagues. Established colleagues have been given the chance of remaining on what Asda calls "standard rate" whilst new recruits are automatically awarded top

rate. For some experienced colleagues the top rate option had been beneficial. For many others the package of an increased rate of pay was a loss of bank holiday premium and lieu hours. This has not proved attractive.

Established colleagues have been given the chance of remaining on what Asda calls standard rate whilst new recruits are automatically awarded top rate. For some experienced colleagues the top rate option has been beneficial. For many others, the package of an increased rate of pay was a loss of bank holiday premium and lieu hours, which has not proved attractive, especially where it affects Working Tax Credit entitlements. At least colleagues have had the choice, that is until now.

Asda has decided that the days of cosy consultation and gentle cajoling are at an end. Having previously promised that no one would be forced to change, Asda has announced that it is bulldozing through its top rate for all plans on August 5<sup>th</sup>. This would be acceptable if Asda was providing adequate compensation for those who are most severely affected by the changes. However, there has only been a promise of a balancing supplement, the mathematics of which do not begin to compensate for the loss of the bank holiday benefit. The way in which Asda has introduced the changes beggars belief. For a start, their one-to-one interviews have seen two managers sitting across the table from one often intimidated colleague. If Asda cannot get their basic maths right, then can you trust them to calculate your balancing supplement. You might just as well cross an arsonist with a box of matches. Those colleagues with the courage to ask questions in relation to some of the implications of the new arrangement have been met with a refreshingly honest answer from managers: "Asda has not briefed us on that point. We can only tell you what we have been told ourselves".

The lack of joined-up thinking and the robotic way in which managers have rolled out what they call proposals insults colleagues who have given years of service, colleagues whose loyalty and work ethic has enabled Asda to win numerous trade awards, including, strangely enough, the best supermarket to work for! Asda has even tried to rush through the one-to-one interviews when shop stewards have been off site and unavailable.

In driving through top rates for all under the umbrella of 'needs of the business' Asda has changed consultation into coercion; dialogue has become monologue. In football terminology, it has not only moved the goal posts but it has taken the ball as well. Never before has there been a need for Congress to show its teeth and support our suggestion for compromise. We accept Asda's top rate but it must award colleagues time off in lieu and premium pay for bank holidays. We ask Congress to back us to the hilt, to fight for our members' rights and to achieve a victory which will lay down a marker for the future, one that will boost recruitment, challenge Asda's dictatorial approach and justify our confidence in the GMB and *Fairness for All*. I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Can we have a seconder?

*Emergency Motion 1 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Now, colleagues, does any delegate wish to come in on any part of the debate on the resolutions we have just had, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, and the Emergency?

SIS. J. MARKS (South Western) supporting Emergency Motion 1 said: The South Western Region fully support this Emergency Motion. Well, Congress, what a surprise, Asda has gone and done it again. We know the issue that Asda has announced, that it is going to change the contracts of employment for many of our members from August this year. Their claim is that it will bring everyone's pay and hours into line. Now, I hope that we are not going to fall for that one.

Congress, our members deserve better. They fear that they will not only lose the right to choose to work bank holidays but they will also lose premium double time and their holiday lieu day. They are also concerned about family and childcare commitments on bank holidays and losing quality time with their family. We are now getting nearer the date of change, August 5<sup>th</sup>, and our members need to know that our union is behind them. All our members are getting anxious and worried; we cannot let them down. Congress, we support.

SIS. A. POULTON (London): I support the Motion 122, paid overtime. It is not just Asda, there are many private sectors where they are actually saying that you have to work on a bank holiday and saying it is a normal working day. You will have management off; the only people in will be those on the shop floor and there will be no management. I support this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I call Kath Manning on Motions 121 and 126 to reply on behalf of the Executive?

SIS. K. MANNING (CEC, Commercial Services): The CEC is supporting Motion 121 with the qualification I will give, and asking Congress to refer Motion 126.

Firstly, on Motion 121, the motion rightly welcomes the work of the National Organising Team and calls for a national recruitment campaign in the retail sector. The qualification is that the National Organising Team has already made inroads into the retail sector as they have adopted Asda's stores as a national project. Therefore, in order to comply with the motion the Organising Team needs to fully explore the ability of a retail campaign as a whole project.

On Motion 126, the CEC is seeking reference as we would not be able to pursue recognition at Ladbrokes as they have a recognition agreement with another independent union. However, the GMB has some pockets of membership in the sector and we should refer the proposal to the National Organising Team and a further examination of the potential.

We are asking for reference on Motion 126 and seek support on Motion 121 with the qualification I have now given.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Kath. North West & Irish Region, do you accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Good. Thank you. Can I now move to the vote?

I now move to the vote on 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, and the Emergency Motion. All those in favour please show? Thank you. All those against? That is carried. Could I ask GMB Scotland will they accept reference? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Does Congress accept reference? (*Agreed*) Thank you very much.

*(Motion 121 was carried)*

*(Motion 122 was carried)*

*(Motion 123 was carried)*

*(Motion 124 was carried)*

*(Motion 125 was carried)*

*(Emergency Motion 1 was carried)*

*(Motion 126 was referred)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now call on Richard Ascough, the Southern Regional Secretary, to move his report on pages 162-172, and then I will be calling Motion 13 from Birmingham & West Midlands, 15, Southern Region ----

## **REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: SOUTHERN REGION (PAGES 162-172)**

### **SOUTHERN REGION**

#### **1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT**

<b>Financial Membership</b>	<b>73,221</b>
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	22,361
MANUFACTURING SECTION	9,841
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	41,019
Grade 1 members	46,641
Grade 2 members	20,785
Retired, Reduced Rate and others	5,795
Male Membership	37,478
Female Membership	35,743
Total number recruited 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	10,517
Increase/decrease 1.1.2006 - 31.12.2006	-2,032
Membership on Check-off	48,516
Membership on Direct Debit	17,364

#### **Response to Organising Agenda**

In 2006 the Region established a Regional Organising Team headed up by a Senior Organiser. For the first time the Region also appointed two Membership Development Officers who were attached to the Organising Team. Each Membership Development Officer taking responsibility for half of the Region. The Organising Team is supplemented by an additional Organiser and two members of Staff.

The Organising Team has primarily worked in the Public Sector and has continued with considerable success in organising School Support Staff.

Following on the success in establishing County Local Authority Branches, the Region's top priority in 2006 was the organising of a Hampshire County Branch. This campaign has already produced considerable results and has established the GMB firmly in the County. This same process will now be applied to a Dorset County Council Branch.

A three-day seminar was organised for all Officers to establish the priorities of the Organising Agenda. A further follow-on meeting was held at the end of the year. In addition, the Education Department using Project Workers and the Organising Team have met and established organising priorities for 2007.

### **Recruitment Targets and Campaigns**

At 2006 Congress, the Region reported that it faced considerable problems by attacks from disgruntled former officials. During 2006 the Region was able to consolidate despite that and has now effectively neutralised the challenge within DHL. There has also been considerable success in the fight back against the AA and its renegade Union. A number of members have now returned to the GMB. As part of this campaign, the Region has spearheaded an attack on Venture Capitalism which has attracted considerable media attention.

In 2006 the Region targeted migrant workers and commenced a successful organising campaign. Part of this campaign was the setting up of a Migrant Workers Branch in Southampton which has already resulted in significant recruitment. The Region has also successfully bid for a Migrant Workers Project in the South West and has appointed a Project Worker.

After a very sluggish start to recruitment within one of the national targets of Southern Cross, the re-focusing of the campaign did bring about some significant improvements towards the end of the year which has been developed into the New Year.

### **Overview of Region's Economic and Employment Situation**

As in 2005, the Region's membership base saw a continuing increase in public service membership with a decline in engineering and manufacturing jobs.

## **2 GENERAL ORGANISATION**

Regional Senior Organisers	5
Membership Development Officers	2
Regional Organisers	15
Organising Officers	5
No. of Branches	108
New Branches	3
Branch Equality Officers	22
Branch Youth Officers	9

## **3 BENEFITS**

Dispute	NIL
Total Disablement	4,000.00
Working Accident	3,980.00
Occupational Fatal Accident	4,000.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	1,100.00
Funeral	15,277.00

#### 4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

The Region has issued hundreds of press releases throughout the year; in particular in regard to campaigning on the AA and Venture Capitalism. This has caused considerable interest within the media in terms of newspaper, radio and television coverage.

The Region re-launched its magazine under the title of 'Vision'. So far, three editions have appeared.

#### 5 LEGAL SERVICES

##### (a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
533	513

##### Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
682	263	3	415	1	
			£5,412,897	£5,587	£5,418,484
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006			743		

##### (b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	158
---------------------------	-----

##### Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
187	5	3	169	10	
			£962,951	£787,522	£1,750,473
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2006			79		

##### (c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
175	-	£1,271,964	53

##### (d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
4	2	-

#### Innovations and Changes to GMB Southern Region Legal Services between 01.01.2006 and 31.12.2006

As a result of the attack from certain solicitors in regard to equal pay, the Region has transferred the responsibility for all equal pay claims within the Public Sector to Thompsons Solicitors.

#### 6. EQUAL RIGHTS

It has been a very successful year for the Southern Regional Equal Rights Committee.

As regards the commitment to train Staff and Officers in diversity through the Union, this was achieved by the Southern Region before Christmas.

The Southern Equal Rights Committee has been extremely busy sending delegates to the South West TUC Conference, TUC Women's Conference and also the TUC Black Workers' Conference which raises the profile of the needs of black workers within the Region, builds alliances with Race Equality and Community groups, and also encourages local BME activists to participate. We also sent three delegates and one observer to the National Equal Rights Conference in Manchester in November. The feedback from this was very positive and the delegates found the workshops very useful.

The Committee took part in London Pride, Plymouth Respect Festival and Brighton Respect. All of these events brought new members into the GMB. This all links in with the Organising Agenda.

The Equal Rights section of the Region is still not functioning to its full potential, as not all Branches have yet filled the post of Equal Rights Officer. Hopefully with the recent Branch Audit being done in the Region we will have a clearer picture of what exactly needs to be done.

The Committee we will continue to prioritise in all areas of Equal Rights and maintain the practice of regularly informing Branch Equality Officers in the Region.

In 2007 the Equal Rights Committee is committed to highlighting the Equal Pay Gap and Age Discrimination in Workplaces by promoting Equality in every aspect of working life.

### **Race**

The Regional Race Committee consists of twelve members, and is chaired by Dotun Alade Odumosu, supported by Lorraine Parker as vice chair.

The Committee has met bi-monthly during the year and most of the meetings have been well attended.

### **Regional Race Conference**

The Regional Race Conference planned for October 2006 was rescheduled for spring 2007 to fit in with the national conferences.

The Committee operated to a Plan of Action for 2006-7 and continued to meet bi-monthly with guest speakers making presentations when they were available. Guest speakers in 2006 included Mick Rix on the work of "Stop the BNP" and Alan Fraser, Southern Region Education Officer on the new regional education strategy.

### **Political Activities**

Members of the Regional Race Committee were active during the local and European elections throughout the Southern Region and were also involved in events to commemorate Black History Month in London and in Plymouth, and attended the London Mayor's Rise Festival in London.

### **Branches**

The number of branches informing the centre of race officers has risen slowly and a region wide audit of branches conducted by officers should give a much clearer picture.

The Committee intends to visit branches to explain the role of the Race Committee and to promote the work of race officers.

## Future Plans

The Committee will continue to meet on a bi-monthly basis with a conference in spring 2007 and plans to play a full and active part within the Region and the National Race Committee.

In addition, the Committee is drawing up a Plan of Action for 2006-7 which will guide the Committee's work, ensure Southern Region participation in a number of important Regional and National events, and provide information to enable resources to be made available when required by the Regional Secretary and Regional Committee.

## 7. YOUTH

Throughout 2006 the Southern Region Young Members helped participate in a number of events. This has included helping with the Workers' Beer Company at events across the country between March and August.

### GMB Young Members National Conference

The National Young Members' Seminar took place on 4/5<sup>th</sup> November in London. About 80 young people attended and the weekend was an informal mix of a wide range of topics. The session included workshops on 'Organising Skills', 'Fighting Racism and Fascism', 'GMB Young Members – The way forward'. The Region fully participated in the Conference.

### Billy Bragg's Hope Not Hate Tour

The penultimate event of Billy Bragg's 2006 tour was in the Brighton Dome on the 16<sup>th</sup> December. Southern Region Young Members helped out on the stall and both the Tour Manager, Jeff Martin and Billy, commented that GMB's presence was eye-catching and that it was good to see some younger members.

### Target BNP

Young Members in the Brighton area gave their support to the launching of "Target BNP" in Brighton. The Young Members' Section aims to build further links with Love Music Hate Racism.

### Young Members Website

The above website which was established in 2005 has continued to prove popular and members are able to view events, activities and campaigns. The website also gives employment advice directed at young workers.

## 8 TRAINING

### (a) GMB Activists Basic Courses

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Induction Part 1	17	127	53	180	900

### (b) GMB Activists Courses

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Union Learning Reps	5	32	17	49	245
5-Day Union Learning Reps Follow-on	5	22	19	41	205
5-Day Industrial Relations Part 1	2	14	2	16	80

5-Day Industrial Relations Part 2	1	6	1	7	40
5-Day Introduction to Employment Law	2	16	3	19	95
5-Day Advanced Employment Law	2	16	2	18	90
3-Day Recruitment & Negotiation	1	10	1	11	33
5-Day Negotiating Skills	4	34	9	43	215
5-Day Stress at Work	1	17	2	19	95
2-Day Leadership Skills	1	8	3	11	22
5-Day Accompanying Reps	1	13	3	16	80

(c) GMB Activists Health & Safety Courses

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Induction Part 2 (H&S)	12	88	38	126	630
5-Day Health & Safety Part 1	2	20	8	28	140
5-Day Health & Safety Part 2	2	16	7	23	115
2-Day Health & Safety Update (LAS)	1	4	4	8	16

(d) Other GMB Courses

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Access Course Trade Unions & Politics (residential)	1	8	5	13	65

(e) GMB Officers Courses

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
2-Day Tackling Inequality Part 1	1	5	1	6	12
2-Day Tackling Inequality Part 2	2	18	4	22	44
2-Day Tackling Inequality Part 3	1	10	2	12	24
2-Day Recruiting & Organising	1	9	3	12	24
2-Day Employment Law Update	1	11	3	14	28

**TOTALS**

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
	66	504	190	694	3198

## 9 HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Introduction

The Region continues to engage more productively with our members' and activists in terms of raising the profile of health and safety, building and improving relationships as well as providing an enhanced service both technically and of a practical nature. As a result the region has witnessed better health, safety and welfare standards in the workplace, visible development and more importantly greater union/worker involvement in organising for health and safety.

### How are we doing this?

- Providing comprehensive/up to date information.
- Offering bespoke training/education tailored to our members' needs delivered in a way that best suits them.
- Engaging with employers' i.e. joint union/management initiatives, partnerships, working together and offering guidance, advice and support regarding workplace structure and organisation and most importantly promoting the value of worker involvement which is at the heart of effective health and safety management.

### Examples

1. Richmond Borough Council – we have been working closely with the reps assisting in establishing an agreed workable structure that can deliver real improvements in the interests of all concerned i.e. meaningful and productive consultation, a joint management/union safety committee that meets on a regular basis working to an agreed agenda with minutes taken. The reps have been encouraged to get involved in workplace inspections/reporting and take the lead in developing greater membership participation.

2. We have facilitated specific training/courses during the early part of the year i.e. Teaching Assistants at Hastings and at Dorchester for our members' working for the local council.

As a region we facilitated both these requirements by us going to our members' rather than them coming to us. This demonstrates and reinforces how we are addressing our members/activists needs in a more flexible and organised way.

3. During July productive discussions took place with Management at Horsham District Council, where our members are predominantly employed in the refuse collection industry. The employer initially approached the Regional Officer with a view to raising the profile of health and safety and to get the workforce more involved in this respect. The R.O. invited a resource from the education and health and safety department to also attend a meeting with management to discuss how to facilitate both the employer's needs and that of our members'. During discussions the employer did highlight that an accident had taken place on one of their sites with the HSE being involved and offering advice as to how they should move forward in terms of managing health and safety. Management were keen to include the GMB in this process and welcomed any further assistance.

Subsequently it was agreed to enter into a joint GMB/HDC health and safety initiative and deliver health and safety forums over a two-week period during October with a focus on the following:

- Raising the profile of health and safety.
- Improve worker involvement.
- Improve workplace health and safety.

It became abundantly clear right from the start that the workforce had become frustrated, fed up and apathetic. As far as they were concerned the only reason the said forums had been set up was as a result of an accident with the majority believing that management were using this process simply to tick boxes going through the motions to protect them.

Historically the attitude to health and safety was one of "here's your PPE get on with it". The union had no real connection or involvement. Things have slowly improved, there are some safe systems of work in place, an induction process of sorts however communications and union involvement is minimal with the workforce not being directly involved in matters of health and safety.

Whether management are serious or not, or are going through the motions, the forums provided an opportunity for the GMB to raise the profile of workplace health and safety and the value of organising and more importantly worker involvement with GMB representation.

As far as the latter is concerned the forums were a success. Over the two weeks all the participants were involved in activities/group work and two way feed back on the following:

- What's health and safety all about?
- What are the rights and responsibilities of employers/employees?
- Overview of health and safety law.
- Reviewing health and safety at work.
- Organising for health and safety

The region quickly backed the forums up by providing management with comprehensive feed back in the form of documentation and a power point presentation. The current situation now is that we have two more health and safety reps in place, management are reviewing their health and safety policies/procedures, and communications have improved with the reps and the workforce being more directly involved. This situation will be supported further with a strategy that represents greater visibility from the GMB, offering assistance and support where necessary, rebuilding confidences in the union, and in turn demonstrating the value of collectiveness and the organising agenda. This process can only assist in retaining members but also recruiting others as well as encouraging membership participation.

In general terms the use of forums/workshops can provide an excellent and effective way of delivering the union's agenda, it facilitates flexibility and can address the needs of both our reps, members' and that of the employers'.

### **Worker involvement**

Whilst continuing the focus on worker involvement, which is at the heart of sensible health and safety management, and trade unions providing the mechanism by which workers have a voice in the management of their health, safety and welfare, employers need to be constantly reminded and encouraged to give it the attention that it deserves. This was reinforced at the National Hazards Conference during July of last year. The Southern Region sent along 6 delegates who enjoyed the numerous workshops and debates on offer. One of the many discussions that took place was the key issue of worker involvement, improving health and safety and increased rights for safety reps. The Health and Safety Commission produced a consultation document in this respect and in turn welcomed the unions' comments and submissions on all the issues raised in the document. The HSE arranged various meetings to facilitate this process.

Due to clashes with Congress arrangements were made to set up our own meeting at the regional office in September to facilitate John McClean GMB National Health and Safety Officer to present

the key issues contained in the consultation. Health and Safety Reps throughout the region were invited to attend, which gave them an opportunity to meet up and to participate and contribute to the debate. The day was a great success; over 20 reps turned up and clearly enjoyed the interaction and discussion as well as an excellent presentation by John, which was supported by handouts, and the HSC Consultative Booklet.

Key issues were discussed in groups and through report backs i.e. strengths/weaknesses of the document and what improvements would we want to see, the main issues being:

- Improving current legislation and enforcing it.
- Enforce the consultation process on employers to consult within definitive timescales.
- Enforce the consultation and involvement of reps/workforce being fully involved in the risk assessment process.
- Legal backing for roving safety reps to cover small firms and workplaces.
- Give safety reps the right to stop the job if there is serious or imminent danger.
- Give safety reps the right to issue PIN's - provisional improvement notices, this would ensure that employers are legally required to remedy a problem within a specific timescale.

All those attended agreed that they would submit a formal response to the HSE on behalf of the GMB and their respective organisations.

Worker involvement is an essential part of health and safety management coupled with the enormous and vital contribution made by union safety reps in the workplace. For the GMB this means improvement in worker involvement and improvement in safety reps' effectiveness and ultimately more support and rights for safety reps'.

### **GMB National Health and Safety Reps Conference**

It has been agreed to hold the said conference on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2007 at Hamilton House London. Details were discussed at the most recent RHSO's meeting. The day will consist of speakers and Q&A sessions in the morning followed by workshops in the afternoon. The theme of the conference will be worker involvement. Thompson's our sponsors have agreed to put up an award for a GMB Safety Rep of the year.

The Southern Region like others have circulated the relevant details regarding the conference with nominations being invited for 10 delegates to attend from each region which will include a nomination for the said award.

### **Education**

Trade union education is an important and integral part of many trade union activists lives. It is a necessary and fundamental aspect of developing key activists within the labour movement. The Southern Region is proud of its bespoke educational programme and continues to develop it which now includes further courses i.e. access to H.E. namely Trade Union and Labour Studies, Advanced Employment Law, Occupational Health and Safety. Other courses being developed are Race and Organising and Women and Organising including a health and safety element.

### **Conclusion**

In essence the region is making a conscious effort to work much closer with our reps and members'. Health and safety is not merely an add on, its an integral part of the industrial relations process and collective bargaining. It is essential to ensure that health and safety is given the utmost priority and attention it deserves. The most effective tool we have in achieving this and ensuring

good health, safety and welfare at work is trade unions and being organised. By working together and resolving collective problems on a collective basis is the way forward to achieve our goal.

*(Adopted)*

BRO. R. ASCOUGH (Southern): Formally moved from the beautiful City of Brighton in the Southern Region.

*The Regional Secretary's Report: Southern Region (pages 162-172) was formally moved.*

THE PRESIDENT: Are you formally moving Brighton or your report? OK, Richard, thank you. Pages 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172. Does any delegate in the region wish to.... No? Agree the report, colleagues? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

*(The Regional Secretary's Report: Southern Report (pages 162-172) was adopted)*

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now ask the movers of 13 and 15 to come to the front, so that is Birmingham and Southern Region.

## **UNION ORGANISATION: RECRUITMENT & ORGANISATION**

### **MOTION 13**

#### **MIGRANT WORKERS**

Congress calls on the CEC to formulate a national policy on the recruitment of migrant workers, enabling the GMB to grow within this expanding area.

R35 – ROCESTER JCB BRANCH  
*Birmingham & West Midlands Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. G. RICHARDSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, migrant workers are human beings only trying to make a living for their families no matter what country they come from or go to. Since the enlargement of the EU we all know the amount of people that have been arriving in the UK seeking not only a job but a job that gives them a better life and standard for their families. Let me remind you if you do not know, it runs into hundreds of thousands and, whether we like this or not, this country along with others within the EU need them.

Colleagues, how wonderful to have this freedom to move around within the EU at will. Congress, there is a need for these people because we are short of certain skills and, yes, Congress, we probably welcome some of those because they do some of the jobs that sometimes we are not prepared to do ourselves: long hours, low pay, and dirty work.

Remember back to the 1950s when we had a big immigration programme where we needed a similar type of people to do some of the menial tasks and dirty jobs that we

would not do? That is only just over 50 years ago and some of those people suffered the worst hostility and exploitation that this country has ever seen. Thank goodness society in general has changed its attitude and shows a more caring side to its nature. But, Congress, let us not be blind, there are many employers in this country, whether they be agencies or otherwise, who are and have been prepared to exploit employees in different ways.

Thank goodness as a trade union we have a major voice against exploitation both in the past and present. That said, it leads me to this very important question: do we have a national policy on the recruitment of migrant workers? I am aware of recent links with our counterparts in Poland about the benefits of being a member of a trade union and also the setting up of a branch specifically for Polish workers in the Southern Region, which I am sure you will all agree is excellent. It also gives us the opportunity to raise the awareness of the benefits of being a member of a trade union in the UK.

Congress therefore calls on the CEC to make recruitment of migrant workers a national project so that we can make real inroads into this area and in doing so incorporating best practices from regions that have been successful and already achieved some moves. Congress, I move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

*Motion 13 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Southern Region to move 15, 2012 London Olympics.

## **MOTION 15**

### **2012 LONDON OLYMPICS**

We call on Congress to create a CEC sub committee to ensure that all opportunities relating to organizing in relationship to the Olympics are realised.

SECURITY G36 BRANCH  
*Southern Region*

*(Carried)*

BRO. B. BEAVEN (Southern): I am moving Motion 15, the 2012 London Olympics, even though most of my colleagues will actually say they are not strictly speaking just in London, that they actually take part across the whole of the south as well.

We really need to empower the CEC to set up a subcommittee to actually make sure that the opportunity supplied by the Olympics is not either wasted or just not met. For the CEC actually to be empowered Congress needs to give them a chance actually to do some work so that although it is 2007 now, 2012 will be on us very quickly and we need to act now. I so move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Secunder?

*Motion 15 was formally seconded.*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Does any delegate wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)* No. Thank you. Can I now put 13 and 15 - the CEC is supporting them - to the vote, all those in favour please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

*(Motion 13 was carried)*

*(Motion 15 was carried)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, before I move on to the next part of the business, I have had a note from Midland & East Coast Region and it says, "Mary, will you please make the following announcement: the Birmingham & West Midlands Region in partnership with Justice for Colombia are selling GMB bracelets on our stall." There is the bracelet. "These bracelets are unique. Each one has the name of the political prisoner that made them sewn in on the label. The bracelets are £3 each with the proceeds going to Justice for Colombia." We are asking you to support that very worthwhile charity. OK. That is £20, Paul! *(Laughter/Applause)*

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Wrong size, Mary!

THE PRESIDENT: Put it on your big toe! OK, colleagues, we now come to the next debate, that is the CEC Special Report. The report will be moved and seconded on behalf of the CEC, then I will invite each region in turn to put up one speaker. Then I will ask for any speakers opposed to the report. The CEC mover will have the right of reply and then we will move to the vote, colleagues. OK. As I promised this morning, we are going to go in the reverse way. Can I ask the mover and the seconder....

**CEC SPECIAL REPORT: GMB@WORK WORKPLACE ORGANISATION**

**CEC SPECIAL REPORT 2007**

**GMB@WORK:WORKPLACE ORGANISATION**

**"Our purpose is to get a better deal at work  
by building the union in numbers and in  
power in every workplace we have  
members."**

**Recruitment and Organisation Performance 2006/7**

The GMB@Work Organising Strategy aims to tackle long term membership decline within existing budgets - changing how we work as a union to make sure membership growth becomes central to all we do.

Using the process of bargaining to grow the union, organising every workplace

as if a ballot for action was imminent, and mobilising members to organise themselves, setting the agenda in their workplace.

### **National Projects**

To give a focus to our new organising strategy, in January 2006, all GMB regions through the National Organising Team, collectively adopted three National Projects in Health and Social Care, Security Guarding and Education.

To the end of March 2007, these National Projects have produced over 13,000 new members, including over 6,000 School Support Staff, 4,000 Care Staff in Southern Cross Homes and 3,000 Security Guards at G4S.

### **Sustained increase in recruitment**

Nationally the union is signing up new members at a rate of 78,000 per year, compared with 70,000 per year two years ago. Our target remains 90,000 per year.

To make sure our improving recruitment performance is being sustained, regions average recruitment over the last 12 months is now watched closely and monthly figures published across the union.

All Regions of the union have increased their average recruitment performance over the last two years. Two regions have seen an increase of over 20% in their average recruitment per month, four more have increased their average recruitment per month by over 15% and three have increased their recruitment by 8% or less since September 2005.

### **Membership Growth**

This improved recruitment performance and the work started on retaining existing members has resulted in the GMB starting to show a net growth in membership, turning around a 5% year on year membership decline two years ago.

### **Stewards Training and Mobilisation**

The workplace is the basic building block of the GMB. It is here where our members have the power to change their working lives.

Effective, active and strong workplace organisation, led and sustained by GMB Reps is our goal. Membership growth is fast becoming the measure of every aspect of our Reps work. Recruitment, representation and retaining members is being re-united in the workplace.

To sustain this momentum, new stewards training is being rolled out across the Regions in 2007, on an agreed national programme. This will be supported by similar training for existing Stewards in target workplaces within each Region and nationally within the National Projects and campaigns.

## Key Messages

GMB Congress 2006 adopted a clear set of principles to guide us in 2006 which we should maintain and update for 2007.

1. **Our future is down to us.** As we get ourselves better organised we become better at organising workers into the GMB
2. **Our job is to manage the growth of the GMB** becoming inclusive and representative of our new members in the service industries.
3. **We must have the discipline to focus on what works and learn from each other.** Sharing best practice between Regions should be routine.
4. **Improving Workplace Organisation is central to our strategy.** Mobilising our Reps to organise a workplace map and a members newsletter in every workplace.
5. **Increase union resources spent on recruitment and workplace organisation towards 20% of the total**– effectively directed within Regions.
6. **Fewer Targets more effectively organised and monitored.** Choosing targets by assessing the access we have to workers, the issues they face and potential to gain momentum, involving new members in growing the union.
7. **A bigger role in the workplace for our Reps** New training to equip them with the skills they need in workplace organisation
8. **Priority to consolidating membership in existing sites exploiting existing pay bargaining to gain access to potential members.** Organising in every workplace as if a ballot for action was imminent and always having a claim on the table.
9. **Assess every aspect of GMB services and campaigning potential contribution to membership growth**
10. **Reps, members, and potential members included and involved in our workplace organising and servicing work.** We must reverse the dependency of some of our members on full time officials.

### National Organising Department

The National Organising Team (NOT) has been established since October 2005 with a senior officer representing each region to co-ordinate the contribution regions are making to the new strategy for growth.

The team will continue to steer the work of the Organising Department, consult with colleagues in the regions and reach collective decisions over strategy.

The National Organising Team members from each region are as follows:

Birmingham and West Midlands Region:	Martin Hird
London Region:	Tony Warr
Midland and East Coast Region:	Tim Roache
Northern Region:	Billy Coates
North West and Irish Region:	Karen Lewis

GMB Scotland:	Mick Conroy
Southern Region:	Paul Maloney
South Western Region:	John Phillips
Yorkshire and North Derbyshire Region:	Neil Derrick

The role of the NOT member in each Region is to consult officers and staff on the National strategy and targets, help implement agreed policy on Organising, and inform colleagues of progress and new developments.

In April 2007 four appointments as Lead Organisers were made to the Organising Department. These posts are in addition to a small number of special project workers, research and admin support.

National Organiser: Martin Smith  
Lead Organiser: Avril Chambers  
Lead Organiser: Paul Clarke  
Lead Organiser: Paul Hayes  
Lead Organiser: Keith Williams

Casinos Organiser: Adrian Baker (Half Post)  
ASDA Organiser: Jim McDermott  
ASDA Organiser: Brendan Kemp

Research: Eamon O'Hearn Large (Half Post)  
Admin: Emma Cole

## **Progress on 2006 Agenda for Action**

Much of the agenda adopted by Congress 2006 have been put into effect within Regions or will be fully introduced shortly. By adopting these recommendations Regions have produced significant and sustained improvements.

### **Regions**

#### **Performance and Accountability.**

1. Change performance measurement from league tables to a rolling average figure over the preceding year to replace competition between regions.

Completed under review

2. Each region to contribute to increasing the national rolling average by 2000 per month by increasing its rolling average recruitment figure substantially.

In Progress

3. The adoption of Regional targets with collective performance measurements.

Completed in part and under review.

### **Organising Teams**

4. To divert resources into organising in each region under the control of a dedicated Senior Organiser.

5. To organise these resources into an Organising Team including an appropriate mix of skills and experience.

6. To require Servicing organisers to allocate regular time (ie one week per quarter) to the Organising Team on a rolling basis, to work on Project Board priorities at the direction of the Senior Organiser.

7. Organising Teams to include RHSO's to assist in identifying consolidation targets.

Implementation In progress in each Region

8. To consciously break with the "Recruitment Team" sales culture by full integration of the Organising Team into every aspect of regional activity, using servicing work as an opportunity to build membership.

In progress in each region

9. To change the entry point for new officers, renaming the Recruitment Officer grade as Organiser.

Completed and under review

### **Organising Project Boards**

10. A single Organising Project Board in every region to ensure disciplined targeting of resources, with a clear, open and transparent method of selecting projects, regularly reviewed.

11. Organising Project Boards to include collective quarterly numerical targets and be on open display.

12. Organising Project Boards to include no more than 6 main projects and the numbers expected to deliver in the quarter – and no more than 5 developmental targets.

13. Most targets to be consolidation – but in workplaces with membership density below 60% . Above 60% we should expect existing workplace organisation to improve density further – with external support and training.

14. Consolidation targets to be identified using organisers own workplace maps, and centrally produced information on membership levels, existence of check off and numbers of postholders.

15. Targets to be prioritised using the Aim Organising Test (Access, Issues, Momentum)

In discussion/implementation in Regions

## **Administrative**

16. To ensure each local office co-ordinates calls from potential members with allocated organisers to follow up leads within 24 hours.

In discussion/implementation in Regions

17. To have an agreed and understood policy on services available to new members joining with pre-dated problems.

Completed and under review

18. To adopt a systematic policy of contacting apparent leavers which involves the relevant servicing officer and establishes the scale of the problem of apparent leavers.

In hand under NOT review. Detailed recommendations imminent.

19. To ensure the shift in resources to organising is understood by front line staff and put across to members.

In discussion/implementation in Regions

## **Training**

20. Follow on training in workplace organisation to be targeted at reps in consolidation targets. Training to be standardised, based around the 5 key principles and delivery to include organisers involved in the workplace.

21. Regional Training programmes to be reviewed and standardised, shifting the focus from dependency on officers to workplace organisation.

In progress. Currently being rolled out

22. Regional training programmes to be open for entry at every level to allow retraining of Reps in targeted workplaces.

In discussion. Implementation planned during 2007.

## **National**

### **Performance and Accountability**

23. To produce monthly reports of average performance and the trend in each region.

Completed and under review

24. To standardise evaluation system for projects into output measures (members recruited, increase in membership density, Reps coverage) and activity measures (contact time with potential members, workplace activity).

Implementation during 2007 with the appointment of Lead Organisers

## **Organising Teams**

25. To form a National Organising Team from the Senior Organisers appointed to make recommendations to the CEC organisation group on policy, review, monitor and manage recruitment work, share good practice and prioritise National organising projects.

Completed and under review

26. That this team meet 10 times per year.

Subsequently agreed 5 times per year in 2007

## **Organising Project Board**

27. To develop a National Project Board on the same basis as in the regions but containing no more than 3 main projects at any one time.

Completed and under review

28. To grade national projects into three streams: Stream One where we ask regions to divert some resources towards a common goal and place the project on their project board, Stream 2 where we ask regions to assist in developing a target, and Stream 3 where we launch projects designed exclusively to be run and lead by activists.

Partially completed, implementation to be progressed by Lead Organisers

29. To produce data to assist in the identification of consolidation targets in regions.

30. To produce data to assist in the prioritising of National Projects.

31. To construct a clear streamlined decision making process to assess and prioritise National Projects: proposals come to MS or JM, are referred to the monthly NOT meeting for consideration and a recommendation made to JM for action.

Completed and under review

## **Training**

32. To produce a new Stewards Handbook to assist local reps learn the skills they need to improve workplace organisation – to re-define the role

of workplace reps.

33. To use the Reps mailing to re-inforce the workplace organisation message to existing Reps.

34. To standardise training for new reps, follow on training for reps in consolidation targets and training for officers in consolidation techniques.

35. Briefing for all officers in consolidation techniques to be delivered in region, by the SO with support from the NOT and standardised nationally.

In progress. Implementation during 2007

### **Administrative**

36. To make the arrangements to allow workers to join us online.

37. To establish a centralised lead Book in national office to allocate leads to the Senior Organiser in each region.

38. To shorten the time between a TUC lead arriving and a local officer making contact.

Completed and under review

*(Adopted)*

BRO. M. SMITH (National Organiser) moving the CEC Special Report: GMB@Work said: We have been implementing our national organising strategy for over 18 months and the report in front of you details the progress made on its 38 policy points and the effect so far on our membership figures. The three national projects, schools, care homes and security, now replaced with Asda, these have produced 17,100 new members themselves since January 2006. The actions taken within regions to reorganise their work and focus on local targets have produced far more and the membership reports circulated to you all by the NOT members clearly show the progress we are making.

So far the plan is working for now we have stopped the long years of membership decline. Two years ago in Newcastle, despite all our efforts, our best efforts in recruitment and retention, we were shrinking by about 2,000 members per month. Now, at least for this year, we are growing at the rate of a thousand a month.

I think we should just pause for a moment, Congress. I am told this is the first time since 1978 we have opened Congress on the back of a full year of membership growth. Over those years we faced the most serious attempt, arguably, in our history to put us out of business all together. We are still standing and we are beginning to bounce back but we must not decide that the job is done. It has been tough to turn this corner and our progress is fragile. If we take our eye off the ball we could easily lose the momentum we have gained.

Whatever may happen in the future, let no one ever again tell us that all we are good for is managing our own decline. Let no one tell you it cannot be done. Let no one tell you people do not join unions any more. And do not let anyone tell you that all we have to look forward to is to be taken over by another union. We have proved we can stand alone, grow our membership, and take on the employers.

Our future? It is now a matter of choice, not chance. We can see the GMB@ Work strategy starting to work even though much of the policy has yet to be fully implemented everywhere as you will see detailed in the report, this is the GMB firing on two cylinders. Imagine where we will be when we are firing on four. The National Organising Team proposes we do not change the winning formula but in reality, Congress, there is no plan B.

So what has made the difference? The turning to some old ideas, like building sustainable membership growth through strong workplace organisation, uniting recruitment representation and retention, building the union in the workplace not selling it, putting right the damage done to the union in the days when recruitment was believed to be something only recruitment officers did. We have been building membership and organisation in workplaces where we already have members' facilities and access, and where we estimate that over one million non members work in contact with GMB members every day but are unaware of our work or the contribution they could make to make the union stronger, and in some places not yet close to joining us. We have been talking to these workers, building their confidence in the GMB, playing to our strengths, and rebuilding the union from the bottom up.

Congress, I spoke to a delegate from the Southern Region yesterday who told me that in his bed factory on the South Coast we have now achieved 98% membership. When I asked him how this was done he simply said, "Well, by asking all the workforce, including non members, what they expected from the GMB and then campaigning around that agenda," saying in less than 20 words what it takes me in 2,000. Thanks, brother, keep up with that message.

This is the role our local reps and shop stewards, our workplace organisers, perform so well for us day in, day out, year after year, looking for every opportunity to build a union where you work, using local representation and negotiation to get access to potential members, recruiting and organising. It is not the glamorous end of what we do, it does not often make the headlines or the teatime news but it delivers sustainable membership growth, the foundation stones of our union, and without these foundations the organising campaigns we want to launch in new workplaces and industries will be built on quicksand. This year we will invest heavily in supporting and training our reps to become workplace organisers and giving you the recognition you are due in the magazines and publications of the union.

We have also begun to confront some of our own culture. It is a deeply held view in many parts of our union, for example, that to recruit all we have to do is simply deliver a good service to enough of our members. Now, of course, that is what we do and that is what we do well, it is what we will continue to do, but collective power does not come from the barrel of a grievance, Congress. What we know is that it is the process of taking on the employer, campaigning for a pay claim, fighting to protect pay and conditions, it is all this that attracts working people to join us and how we build collective strength at work.

Congress, few people join us out of gratitude for what we have already done. Far more join us out of fear in the present and in hope for the future. So the next time someone asks you why all this talk of recruitment in the GMB, explain to them that in the workplace a growing union delivers to its members while a shrinking union lets

people down. All this and more is contained in the GMB@Work report in front of you. Let's keep our eye on the prize as well and remember the real reasons we want the GMB to be the biggest and the best union.

Our members know that wealth does not trickle down, it trickles up. However fast you stack shelves in Asda, however hard you work in care homes, as a security guard at the airport, changing beds in the hotel, sweeping the streets, you have to fight for every penny in the pound increase you get. Let's not be shy about saying that it is our job to organise at work, and politically, to make sure more of this wealth stays in our members' pockets.

We can use strength in high places to help us where we can get them, but whoever is in Number 10 we must always remind ourselves that our strength, our ability to protect and enhance the working lives of our members, this strength cannot be begged or borrowed from politicians, from employers, or from the media, but only built at work and in the community by ourselves.

Andy Stern, the leader of the big American service workers union, the SCIU, gave Congress a lecture from this podium 10 years ago to the day. Its union had just doubled its membership in that 10 years. Some of us at the time thought Paul Kenny had nipped round the back and written his speech for him. Others may even recall having said that organising America was a bit like sex, people talk about it more than they do it.

Congress, we certainly talked about it for a few years and I cannot say whether we will double our membership between now and 2017 but unlike the SCIU we will not abandon a winning formula in favour of striking partnership agreements with global mega-companies, never again putting our members' future and aspirations at the mercy of the employers. Our future lies in the tactics and strategies that built our union in the first place. Standing on the shoulders of those who went before us our future is ours to build: choice not chance. Let's keep on building our union. We do not need planning permission.

THE PRESIDENT: Martin, you speak for yourself when you are talking about sex! (*Laughter*) Thanks, Martin, well done.

SIS. L. SHARP (CEC, Commercial Services): Colleagues, National Organiser, Martin Smith, has just outlined the results of the national projects run by the National Organising Department over the past 18 months. These projects are chosen collectively by the regions at the meetings of the National Organising Team and then approved by the senior management team and the CEC. They are chosen on the basis that there are big workplace issues facing the workforce, that we have a degree of access to workers and that we have a detailed plan to campaign on these issues before we start.

As a workplace organiser taking on Asda local and regional managers for the last 28 years I am delighted that the regions have recommended at last that we should take on Asda on behalf of the thousands of workers desperate – desperate – for union support in their stores every day of the week. Finally, after far too many long years of our members being denied rights and respect, we are back in Asda and we are going to

rebuild the GMB. But, Congress, make no mistake, just because there is potential growth is not the reason we have decided to take on Asda. 18,000 staff are currently threatened with the sack if they do not volunteer to give up their bank holiday. Tens of thousands more face the prospect of being forced to work over all public holidays.

So, we have the issues we need to campaign over and we have the ability to create the momentum we need to build the union in every store with support and assistance from branches and regions, and let us be absolutely clear, we have all the access we need to talk to these staff. They work in a shop. Let's not accept that GMB people have less access to staff than Asda customers do. Anyone of us can go in and talk to staff about the union at any time.

Colleagues, the GMB does not need permission from anyone to organise workers threatened with the sack. Asda have offered us better and more structured access and, of course, we will take it but let us not turn our nose up at a current bun because we think there is a Black Forest gateau on the way in. At Tesco they say "every little helps".

Many regions have reported difficulties getting cooperation from store managers promising one thing and then doing another, cancelling meetings at the last moment, telling staff lies about the GMB. Taking on Asda has never been easy. Welcome to my world. But if we are going to take on a national company like Asda we need officers and regions working together as a national union and a new structure within the organising department gives us this opportunity. As in the other two national projects I do not think anyone in the Executive believes that our nine individual regions could or should take on Asda individually. Now we can work together and actually share best practice not just talk about it.

I second this report and urge the union to redouble its efforts to help our colleagues at Asda who have carried the GMB flag for so long under such difficult circumstances. Of course it is hard. Did anyone expect Wal-Mart to thank us for organising workers? But, Congress, help us at Asda to fulfil the organising agenda and we inside Asda will show you what membership is really all about, no opt-outs, no being put off because the manager will not let us in, once we all move together they will get the message. Congress, the GMB is not for giving up or giving in. I second.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lena. Can I now call Northern Region, then South Western Region, and then Southern Region, please? By the way, colleagues, Paul Kenny paid me the £20 and I have just paid it to Jo. Well done. (*Applause*) OK, colleague.

BRO. M. BAKER (Northern): The decisions we took at Congress 2006 have changed the way we organise as a trade union. The effects are being felt for the better throughout the organisation although we have not reached our goal yet on membership recruitment. Membership is undoubtedly increasing. We have also an organisation starting to focus on retaining our members, something that was not being done with any consistency before. We are training our stewards and mobilising them to be a positive powerful force for change within the organisation. The Northern Region believes that we should build on the success of the last year and consolidate the hard work that has been done. It is only with this disciplined approach to

recruitment and organisation that we can continue to grow and prosper as an organisation by continuing to give both our officer force and lay membership the tools and skills they need to carry on the excellent work that has been done over the last year.

Congress, Northern Region wholeheartedly endorses and supports this report. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. South Western Region.

SIS. J. MARR (South Western): The South Western Region fully supports the GMB@Work document and commends the effort, hard work, and progress our National Organisation Team representatives have achieved. The document states that effective, active, and strong workplace organisation led and sustained by GMB representatives is our goal. Well, Congress, we all know the workplace reps are better placed to recruit new employees into membership; that is why my region welcomes the high priority that this report has given in supporting our reps through the regional education programmes.

Colleagues, at the same time as we are all giving 100% to support our ambitions, let us not forget that most GMB representatives are unpaid volunteers and need full support from the organisation and their officers. Organisation in every workplace is crucial to the growth of our union, not only do we need to recruit new members, we need to keep our existing members and to do this through two key areas, training and communication.

GMB representatives are our ambassadors who, using the tools and skills obtained in the training courses provided by our union, gained confidence to represent our members, learn communication skills to negotiate with workforce management, and become informed on what the GMB can do for new and existing members.

I work for Asda Wal-Mart, yes, the dreaded Asda Wal-Mart, and I am sure that you all know of the union-busting philosophy. In the distribution centre where I work in Chepstow we recently held a ballot for the GMB to have full recognition bargaining rights in the depot. The result of the ballot was a resounding 90% in our favour. A tremendous amount – (*applause*) – thank you – of hard work and effort was put into the campaign by a lot of people using the set of principles laid out in this report.

People are different with different sets of principles with various reasons for joining our union. Some will throughout their working life always be a member of their workplace union, some only look to become a member when they need something, representation or advice, for example. These members can be a great advertising tool for us to build on and increase our membership, especially when we get a successful resolution to the member's problem. What a great opportunity to turn quick wins into recruiting more members. I support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Southern, then Yorkshire, and Midland.

BRO. B. BEAVEN (Southern): Basically, we have a golden opportunity to update you where Southern Region actually stands on the plan. We have actually formed a

regional organisational team supported by two fulltime membership development officers who have developed a workplace mapping and membership mapping software to allow us to identify not only where our members are but where our stewards are that can actually service and organise for them. We have developed a main project board and the projects we worked on in the last year have been schools, Southern Cross, and security, mainly G4S. These projects have been very successful and in line with the NOT team we are working on developing other targets for the national board.

We also managed to start, as many of you know, the first migrant workers branch, which is driven by two young Polish women who actually hold the branch offices of president and secretary, and the nice thing is that not only are we actually managing to organise some migrant workers but they are also mostly young members. We have also managed to put together a job centre plus scheme where we are taking unemployed people and giving them skills, recruiting them into the union, and then getting them jobs. We are hoping this scheme actually rolls out through various other regions later this year.

The actual workplace organisational plan is not merely to recruit but to organise. To this end we have actually started a database of all our members' email addresses to allow us to communicate with them. We are re-launching the website, and we are empowering branches and members to become more involved in the union. I so move.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Yorkshire.

BRO. R. ALDERMAN (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire) speaking in support of the Special Report said: Colleagues, we welcome this progress report on our GMB@Work strategy. The first thing that strikes you when you read this update is the question, why haven't we been doing it this way for years. There are some essential truths contained in this report which for some reason we lost sight of as a union and of which we ought to remind ourselves about every day of our union lives.

The workplace is a basic building block of the GMB, it is where our members have the power to change their working lives. That is not only true, it is a powerful message on which we should base our contact with members and potential members, which is paramount. If we do not get that, then those who we seek to organise will not either, and if we want workers to join the GMB they need to believe that doing so will give them the power to change their working lives; it is as simple as that.

Recruitment, representation, and retaining members, has been reunited in the workplace. Gone are the days, colleagues, I hope, when the debate in the GMB will be recruitment versus representation. What is more important? The fact is we rediscovered organising at work is a holy trinity. You cannot organise without members, you cannot recruit if you do not support our service, and you start retention at the point of recruitment. It is not a question of which comes first, they all need to come together for our union to be effective in our workplace.

An effective workplace union will make things happen. Membership will grow because they see it making things happen. Representatives will emerge because they

want to influence change and members will stay with us because they will see what being in a trade union is all about.

My region support wholeheartedly the moves to provide training for representatives designed to augment the organising agenda as a key part in the strategy of which Yorkshire in our revitalised Training and Education Department, under Colin Kirkham, our Regional Education Officer, has embraced with a vengeance.

Colleagues, there is no going back nor should there be. Organising for growth, organising for strength, is what the GMB is all about. Long may it prosper.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Midland. Then I am going to call London and North West.

BRO. P. SOPER (Midland & East Coast): At last year's Congress we voted against amalgamation with Amicus and Transport & General Unions so the GMB can stand alone and become a major force in its own right. That was the easy part and the hard part starts now. This Special Report is just the beginning of the road ahead.

If I could just make a point on membership: I think our National President, Mary, will agree that the proportion of women members has been increasing steadily for some time and they make up nearly 40%-50% of the membership, but as in so many other spheres of life women continue to be severely under-represented. We as a union must focus on women to play a more active role in the workplace so more women members will be inspired by them.

On the point of a bigger role in the workplace, our reps must be trained to equip themselves with the skills to represent and negotiate on all issues which concern our members. Like it or not most members do not join the GMB union, they join Mick's union, Bill's union, Mary's union, anybody's union that performs and produces the goods, safe, honest, and realistic promises that are kept and delivered in a timely fashion and in a professional manner.

This document and the principles therein when complete will provide a structure and growth that we all can achieve. With the best will in the world they will not be able to rely on fulltime officers for every minor issue. This in itself will impress members and retain them and let them know that their reps are always on hand with professional advice, and assess every aspect of the GMB services. Shop stewards and members are still not aware of all the services the GMB provides. We must produce some kind of booklet for the branches at least to assist in further recruitment. I also support sharing best practice which Midland & East Coast Region already promote with different regions.

The region fully supports the GMB@Work but must build more into it and keep our eyes on the ball. We are already the best so now let's get out there and be the biggest. I support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. London.

SIS. J. SMITH (London): Congress, the GMB is our union, which we all over the years have helped to build into a union that we are all proud of. Congress during 2005 and 2006 called on the CEC for improvements to be made within our workplaces and within the role of the GMB. The documents set out the projects, membership growth, recruitment and, importantly, the retention of members. We can all recruit but, Congress, if the retention is not monitored we would be on a losing battle.

Within the workplaces shop stewards and health & safety reps all need training with ongoing training to be able to represent not only the GMB but all our members' needs. On the agenda for action some of the areas have been implemented, like organising teams and training issues is planned during 2007. Now, I ask, when is that going to take place? Is it tomorrow, next week, or the end of the year? Like any of the outstanding implementations we need to know not sometime in 2007 but when.

Congress, apart from my few gripes since the 2005 and 2006 Congresses, the various motions seeking these very important requests to give improved services within the work of the GMB and workplace organisations have been taken on board and by Congress 2008, by adopting this report, all the I's and the T's will have been dotted and crossed, I sincerely hope.

Congress, please support this document. I move, and in doing so, Congress, if we all recruit one member, which I recall Paul Kenny once saying, we will be much stronger and in being a million to a million-plus membership way exceeding the 600,000 and achieving the issues within this report. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jan. North West, and then I will be calling Birmingham and Scotland.

BRO. K. FLANAGAN (North West & Irish): North West and Irish Region and proud of it! I feel that I am actually in a new region, which I am, but I am increasingly feeling that I am actually in a new union because I feel a sense of change that we have not had for a while, and some of us have argued from this rostrum for a number of years for that change. In 2006 we took the decision to find a new way forward, to share resources, to find new ways of empowering our workplace representatives and those who support the GMB, to empower them to take responsibility for the recruitment and the organisation of this Movement.

Thank God, just within 12 months we can see the fruits of that already. We can see our membership growing, not only that we can see the confidence growing, we can see the fight coming back into the belly of the Trades Union Movement and, by heck, that will do a lot of us good and it does the Trades Union Movement good. Twelve months have been good but it is not the end, we must all own this agenda ourselves. It is not just about getting new members, it is about owning it. It is about actually having a change of mentality within the Movement that puts the real power back where it matters.

I recently visited a site where we have 50% of the membership. A few months ago I was at another site and realised that we still only have a third of the membership because the other people in the factory were outsourced but they were not unionised.

There are as many non union members sitting right next to our unionised members, that is where the growth is and that is where we need to go out. Think about it, if one in four – one in four – of our membership this 12 months go out and own this agenda we will have 132,000 members represented at this Congress next year; that is what it is about, the policy to empower.

I give applause, my region gives applause, to the NOT team and to the leadership shown on this agenda. We have seen growth in the care industry because we are sharing resources, we are now fighting over them, we are sharing leads and we are working together in fraternity, which is what we should have been doing from day one, in the first place.

I say to you, this is the lifeblood of the Movement. This is a campaign we have to own because the only option is to wither away and to die. Well, there is one way we will win that, get them into membership, campaign for integrity, campaign for rights at work, campaign for justice, and they will be flocking to join us because there are enough people out there being trampled on who need the GMB, and let the new song be, *“I am a GMB member, I got thousands in my pockets.”* Let’s support them, let’s sing, and let’s have a vibrant Congress next year with 132,000 more. Congress, we support.

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Kevin. Hi, Jackie.

SIS. J. INGLEBY (Birmingham & West Midlands): This report introduced at last year’s Congress in our opinion was long overdue. We finally have a cohesive strategy in place which has rolled out across all regions. It has taken a while to bed into place but, as can be seen from the results nationally, it is working. It has been a very long time since we have grown as a national organisation but that is what we have done. We in the Birmingham & West Midlands Region have embraced the organising agenda willingly and it is showing dividends. The National Organising Team, the Regional Organising Team, the senior management team, and you the activists, who we would not be able to function without, should be congratulated for the efforts put in to make the organising agenda the success that it is.

However, we cannot rest on our laurels, we must continue to press ahead with the organising agenda. Some in the Movement thought that the formation of Unite with T&G and Amicus would present us with problems. We do not hold that view. We are the architects of our own future under our current leadership. We have become an organising and campaigning union. We now must capitalise on the opportunities we have in front of us and this Special Report keeps us on the right track. Birmingham Region supports.

THE PRESIDENT: Well done, Jackie. GMB Scotland.

BRO. F. MACKAY (GMB Scotland): Congress, we heard Mary Turner as President of the GMB highlighting the success of the GMB over the past 12 months, stabilising membership decline and moving into growth. The document sets out a strategy and measures of our performance. At the heart of this document is the workplace. We have seen the benefits gained from national projects being implemented across our

regions resulting in a sustained increase in membership recruitment and in the training of new and existing stewards, in recruitment, representation, and retention.

We need to ensure that the key measures set out in the document become common currency from the workplace to the regions and nationally. We have seen success through growth and want to take the opportunity to thank the team and Martin Smith for their hard work.

GMB Scotland supports the document as a foundation for our current and future success. The vision is now a reality. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Colleagues, that is the end of that particular debate but before I call for the vote on it I think it is only right that Congress is aware of the lead organisers – and you met Martin Smith earlier – who are carrying out these projects in your name. They know nothing about this but I am going to embarrass them now and I do not mean to. Could I ask the team to stand up: Avril Chambers, Keith Williams, Paul Hayes, and Paul Clark. Welcome to Congress. *(Applause)* Can I say, Congress, each and every one of them has been a delegate to this Congress and spoken over the years here, so we are leading from the grass roots to the top. That is very important.

We also have another guest. I was delighted to see him last night, and many of you know him. He is sitting up the back all quiet and shy. His name is Phil White. Phil used to be on the platform with us. He is the researcher and he has always been a great help. He is here voluntarily for two days just to see how things are going now. Phil, welcome. *(Applause)* Now I will not get that vodka, for that! Never mind.

Can I put the GMB@Work Workplace Organisation to the vote, please? All those in favour? Anyone against? That is carried.

*(The CEC Special Report: GMB@Work Workplace Organisation was adopted.)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, that is the end of business today. I thank you all on this Sunday afternoon when you should have all been in church, one that says, “push” on the door!

Just to remind you, tomorrow morning we start at 9.30. Have a great evening all and I will see a lot of you later. Bye.

*Conference adjourned.*