

GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT



ANNUAL CONGRESS 2008 PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS

CONGRESS - SUNDAY 8 JUNE
9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

CONGRESS - MONDAY 9 JUNE
9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

SECTION CONFERENCES – TUESDAY 10 JUNE
9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

SECTION CONFERENCES – WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE
9.30 am - 12.30 pm

CONGRESS – WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE
2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

CONGRESS – THURSDAY 12 JUNE
9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm

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GENERAL SECRETARY'S INTRODUCTION



Dear Colleagues

WELCOME TO PLYMOUTH

Whilst I cannot guarantee sunshine this week, I can promise you a warm welcome from the Branches and members of GMB in the South West.

The area boasts not only the historic Devonport Dockyards with its fantastic skill base, but also the largest health service membership in the Union and, having met the Branch Officials of both establishments, I can tell you they are good, very good indeed.

So, we arrive here at Plymouth - my fourth Congress in the office of General Secretary and Treasurer.

The Union wanted change and we have worked to make the Union fitter, stronger and more relevant to our members.

In a few short years we have turned membership and financial losses and mismanagement into stability and growth.

The changes in our membership means I can come here and announce three years of membership growth, and four years of financial growth, as well as the modernisation of our internal democratic structures with an all lay member Executive built on a professional approach to manage the Union's business and deliver the policies we stand for.

The Senior Management Team approach has seen, probably for the first time in the modern era, a joined up, shared approach to problem solving.

That demand for change has driven what we have achieved in the last four years.

Alongside that has been the clear and unshakeable rule; never to let ourselves spend more than we can afford; never to pay ourselves in any form what we just cannot afford, or cut services to members in order to prop up bureaucracy or expense claims that bring us nothing.

The balance of delivering the policies with the resources available will sometimes make it tough to prioritise.

GMB in the past has been littered with General Secretaries caving in to spending demands because to urge caution or to oppose them would have made them very unpopular. I have no such qualms.

The legacy of this greed and weakness is something we are still freeing ourselves from in certain isolated areas.

The single interest of any group must be weighted against the good of many.

GMB stands today as a campaigning, growing Union with vision and courage. We have a new approach with our equality and inclusion strategy, our GMB@Work programme is turning the Union's workplace organisation and recruitment targets into reality.

As I write this the Union has climbed back over the 600,000 member level; the decline we inherited four years ago is not inevitable, nor will it be allowed.

The future looks positive and bright despite our deep disappointment over the Government's handling of Remploy and rights for agency workers. I don't kid myself into believing that somehow the Tories would behave in anything other than in the employers' interests.

GMB fought a long and hard charge against the closure of any Remploy factory, not just because they were Remploy but because they were GMB members, in a struggle for justice and their jobs.

The bitterness at the outcome the Government arrived at for the Remploy factories will resonate for years to come.

This Congress is also a new approach, combining the policy making and industrial conferences within the same week. Frankly, we don't know if this will be the perfect answer, no doubt hiccups will occur, nonetheless, enjoy the week.

You are part of a growing, fighting Union which does not cave into pressure from Government or individual interests, from whatever quarters they come!

Enjoy your week and thank you for being here!!

Yours fraternally



PAUL KENNY
General Secretary

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE OF THE GMB: UPDATE

This report audits 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. Where it has been previously reported to Congress that the recommendation has been implemented, the recommendation itself is no longer shown.

1.	<i>Implemented</i>
2.	<i>Implemented</i>
3.	<p>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.</p> <p><i>It was reported to Congress that progress was being made and a successful conference had been organised attracting 60 young members.</i></p> <p><i>A young activist database has been established and we continue to attract interest for and send full delegations to TUC Young Members Conference. However, the problem we have encountered – as has historically been the case – is that we lose a handful of young activists who pass the age threshold of 27 and consequently lose the impetus of the campaign.</i></p> <p><i>The establishment of the National Equalities Forum will for the first time have seats reserved for young members and the Forum will be ideally placed to examine how best to engage with, attract and encourage young members.</i></p>
4.	<p>The CEC Training Committee will progress the development of education and training for workplace activists on the basis of the proposal outlined</p> <p><i>The sub committee has adopted the GMB@WORK training programme for new stewards recommended by Regions and has implemented it in every Region. During 2008 the committee will consider and adopt a strategy to roll out similar training on workplace organisation for existing stewards in targeted workplaces. The committee will ensure that GMB@WORK Congress policy 21 on reviewing all Regional training also commences in 2008. This policy adopted by Congress 2006 aims to ensure our whole training programme becomes more industrially focussed and standardised and that we use our training to effect a shift in focus among GMB reps from dependency on officers to self sustaining workplace organisation.</i></p> <p><i>The committee will also receive formal reports into the full audit currently being completed into the effectiveness and impact of ULF funded projects within GMB, following Congress 2006 motion 35.</i></p>
5.	<i>Implemented</i>
6.	<i>Implemented</i>
7.	<i>Implemented</i>
8.	<p>The CEC recommends that the GMB should adopt and implement this increased workplace focus as <i>policy</i>, and will refer this matter in the first instance to the Recruitment & Organisation Committee for the Committee to identify how to progress this.</p> <p><i>The CEC Organisation Committee is progressing this.</i></p>
9.	<i>Implemented</i>
10.	<i>Implemented</i>

11.	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Commencing in 2008 the full investigation and examination of these Branches will involve the members of each Branch and the Regions.</i></p>
12.	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Work in Progress</i></p>
13.	<i>Implemented</i>
14.	<i>Implemented</i>
15.	<p>The CEC recommends that:</p> <p>(i) an examination should take place of the size and effectiveness of the CEC and Regional Councils and;</p> <p>(ii) the current system whereby only members of Regional Councils are eligible to stand for election to the CEC should be maintained.</p> <p><u>Central Executive Council</u></p> <p><i>Implemented. A smaller, lay member only Executive took up office in December 2007.</i></p> <p><u>Regional Councils</u></p> <p><i>The CEC Task Group proposes that with effect from the 2009 Regional Council elections, Regional Councils shall comprise elected members, calculated as follows:</i></p> <p><i>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</i></p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>These proposals to go out to Regional Councils for consultation with final recommendations to Congress 2008.</i></p> <p><u>Regional Council Elections</u></p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><u>Regional Committees</u></p> <p><i>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</i></p> <p><i>Following consultation with Regions this matter is still under review. There are a number of considerations to take into account and there is no consensus at present on the best way forward. Consultation will continue up until Congress 2008 where the outcome will be reported.</i></p>
16.	<p>The CEC will establish a working party to review the rulebook (at an appropriate time) following Congress 2005.</p> <p><i>Implemented. Rulebook Working Party Report going to Congress 2008.</i></p>
17.	<i>Implemented</i>

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. <i>Work is ongoing</i>
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. <i>Work is ongoing to identify further areas for cost savings. We have embarked on a programme of reviewing all supplier contracts and re-tendering and consolidating them to achieve savings</i>
20.	<i>Implemented</i>
21.	The CEC Finance Committee will conduct a review of branch commission payments. <i>Implemented. CEC Rule amendment adopted by Congress 2007</i>
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. <i>The Finance Committee is reviewing the qualification for benefits and level of benefits and the Finance Report to Congress 2008 will include a report on Benefits.</i>
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. <i>Work is ongoing. Paperless direct debit has allowed us to introduce web-site recruitment and joining by telephone.</i>

Congress 2007 referred the following Motion to the CEC

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 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

The Deputy General Secretary wrote to Regions in September 2007 suggesting two options for Regional Councils to consider to bring these election cycles into line:

Option 1 – *The Regional Council elected in 2009 only holds office for two years; the Regional Council elected in 2011 holds office for four years as will Regional Councils elected thereafter. This brings the elections into line in 2011.*

Option 2 – *The Regional Council elected in 2009 holds office for three years; the Regional Council elected in 2012 holds office for three years; the Regional Council elected in 2015 holds office for four years as will Regional Councils elected thereafter. This option gives the interim Regional Councils a longer term of office than in option 1 and brings the elections into line in 2015.*

Following consultation with Regions the CEC at its 11 March 2008 meeting received feedback from the Regions that no consensus could be reached. The CEC therefore AGREED to maintain the status quo and make no change to the rules covering the timing of CEC or Regional Council elections.

NATIONAL ORGANISING DEPARTMENT REPORT

Two years of sustained membership growth

As the GMB@Work plan has been rolled out, the union has enjoyed a period of growth in the number of workers joining us and a reduction in the numbers leaving us, producing two full years of sustained overall membership growth.

In January 2008 the union's membership broke through the 600,000 member barrier for the first time in many years.

National Organising Team

The National Organising Department continues to be steered by the National Organising Team, made up of a senior representative from each region. The NOT exists to make sure the GMB@Work strategy is steered by the Regions acting collectively and is based on what works.

The NOT:

- Provides full membership and recruitment information to regional officials
- Consults regional officials on matters of strategy and best practice
- Agrees detailed strategy on the National Projects in the Education, Retail and Care Sectors
- Oversees organising within the Security Sector
- Agrees and promotes Best Practice on organising and recruitment and training
- Oversees the implementation of new Stewards Training Programmes
- Makes policy recommendations to the Senior Management Team.

On the recommendation of the NOT, Congress 2006 adopted 38 new policies on recruitment, retention, representation, organising and training. These are contained in the GMB@Work Special Reports 2006 and 2007 available on the GMB website. All but 3 of these policies have been successfully implemented and these will be the priority for 2008/9.

Policy 14. Regional Consolidation targets to be identified using GMB Organisers own workplace maps and centrally produced information on membership levels, existence of check off, and numbers of postholders.

Policy 21. Regional Training programmes to be reviewed and standardised, shifting the focus from dependency on officers to workplace organisation

Policy 22. Regional Training programmes to be open for entry at every level to allow retraining of Reps in targeted workplaces.

New Training for Stewards and the Workplace Organisers Toolkit

The last year has seen a major change in how we train our new representatives. Each newly elected GMB Rep now attends a 2 day course on workplace organisation within a few weeks of receiving formal Initial Support Training from their GMB official. These courses are run by GMB Organisers who teach Reps about workplace mapping, finding collective issues in the workplace and producing workplace newsletters.

At the end of the course each GMB Representative produces their own Workplace Organising Plan which goes to their GMB officer for joint action and follow up.

Similar courses will be rolled out in every region during 2008 for existing GMB Representatives and Branch Secretaries.

Everyone attending such a course will be issued with a copy of the new GMB Workplace Organisers Toolkit. The Toolkit sets out the GMB approach and policy on recruiting, representing, retaining, advising and organising our members in the workplace.

Consolidating our membership – the next challenge

Much has been achieved since congress 2006 and many things have changed in how the GMB approaches the recruitment, retention and representation of our members. We have ended pointless competition between GMB offices, regions and branches. We have discarded the sales culture and removed the Recruitment Officer function, moving from Recruitment Teams to Organising Teams

We have made direct communications between regional officials to share best practice central to our work. We have organised ourselves better to have a more effective, focussed and disciplined recruitment strategy in each part of the country. We have changed our approach to training our Stewards – putting increasing the membership and strong workplace organisation first and making sure training is delivered by GMB officials with real experience of organising workplaces.

But hundreds of thousands of workers who are not GMB members are in contact with the GMB every day and enjoy the benefits of working in a GMB recognised workplace. Industrial opportunities arise in every workplace every week for us to recruit and organise these workers.

Adopting detailed Organising Plans to assist Officers and Reps increase our membership in semi organised workplaces will be the next big challenge for the GMB@Work strategy.

Branch Organising Plans

In many industries our Branches have a central role to play in supporting GMB Reps develop and implement their Workplace Organising Plans.

A new model Branch Organising Plan is in development and will be launched in 2008/9. The Branch Organising Plan will clarify for Branches the information needed by Regional Committees to assess the support they provide.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

The first and main task of the GMB National Communications Department is to generate as much positive press, broadcast and media column inches for the work of GMB as is possible. This is done via press releases and campaigns to the UK's 1,300 geographically based media outlets that report the daily and weekly news. The Department also targets over 3,000 specialist media outlets that deal with industrial sectors and consumer interest. Our press coverage is assisted by the fact that GMB has two methods of carrying out its day to day business with employers. The first is for the Union to deal in private through correspondence, and at meetings with members and employers where the employer is in good standing with the Union. If this system breaks down or if the employer is not in good standing with GMB and where GMB cannot reach a position of regular access and contact can be established the Union's governing bodies may make the decision to do the business in public. At that point the department will issue regular press releases which deal with all aspects of that employers business. For the most part these releases are news worthy and generate coverage for the Union. It is GMB's experience that after a period many employers prefer to revert to doing business with the Union in private and settle with GMB.

The Department is tasked with providing support to regions and other departments in producing publications, membership mailings, on-line surveys and newsletters. The vast majority of this work is now carried out on behalf of the National Organising Team to support their work with the national targets.

The Department has also responded to the Regions needs for an increasing number of publications and web pages translated into many languages.

CAMPAIGNS

The Department supported GMB campaigns against the AA, Remploy, Bakkavor and other employers with advice on campaign strategy and organised events and press releases and set up campaign specific websites through Union Web.

Remploy

GMB members employed by Remploy have been badly let down by the Labour government. It is true to say that the members who lost their jobs in April 2008 felt betrayed by that government. GMB succeeded at the Labour Party conference 2007 in getting GMB's motion adopted as government policy. There were two aspects to this policy. The first reversed the policy of ending supported employment and endorsed the question of choice for disabled workers. The second established that public procurement would be used to keep all 83 factories open. Six weeks later the then Secretary of State Peter Hain went back on that deal and announced the closure/merger of 28 factories with the loss of 2,000 disabled workers jobs. This followed a long campaign supported by the department including the month long Remploy Crusade to drum up work for the factories. The campaign slogan was that 5 pence in every £100 of public procurement money already being spent would secure the future of all 83 factories. Although the trade unions were not successful in maintaining all 83 factories it is very important that the campaign continues to get public procurement work to support the remaining 53 factories. The change in the EU procurement directive which allows public work to be given to supported workshops has yet to make a major change. As we go to press the department has yet to discuss the strategy that needs to be followed on this on-going campaign.

Bakkavor

This employer has 13,000 workers in the UK providing ready meals and prepared vegetables and salads for the main supermarket groups. It has a major production facility in North West London employing 2,500 mainly migrant workers. GMB had recruited members in the workplace but the employer refused to deal with the Union and in particular GMB London Region's concerns about health and safety. It was decided to do the business in public. In press releases GMB predicted that the poor health and safety record at the three Wembley sites would convert into public hygiene issues. This came true with an outbreak of salmonella in February 2007. The department helped to stage demonstrations outside the head offices of M&S and Tesco which received wide publicity. At GMB Congress 2007 the General Secretary announced that the then Managing Director had lost his job. The incoming management had experience of working with GMB and brought about a change of heart. GMB London Region were offered access to the three sites from 19th November 2007, for 3 weeks, following which the recognition agreement would be signed with the management if GMB was successful in recruiting the members. Following this agreement GMB went back to doing the business in private and an up date is to be found in GMB London Region's report.

AA

The AA campaign arose from de-recognition of GMB and the sacking of GMB disabled members by the new private equity owners in 2005. The campaign was launched by GMB Congress 2005 adjourning the Congress to protest outside the AA office on the banks of the Tyne in Newcastle upon Tyne. The campaign did not attract major media coverage until private equity buyers moved in spring 2007 to take over Boots and Sainsbury. At the point the hidden tax breaks given to the multi millionaire elite who run the private equity industry exposed by GMB using the AA as an example became front page news. During the first half of 2007 this campaign generated over 200 million mentions of GMB in print media and an equal number in broadcast media and internet fronted by Paul Maloney. One of the by products of this campaign was the decision by the government to increase the tax rates on Capital Gains from 10% to 18% for private equity. There was also an inquiry by the Treasury Select Committee to which GMB gave evidence. To date the recommendations of the Treasury Select Committee report which calls for more scrutiny and the ending of tax breaks for private equity has not been actioned. Another by product is that overseas people who are resident in the UK but are exempt from paying tax on their overseas wealth, the so called 'non-domiciled' face the prospect of a levy of £30,000 per annum to maintain this status after they have lived here for seven years. This has generated howls of protest from

this well heeled elite who feel that paying taxes is for little people.

The media campaign forced the then private equity owner Damon Buffini of Permira to the negotiating table with the General Secretary Paul Kenny. At that meeting Damon Buffini agreed to re-recognise GMB when the TUC had verified that we had the number of members that we claimed. During this period of verification the private equity owners merged the AA and SAGA together saddling the combined organization with £4.8 billions of debt. On Monday 25th June 2007 Paul Maloney, GMB National Secretary commented on the news that the AA had been merged at a value of £3.4 billion said "By our reckoning, the managing partners in Permira and CVC stand to make £300 million having owned the AA for less than 3 years. The Chief executive, Tim Parker, we reckon will get £40 million out of this deal. This shows the extent to which we have entered into a Casino economy. This money was made on the back of 3,500 sacked workers, cuts in the pay of the call centre staff, the elongation of the working day for the patrols and a decline in the service to the customers. GMB will want to talk to the new owners, SAGA, about reversing these cuts and getting back to reasonable working hours and improving services for the customers."

In July 2007 the new owners SAGA replied to a letter from Paul Kenny reminding them of the Buffini agreement to announce that they were going back on the deal. GMB's response has been to set up a 'chicken farm' in the village in Kent where the new managing director Andrew Goodsell lives. During 2008 a series of bird related events are planned at the 'chicken farm' to demonstrate the chickens coming home to roost. GMB also circulated a model motion to pensioner organisations calling for action against SAGA for their refusal to do business with GMB. This campaign is still on-going and there is a long term plan to get the pensioners movement not to do business with SAGA unless the company changes its stance on recognising GMB.

PRESS

The Department aims to issues at least fifteen press releases a week. The variety and scope of the work of the Union mean that this target is often exceeded. The Department has issued hundreds of press releases on the work of the Union and its campaigns. All GMB press releases are available at www.gmb.org.uk. GMB activists and post holders can sign up to have all press releases emailed to them as they are released which can be a source of information for Branch and workplace newsletters and websites. The Department continues to help to raise the Union's profile in all three GMB Sections and has assisted with specific campaigns in specific regions of the UK. The department issues regular press releases of GMB studies of detailed analysis of official figures for employment, disabilities and the performance of the public services and a range of other issues. Each study generates a national press release and thirteen regional variations which generate widespread media coverage.

The Department continues to assist all GMB Regional Organisers in issuing press releases on disputes and ensuring that they get to the relevant media outlets.

The department is assisting the Professional Drivers National Committee in drawing attention to attacks by passengers on licensed private hire drivers (mini cabs drivers). The department is also assisting GMB members working in the Cash and Valuables in Transit (CVIT) security sector with their fight for measures to increase their safety at work following the increasing number of violent attacks by robbers.

The department continues to supply reaction from GMB to major political and industrial developments. The department continues to co-operates with media outlets doing in-depth features and documentaries on subject of interest to GMB members.

GMB PUBLICATIONS

The department to produce increasing amounts of material for the National Organising Team (NOT) as the Union's new organising agenda progresses. The move to the Workplace Organisers Tool Kit and has removed the need to produce many separate publications which can become various section of the Tool kit.

The GMB Notice Board Tool kit has also been designed to provide activist with the basic tools for workplace organisation and profiling.

The following is a list of the GMB publications produced by the Department since last years General Secretary's Report: June 2007 - February 2008.

NOT

ASDA Newsletters x 6 - December 2007 version translated in to 15 Different languages.

ASDA Equal Pay Questionnaire & covering letter

ASDA Skelmersdale A5 leaflet

Reprints: ASDA Newsletters x2

GMB Official 2x Newsletter

Southern Cross 2x Newsletters

Reprints: Southern Cross Newsletter x1

Professional Drivers leaflet

GMB Workplace Organisers Toolkit – A4 Ring Binder and leaves

GMB@School 1x Newsletter - 9 Regional variations

GMB@WORK

GMB Workplace Notice Board Toolkits

Initial kits were completed before Congress 2007, we also had 3 retail posters produced for Congress 2007.

5x Health & Safety posters Re-vamp of headers and footers

Other

GMB Shop Stewards Credential Cards

Local Government Pensions Guide

GMB Pensions Handbook – Printed and on CD ROM

Reprints: Health & Safety Leaflets x7

CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

Remploy Crusade – Posters, postcards & stickers flyers

Excelcare Homes Essex – Three wise Monkey leaflet

AA Professor Sparrow leaflets

Say yes to Heathrow postcards

MERCHANDISE

We continue to produce campaign merchandise for rallies and demonstrations as well as having a various generic items that can be ordered via the website or the Communications Department. All GMB merchandise is produced in line with Congress policy, ethically sourced from Union friendly companies and where possible sourced in the UK.

COMMUNICATIONS

In the period since the report to GMB Congress 2007 the GMB National Communications Department's work has been in line and in response to the direction of the GMB Special Report: A Framework Way Forward. The Department has responded to the demands of the report by developing a new range of communications systems.

New GMB National Website

At the time of writing this report the updated GMB National website www.gmb.org.uk is due to go live in April 2008. With a 'Member Only' area and special facilities for post holders and activists it is designed to improve most areas of member/ union communication.

In line with Congress policy GMB Regions have supplied the Department with details companies and the goods and services that they supply. These are available on the national website and the information is kept up to date by the Regions themselves.

GMB All Member Magazines

The initial edition of the first ever GMB magazines to be mailed to all GMB members homes was published in March 2008. Its has an innovative format of nine separate versions, one for each GMB

Region, with 16 pages of their own regional news and a common 16 page central section with national news. The £0.6 million funding for this major project was achieved by pulling together all the money that GMB Regions and National Office were already spending on member magazines. This, together with paid advertising raised with display adverts and inserts in the magazines enabled GMB to sign-up with a first class magazine provider, FuturePlus. There will be three editions each year. The Regional content for each edition is co-ordinated by Regional contacts in each GMB Region.

Texting

The national texting facility is used regularly by one GMB Region. It is also used as a campaigning tool where a steering committee is in place and needs to be kept informed of progress, events, meeting and talks.

Email

The national email facility is used mainly by GMB Communication Department and infrequently by some Regions. The lack of a complete record of member's emails limits the use of this system but as more members go on-line the usefulness of this facility will increase and keep members better informed and save the Union money.

On-line Surveys

This facility is increasingly used to canvass the views of members and to encourage them to inter act with the Union on various issues. It allowing members to give us their views on many issues and allowing the Communications Department to capture specific data helping to build a comprehensive data base of relevant details and information. One of the first uses was to widen the scope to enable GMB members to nominate GMB health and safe representatives for the GMB Daniel Dennis Award at GMB Congress 2008.

EXECUTIVE POLICY

As part of the restructuring exercise at National Office, the bargaining support roles and sectional policy previously provided by the Research Department are now delivered by Research and Policy Officers who have joined the new Section Teams. The national policy and governance duties are now carried out by the Executive Policy Section of the General Secretary's office.

The Executive Policy Section fulfils two roles:

1. Supporting the General Secretary in matters related to the Governance of the Union. The Executive Policy Section services a number of internal bodies and provides support for the General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary, CEC and National Officials at Congress and CEC meetings, TUC and Labour Party Conferences.
2. Developing union policy, raising the GMB profile and strengthening GMB influence by providing specialist advice, preparing proposals, drafting consultations and liaising with contacts in Government and other relevant industrial political bodies in the UK and the European Union.

The section is staffed by Dolores O'Donoghue and Ida Clemo, Executive Policy Officers who work closely with colleagues at National Office, and are involved in joint work with colleagues in the Pensions, Health and Safety and Legal Departments, and in the Brussels office. They also work directly with colleagues at regional level, and represent the union across the policy-making spectrum.

The Section is heavily involved in the annual Congress Programme; Ida and Dolores are members of the Congress Working Party and are involved in the planning stages for Congress which commence in July each year.

This year the planning has presented the new challenge of implementing the Task Group recommendations agreed at Congress 2007 and incorporating the Section Conferences into the Congress Programme.

Dolores and Ida work closely with members of the General Secretary's Department, particularly Steve Short, Executive Officer in assisting with developing the framework and infrastructure for Congress 2008 and providing advice and briefings for national officials and section staff.

The Section co-ordinates policy work for GMB Congress and prepares the preliminary and final agendas; advises the CEC on policy stances; co-ordinates compositing of motions; finalises the programme and President's running order; co-ordinates and drafts the President's address and provides support and advice to the President's platform at Congress.

At Congress 2007 the department processed 292 motions, supported 61 CEC speakers with speech drafts and policy advice, programmed the attendance of Guest speakers including the incoming Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, the European Commissioner, Peter Mandelson, and the candidates for the Labour Party Deputy Leadership election and had the honour of being on the platform to greet Mrs Desai, the heroine of the Grunwick dispute.

Dolores, in conjunction with Martin Smith, National Officer, provides the Secretariat to the newly formed CEC Organisation Sub-Committee; plans and organises the agenda and business for meetings, advises the Chair on policy matters and ensures that decisions are progressed.

1. Governance Matters

Dolores and Ida attend all CEC meetings and report to the CEC on policy matters, particularly in relation to Congress and on voluntary recognition agreements.

They produce the CEC Action on Decisions document for the September CEC meeting which recommends action to implement the will of Congress, and refer all decisions of Congress to the relevant officials and senior staff, and are responsible for ensuring that these are reported upon in the General Secretary's Report in line with motion 52 passed at Congress 2005:

Congress, we request that at sector conferences and Congress, delegates and regions are given an update on previous motions adopted and what action has been taken in agreement with the resolution adopted. We feel this will enable regions and branches to track how specific motions are progressing through the process – giving us more accountability.

The Section has been responsible for ensuring that Congress 2007 decisions are carried forward for action as listed in the Report on Motions Section of the General Secretary's Report from:

Special Reports

- Progress Update A Framework for the Future of the GMB: Moving Forward
- GMB@Work Workplace Organisation
- Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide Bill
- The Green Agenda and GMB

CEC Statements

- Private Equity and Venture Capitalists
- Progressing Equality Issues in the GMB

Referred Motions and Carried Motions

Dolores also provides the Secretariat for the regular meetings of the Senior Management Team, and works closely with the General Secretary on progressing SMT recommendations through the union's decision-making processes.

2. Policy Matters

The Executive Policy Officers work with the General Secretary to ensure that GMB policies are developed, monitored and implemented in accordance with the policies and values of the union as determined by the Central Executive Council and annual Congress.

They are responsible for cross-union policy matters; particular areas of work in the past year have focused on the removal of the UK opt out, the extension of the statutory minimum holiday entitlement and supporting the TUC's campaign for extra Bank Holidays.

Ida Clemo has policy responsibility for the National Minimum Wage, and co-ordinated the GMB's evidence to the Low Pay Commission. Ida represented GMB on the TUC delegation to give oral Evidence in support of our submission. She answered questions on the accommodation offset, young workers, migrant workers and enforcement

The Executive Policy Officers co-ordinate GMB's response to consultations and liaise with government departments, union colleagues, specialist advisors and interested parties to ensure that GMB's voice is heard in the implementation of regulatory change. For example in 2007/8 Dolores worked closely with the TUC, Kathleen Walker-Shaw in the Brussels office and Mick Balfour in the Commercial Services Section who led on the GMB's response to the implementation of the EU Services Directive.

Their former Research colleague Charles King, now in the Manufacturing Section team, continues to lead on specific policy issues and represents the GMB on the joint Defra and TUC Trade Unions Sustainable Action Committee (TUSDAC) and is a member of the European Funded CAWA research group looking at the problems and needs of older workers post retirement age.

Dolores and Ida support the GMB delegation to the TUC Conference: provide advice to the General Secretary on the Preliminary Agenda, produce briefings and reports and draft GMB motions and speeches. They ensure that the GMB Motions to TUC are taken through the CEC and Organisation sub committee, and on to the TUC. At TUC 2007 they supported GMB's delegation, collaborated with other unions on seconding motions, identified and negotiated to ensure GMB's delegates were able to make interventions and speak.

The Section also provides advice and assistance to the delegation at Labour Party Conference together with their former Research colleague Charles King who provides excellent advice and support gained by a lifetime of experience and knowledge.

The GMB had a particularly successful profile at TUC Congress 2007, where the GMB was at the forefront of debate. The GMB motions on Remploi and the EU Reform Treaty were carried, as were the GMB's amendment which formed part of Composite 6 on the Single Equality Act.

The GMB had 24 speakers at TUC, seconded 9 motions, raised a question on the General Council Report and put questions to the Minister John Hutton and Richard Lambert of the CBI.

Paul Kenny	M71 - EU Reform Treaty	Move
Phil Davies	M31 - Remploi	Move
Stephanie McCaig	Question to Richard Lambert, CBI	Question
George Emmerson	GC Para 6.3 National Skills Strategy	Question
Cath Murphy	Question for John Hutton	Question
Georgia Cruikshank	M54 - Fires in High Rise Dwellings	Second
Keith Hazlewood	M33 - Manufacturing and Globalisation	Second

Maria Ludkin	C8 - Private Equity	Second
Mary Turner	M50 - Health of Public Sector Workforce	Second
Debbie Coulter	M51 - Civil Service/NDPB Dispute & Welfare Reform	Second
Sharon Holder	M56 - 2006 NHS Survey	Second
John McDonnell	M20 - Shrewsbury Pickets	Second
Lorraine Parker	M 21 - Organising and Independent Trade Unionism	Second
Andy Worth	EM1 - Defence of Public Services	Second
Gary Doolan	Composite 11	Speak in support
John Toomey	M45 - Child Poverty	Speak in support
Roy Dunnett	C3 - Employment and Trade Union Rights	Speak in support
Rowena Hayward	C6 - Single Equality Act	Speak in support
Malcolm Sage	M36 - Climate Change	Speak in support
Mick Rix	M41 -Transport	Speak in support
Rachelle Wilkins	M1 - Migrant Workers	Speak in support
Lena Sharp	C17 - Colombia	Speak in support
Jude Brimble	M79 - Abuse of Technology	Speak in support
Richard Robinson	M63 - Criminal Justice Policy	Speak in support

Of the 69 GMB delegates, 33 were women.

3. Special Projects

The department assists the General Secretary by undertaking special projects and duties as directed. In 2007 this has primarily involved providing assistance to the Remploy task Group and producing presentations, briefings, statistics, profiles or research intelligence for the General Secretary to use in internal or external meetings.

4. Information Systems and Other Resources for Bargaining & Representation

Ida advises Regions and National Office on Information Systems and key resources to be used for bargaining support, recruitment initiatives and providing financial information. She produced the monthly & quarterly reports for the CEC on Membership and Recruitment until April 2007 when she handed this function over to the National Admin Unit.

In the last half of 2007, selected GMB Officers have been provided with laptops as part of an initial rollout phase. Ida has been training some of these officers on the key information resources used within the union for company research and bargaining support.

In addition to this, the Executive Policy Section has made improvements to shared access to internal GMB documents and are working with the National Organising Team to produce a Recognitions Agreement database to be accessible by all Regions.

The Executive Policy Officers would like to express their thanks to all the GMB colleagues at National Office who have assisted and advised them in establishing and progressing the work of this new section of the General Secretary's office.

REPORT ON MOTIONS AND CEC SPECIAL REPORTS AND STATEMENTS CARRIED BY THE 2007 CONGRESS

The CEC reviewed all motions and reports/statements carried by the 2007 Congress and decided what action to take to implement the will of Congress. In each case the appropriate action fell into one or more of the following categories:

- All Rule Amendments carried by Congress are being actioned by the General Secretary + Legal Dept.
- A † sign indicates that Congress supported a motion in the light of a CEC qualification.

CEC	To note and take into account in its deliberations (such as in deciding what issues to press and how to vote at TUC Congress and Labour Party Conference), and to pass issues for action to the relevant CEC committee.
GS / DGS	To be noted, actioned or taken into account by the General Secretary (GS) or Deputy General Secretary (DGS) and the appropriate department(s) of National Office or the National Administration Unit (NAU).
Region(s)	For appropriate action by the relevant Region(s)/ Regional Secretaries.
NOT	For appropriate action by the National Organising Team
SMT	For appropriate action by the Senior Management Team
SNS	For appropriate action by the relevant Section National Secretary/ National Officer.

REPORTS AND STATEMENTS CARRIED/APPROVED

General Secretary's Report	GS
Annual Accounts and Auditors Report	GS, National Office Finance Dept
CEC Special Report: Progress Update A Framework for the Future of the GMB: Moving Forward	CEC, CEC Task Group, Equalities Review Group, GS Dept and SMT, National Organising Team, Section National Secretaries, Regions, CEC Recruitment & Organisation, Finance, Communications and Training Committees, Legal Dept and HR Department.
CEC Special Report: GMB @ Work: Workplace Organisation	CEC, GS and SMT, National Organising Team, Section National Secretaries, Regions, CEC Recruitment & Organisation, Training Committee, NAU, Communications Dept, all GMB employees and branches.
CEC Special Report: Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide Bill	CEC, CEC Political Committee, Health & Environment Dept
CEC Special Report: The Green Agenda & GMB: Climate Change, Global Warming, Sustainable Development	CEC, GS and Senior Management Team, Health & Environment Dept, Section National Secretaries
CEC Statement: Private Equity and Venture Capitalists	CEC, GS and SMT, CEC Political Committee, National Off Communications & Pensions Depts
CEC Report on Progressing Equality Issues in the GMB	CEC, GS, DGS, CEC Recruitment & Organisation Committee, NERAC

MOTIONS CARRIED BY CONGRESS

UNION ORGANISATION			
CECRA293	Rule 17		RULE CHANGE
CECRA294	Rule 17A	Officials - Authority Over	RULE CHANGE
CECRA295	Rule 17B	Organisers	RULE CHANGE
CECRA296	Rule 17B	Organisers	RULE CHANGE
CECRA297	Rule 17E	National Officials	RULE CHANGE
CECRA298	Rule 17E	National Officials	RULE CHANGE
CECRA299	Rule 17F	Officials- Disciplinary Procedures	RULE CHANGE
CECRA300	Rule 17F	Officials- Disciplinary Procedures	RULE CHANGE
CECRA301	Rule 17F	Officials- Disciplinary Procedures	RULE CHANGE
CECRA302	Rule 17G	Organiser Election Procedure	RULE CHANGE
CECRA303	Rule 17G	Organiser Election Procedure	RULE CHANGE
UNION ORGANISATION: CONGRESS			
Motion 6	Motions Passed at Congress		CEC, GS
UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL			
Motion 8	Communications		CEC, SMT, Communications Dept
†Motion 12	New Year's Honours List (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)		CEC, GS
UNION ORGANISATION: RECRUITMENT & ORGANISATION			
Motion 13	Migrant Workers		CEC, NOT
Motion 15	2012 London Olympics		CEC, NOT
UNION ORGANISATION: REPRESENTATION & ACCOUNTABILITY			
†Motion 19	Accountability (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)		Section National Secretaries (All), Regional Secretaries
UNION ORGANISATION: FINANCE & CONTRIBUTIONS			
†Motion 21	Branch Recruitment Plan (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)		CEC, Finance Committee, Regional Secretaries
Motion 22	Lay Member Expenses (Carried CEC Stance was OPPOSE)		CEC, SMT, Finance Committee
CECRA304	Rule 47	Contributions	RULE CHANGE
CECRA305	Rule 47	Contributions	RULE CHANGE
CECRA306	Rule 67	Political Fund	RULE CHANGE
CECRA307	Rule 67A	Political Fund (Northern Ireland)	RULE CHANGE
CECRA310	Rule 36	Branch Allocation	RULE CHANGE
CECRA311	Rule 28	Central Fund	RULE CHANGE
UNION ORGANISATION: UNION BENEFITS			
†Motion 30	Funeral Benefit (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)		RULE CHANGE

CECRA308	Rule 55 Disablement Grants	RULE CHANGE
CECRA309	Rule 59 Fatal Accident Benefit	RULE CHANGE
UNION ORGANISATION: EDUCATION & TRAINING		
Motion 33	Shop Steward Training – GMB@WORK - Organising for Growth	NOT
Motion 34	Branch Training	Finance Committee, NOT
Motion 35	Union Learning Project – Potential	Services & Training Committee
UNION ORGANISATION: EQUALITY & DIVERSITY		
†Motion 38	Equality and Diversity Issues (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	CEC, DGS, Equalities Review Working Group, Section National Secretaries (All)
Comp 1	Equality Duties	DGS, Equalities Review Working Group
†Motion 41	LGBT (SHOUT) (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	DGS, Equalities Review Working Group
Motion 45	Equal Rights & Race Relations Committee	DGS, Equalities Review Working Group
Comp 2	Young Members	DGS, Equalities Review Working Group
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK		
Comp 3	Asbestos Compensation	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
Motion 55	Asbestos Waste Disposal	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
Motion 56	Health and Safety	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
Motion 57	Occupational and Environmental Cancers	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
Motion 58	Corporate Manslaughter	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
Motion 59	Assaults on Airport Workers	GS/ Health & Environment Dept, SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 60	Violence at Work	GS/ Health & Environment Dept, SNS (Public Services)
Motion 61	Health & Safety – Agency and Migrant Workers	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
Motion 62	Working Hours in Safety Critical Jobs	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: PENSIONS & RETIREMENT		
Motion 63	Pensionable Age	GS/ Pensions Dept
Motion 64	Pensions	GS/ Pensions Dept
Motion 66	A New and Fairer Pension Scheme	GS/ Pensions Dept
Motion 67	Pensions	GS/ Pensions Dept
Motion 68	Pensions	GS/ Pensions Dept
Motion 69	Pension Changes for Former FTA's	GS/ Pensions Dept
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: RIGHTS AT WORK		
Comp 4	Employment Rights	GS/ Political
Motion 72	Employment Statutory Rights from Day One to all Employees	GS/ Political
Motion 73	Employment	GS/ Political
Comp 5	Restoration of Trade Union Rights	GS/ Political / Legal
Motion 79	Trade Union Recognition	GS/ Political / Legal
Motion 81	Imposition of Contracts	GS/ Section National Secretaries
Motion 82	Job Security for Ex Pats	GS/ Political, SNS (Public Services, Commercial Services)

†Motion 83	Insolvency (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Political
Comp 6	Agency Workers	GS/ Political
Motion 86	Holidays	GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 87	Holiday Entitlement (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 88	Statutory Holidays (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 89	Redundancy Act (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy, Legal Dept
Motion 90	48 Hour Week	GS/ Executive Policy, Political
†Motion 91	Age Discrimination & Law of Unintended Consequences (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy, Legal Dept
Motion 92	Age Discrimination	GS/ Executive Policy, Legal Dept
Motion 93	National Minimum Wage	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 94	Employment Laws	GS/ Executive Policy
Comp 7	Minimum Wage- Age Discrimination	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 97	London Living Wage/Minimum Wage	GS/ Political
†Motion 98	Two Tier Workforce (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Political, Legal Dept
Motion 99	TUPE Regulations	GS/ Legal Dept
Motion 100	Trade Union Legal Support	GS/ Legal Dept
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: MIGRANT WORKERS		
Comp 8	Migrant Labour	NOT, GS/Political
Motion 102	Migrant Workers	CEC, NOT, GS/ Political, GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 104	Foreign Labour	GS, Section National Secretaries (All)
Motion 105	Migrant Workers	GS/ Health & Environment Dept
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: COMMERCIAL SERVICES		
<i>EM1</i>	<i>Contract Changes in ASDA</i>	SNS (Commercial Services)
<i>EM5</i>	<i>Gas Distribution Pension</i>	SNS (Commercial Services)
Comp 9	Private Equity- Venture Capitalists	CEC, GS, CEC Political Committee, National Office Communications
Motion 108	Automobile Association	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 109	Women in Security	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 110	Compensation Scheme – Security Industry	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 111	'O' Licenses	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 112	Maritime & Ports Policy - The GMB	SNS (Commercial Services)
Comp 10	Balanced Energy Policy	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 115	Energy Policy	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 117	Domestic Fuel Prices	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 118	Water Charges Non-Payment	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 119	Coal and New Technology	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 120	Profits from Property Sales	SNS (Commercial Services)
†Motion 121	Recruitment in the Retail Sector	NOT, SNS (Commercial Services)

	(Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	
Motion 122	Recruitment & Organisation in Asda Stores	NOT, SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 123	ASDA : Health and Safety	SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 124	Easter Sunday to be a Paid Holiday for Supermarket Employees	GS/ Executive Policy, SNS (Commercial Services)
Motion 125	Multi-National Takeovers	SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: MANUFACTURING		
<i>EM2</i>	<i>Remploy</i>	GS, SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
Comp 11	Save Remploy	GS, SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
Motion 129	Defence Investment	SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
†Motion 130	Royal Navy Downsizing (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
Motion 131	Shipbuilding	SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
Comp 12	Manufacturing and Public Procurement	SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
†Comp 13	Transfer of Manufacturing Jobs and the Impact on the Environment (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political, Health & Environment Dept
Motion 137	Consultation	SNS (Manufacturing), GS/Political
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: PUBLIC SERVICES		
Motion 140	Terms and Conditions	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 141	Equal Pay (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	Section National Secretaries (All), GS/ Political
Motion 142	Equal Pay – Funding	GS, SNS (Public Services)
Motion 143	Equal Pay	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 145	Outsourced Contract Monitoring	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 146	Two Tier Workforce/Code of Practice on Workforce Matters	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 147	Contractors Admitted Body Status (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 14	Keep Public Services Public	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 152	Contractors In Public Services (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 153	PFI	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 154	PFI Profits	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 156	School Support Staff	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 159	School Support Staff & Term Time Working	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 160	School Kitchen Staff (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 161	Free School Meals for all Primary School children	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 162	Local Government	SNS(Public Services), GS/Political
Motion 164	Tied Accommodation	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 165	Undermining the GMB Recognition Rights (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)

INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: THE ECONOMY		
Comp 15	Economic Growth and Pay Inequality	GS/ Executive Policy & GS/ Political
Motion 173	Pay Freezes	Section National Secretaries (All)
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY : THE ENVIRONMENT		
Comp 16	Global Warming and GMB Environmental Policy	CEC Environmental Task Group
Motion 176	Recycling	GS/ Political
POLITICAL: LABOUR PARTY		
Comp 17	Labour Party Leadership and Deputy Leadership	GS/ Political
Motion 180	Labour/GMB Relationship	GS/ Political
Motion 181	Relationship with the Labour Party	GS/ Political
Motion 183	Labour Party Trade Union Link	GS/ Political
Motion 184	Labour Funding	GS/ Political
Comp 18	Implementation of the Warwick Agreement	GS/ Political
Motion 189	Labour Party Conference	GS/ Political
†Motion 191	Make Labour MP's more Accountable (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Political
Comp 19	"New" Labour	GS/ Political
Motion 195	Abolishing of the Political Levy Ballot	GS/ Political
POLITICAL: DEMOCRACY & CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM		
Comp 20	Opposition to an Independent Scotland	GS/ Political
Motion 198	House of Lords	GS/ Political
Motion 199	Ministerial Salaries and Benefits	GS/ Political
POLITICAL : RACISM & FASCISM		
Motion 202	The BNP	GS/ Political
SOCIAL POLICY: CRIMINAL JUSTICE		
Motion 205	Prostitution	GS/ Executive Policy
SOCIAL POLICY: EDUCATION		
Motion 208	Education	GS/ Political
Motion 210	Personal Finance	GS/ Executive Policy, NOT
Motion 211	Academies	GS/ Political
†Motion 212	Adult Learning and Funding (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 213	Skills and Lifelong Learning (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
†Comp 21	Apprenticeships and Skills Shortages (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 216	Open University	GS/ Executive Policy
Comp 22	ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Funding	GS/ Executive Policy

SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL		
Motion 219	Animal Welfare Bill	GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 221	Criminal Records Bureau (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 222	Child Support Agency	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 223	Bank Charges	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 224	Public Protection in Bankruptcy	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 225	National Insurance Contributions	GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 226	Disability Access (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	DGS
SOCIAL POLICY: HOUSING		
Motion 227	Housing Market	GS/ Political
Motion 228	Council Housing	GS/ Political
Motion 229	Social Housing	GS/ Political
Motion 230	Key Worker Housing Status	GS/ Political
Motion 231	Affordable Housing	GS/ Political
Motion 232	Council Tax Banding	GS/ Political
Motion 233	Land Tax	GS/ Political
SOCIAL POLICY: NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE		
<i>EM4</i>	<i>NHS</i>	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 23	NHS	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 24	National Health Service Finances	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 25	NHS Job Cuts	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 26	NHS Cleaning Contracts- MRSA	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 243	National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence (NICE)	Health & Environment Dept
Comp 27	Prescription Medicines and Postcode Lottery	Health & Environment Dept
Motion 246	NHS Information Technology (IT)	SNS (Public Services)
SOCIAL POLICY: TRANSPORT		
†Motion 248	Stansted Expansion (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Commercial Services)
†Motion 249	Rail Closures and Fare Pricing (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	CEC, GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 251	DVLA Pay As You Go (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
†Motion 253	Speed Cameras (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy
Motion 254	Road Survey	Health & Environment Dept
Motion 255	Road Survey	Health & Environment Dept
Motion 256	British Waterways	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 257	2012 Olympics (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	GS/ Executive Policy

SOCIAL POLICY : WELFARE RIGHTS & SERVICES		
†Comp 28	Care Home Standards and Inspections (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 260	Nursing and Care Homes	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 262	Residential Care for the Elderly	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 263	Care for the Elderly	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 264	Access to Social Care Services (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 265	Life Line Services	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 29	Carer's Allowance	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 268	Industrial Deafness	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 30	Winter Fuel Allowance	SNS (Public Services)
Motion 272	Benefit Theft	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 31	Post Office Closures	SNS (Public Services)
Comp 32	Pensioners Charter- Free Bus Travel	SNS (Public Services)
†Motion 280	Free TV Licences (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)
†Comp 33	Legal Aid Reforms (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	SNS (Public Services)
INTERNATIONAL		
<i>EM3</i>	<i>Hilton Hotels, Barclay's Bank – Extra-Territorial Legislation Discrimination Against Cuban Customers</i>	International Officer, SNS (Commercial Services)
†Motion 284	Foreign Policy (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	International Officer
Motion 285	Guantanamo Bay Detainees	International Officer
Motion 286	Private Military Security Companies	International Officer
†Motion 287	Support of Venezuelan Workers (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	International Officer
Motion 288	Fair Trade	International Officer
Motion 289	Corporate Accountability	International Officer
†Motion 290	World Wide Trade Union Rights of Membership (Carried subject to CEC Qualification)	International Officer
Motion 291	Trade Unionism in China	International Officer
Motion 292	Female Genital Mutilation	International Officer

REPORT ON MOTIONS REFERRED TO THE CEC BY THE 2007 CONGRESS

UNION ORGANISATION: GENERAL	
Motion 9 Buying to Support GMB Members	The GMB Communications Department is progressing this proposal via a dedicated web page on the new GMB National Website in the restricted member area. Producing a printed information member pack would be costly and quickly become outdated.

Motion 10 Fair Trade and Sustainable Sourcing	Fair Trade and Sustainable Sourcing is on the agenda for the GMB Green Working Party which will report progress to Congress 2008 in the Special Report on the Green Agenda.
UNION ORGANISATION: REPRESENTATION & ACCOUNTABILITY	
Motion 17 CEC / Regional Council Elections	The CEC Recruitment and Organisation Committee consulted regions on this proposal. No benefit was seen in changing the election cycle. Accordingly, the March 2008 CEC accepted the recommendation that the system should remain unchanged.
UNION ORGANISATION: UNION BENEFITS	
Motion 28 Union Benefits	The CEC considered the position of members who refuse to cross picket lines, and noted that the general power to intervene sympathetically in such cases and help such members already exists. Regions will deal with any requests on a case-by-case basis.
Motion 32 Convalescent Homes – Age Discrimination	The union already has arrangements for admitting members for convalescence with less than 20 years membership. During 2007, 65 members used the convalescence benefit; of which 4 were retired members with less than 20 years' membership. The CEC recommends continuing to admit such members but will review this if a significant increase in numbers puts a strain on the benefit.
UNION ORGANISATION: EQUALITY & DIVERSITY	
Motion 42 GMB Commitment to Equality	Congress 2007 agreed to accept the recommendations contained within the Equality Review including the appointment of a National Equality and Diversity Officer and the establishment of a National Equalities Forum. The National Equalities Forum will take the Equality Review recommendations forward.
Motion 43 GMB SHOUT Forums	
Motion 49 National Race Conference	
EMPLOYMENT POLICY: PENSIONS & RETIREMENT	
Motion 70 NHS Pensions Advice	GMB Pensions Department provides advice to members and publishes Pensions news, bulletins and briefings on the GMB National Website. Briefings were produced throughout the NHS pension negotiations and a detailed guide to the NHS pension scheme will be published. There are plans to provide presentations for members around the time of the choice so members. In addition some GMB Regions also offer the services of an Independent Financial Adviser.
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: COMMERCIAL SERVICES	
Motion 116 Energy Policy	Thousands of GMB members are employed in the nuclear industry, and the National Secretary has continued to lobby Ministers in support of GMB's long-standing position of having a balanced energy policy, incorporating support for nuclear power as a low-carbon option within the UK energy mix. GMB has lobbied and campaigned for increased funding and new facilities to ensure that nuclear waste is reprocessed safely and efficiently to help reduce the nuclear legacy referred to in the motion

<p>Motion 126 Unfair Treatment</p>	<p>The National Organising Team discussed this in July 2007. No Region reported that Ladbrokes was a current organising target. In December 2007 GMB membership within Ladbrokes stands at 40 of the 12000 employees. There are no current relations with the employer, and in the context of a national Betting Shop campaign by COMMUNITY, an approach to Ladbrokes seeking recognition is highly unlikely to bear fruit.</p>
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY: ENGINEERING	
<p>Motion 132 Cammell Laird 1984</p>	<p>Our legal advice is that the course of action sought would be very difficult if not impossible to pursue. The General Secretary has been directly speaking to the Institute of Employment Rights about the possibility of pursuing this through the ILO or European Courts. The best way forward is for the screenplay, which the union has helped fund, to be finalised and shown to the British public so that the injustice heaped on our Cammell Laird members can be rectified by government through public demand.</p>
INDUSTRIAL & ECONOMIC POLICY : TRIDENT	
<p>Motion 169 Trident Missile System</p>	<p>As the decision to renew Trident as been debated and agreed in Parliament between the time of publishing the final agenda and Congress taking place, we could not take any further action as the decision was already made. The contents of the Motion have been noted for future reference.</p>
SOCIAL POLICY: TRANSPORT	
<p>Motion 250 Road Pricing</p>	<p>The Government announced in March 2008 that plans for the introduction of a National Road Price Scheme have been shelved as they raised questions of privacy and fairness.</p>
<p>Motion 258 Winter Maintenance</p>	<p>Investigation has revealed that Regulation 37 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (as amended) emergency vehicles are permitted to use sirens only to help speed their progress through traffic <i>to the site of an emergency</i>. The measures proposed in the motion, to allow sirens to be used by winter maintenance vehicles in snowy conditions, don't meet this definition under Regulation 37, and road safety organisations, such as RoSPA, would not support lobbying for a change in the Regulations to include gritters and snowploughs.</p>
SOCIAL POLICY : WELFARE RIGHTS & SERVICES	
<p>Motion 277 Royal Mail Postage</p>	<p>Although consumers are becoming more familiar with the new postal system, it is still creating difficulties, and often mail has to be TAKEN to the Post Office for stamping to ensure the right postage is paid. Given the proposals to close thousands of local post offices underway; this is not a helpful introduction. The GMB has made representations on this issue</p>

EUROPEAN OFFICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The GMB European Office continues to develop GMB's ability to influence EU and International policy and initiatives, and to support campaigning activities at European and International level to protect and promote the rights and interests of GMB members and their families. We continue to work in solidarity with our trade union colleagues across Europe and the world to promote labour rights, decent work, conditions and pay, and to strengthen trade union recognition and organisation.

CEC European & International Committee – following CEC consideration and agreement, the CEC European & International Committee has been combined with the CEC Political Committee with effect of January 2008. This will provide positive opportunities to improve our ability to influence Government and Parliamentary scrutiny committee views on EU legislative proposals and policy development in parallel at national and European level.

2. PERSONNEL

European Officer, Kathleen Walker Shaw and European Research and Policy Officer, Sarah King, represent the GMB's interests in Europe. Both are based in the GMB Brussels Office located at the centre of the EU decision making institutions.

3. GMB MEP GROUP

GMB has a strong and committed group of MEP's in the European Parliament including Stephen Hughes (North East – Group convenor), Richard Corbett (Yorkshire and Humberside – Chair), Robert Evans (London), Neena Gill (West Midlands), Glenys Kinnock (Wales), David Martin (Scotland) and Glenis Willmott (East Midlands). Gary Titley (North West) resigned from the group at the end of 2007. Our group provides considerable support to GMB both at regional and European level. Our GMB MEP's have been particularly active in their support for the Remploy campaign, which has been much appreciated by our members and officers. Considerable support has also been forthcoming from a number of non-GMB Labour MEP's, and we are grateful for their commitment and solidarity. The selection process for the 2009 European elections commenced at the end of 2007, and we are committed to supporting our group members through this process. Glenys Kinnock and Gary Titley have announced that they will not be seeking re-election at the next election. We look forward to continuing to work with Glenys for the remainder of her term, and thank her for her wealth of support and commitment to the GMB over the years. We thank Gary for his past support and wish him well for the future.

4. SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION

The GMB Brussels office supports the European and International aspects of National secretaries' and officers' organising work in liaison with the European and International trade union sector federations, ETUC, direct contacts with other European trade union colleagues, and with the EU institutions as required.

Migrant workers - Organising an increasing number of EU migrant workers moving to the UK is an important challenge for GMB, and the European Office has been working with GMB Regions and the National Organising Team in support of this work. Contacts have been developed with new Member State trade unions as well as continuing our links with Solidarność Śląsko-Dąbrowski Region established through an EU funded project involving GMB South Western Region. Funded by the European Socialist Group of the European Parliament, GMB officers and members from Poland and Lithuania were involved in two events held in the European Parliament in April and October 2007 to raise awareness of the unacceptable exploitation of too many migrant workers coming to the UK, and the need to ensure that they receive the same rights, pay and conditions as their equivalent colleagues. GMB provided positive examples of where it had been successful in organising migrant workers, and appealed to MEP's from new Member States to encourage workers planning to move to another country to join trade unions in the host country before they leave their home country as the most effective way of protecting their interests and avoiding social dumping. Failure to tackle exploitation of migrant workers will threaten collective agreements and pay and conditions for all, which will benefit no-one.

European Works Councils - The European Officer continues to provide support and advice to the development of European Works' Councils (EWCs). With the announcement at the end of 2007 of a pending Revision of the EWC Directive, it is hoped that there will be an opportunity to improve the provisions of the law to strengthen information and consultation rights and our ability to organise in multinational companies.

Comparing terms and conditions - The office continues to receive regular requests to compare rights, conditions and redundancy terms across multinational companies operating in other EU Member States, to support our bargaining agenda. Support and solidarity from trade union counterparts in other countries in providing information on their social plans and access to their works councils has proved very helpful, as was seen recently in the Burberry campaign with our French CFDT colleagues and in Staedtler, with colleagues from IG Metall.

Information on EU policy, employment and social rights - The European Office provides regular briefings and a monthly EU bulletin, updating members, officers and organisers on developments in EU legislation and rights such as Working Time and Health and Safety to assist them in their roles and support the bargaining agenda.

5. RECOGNITION

The GMB European Office continues to provide support in comparing recognition across key target multinational companies, which has proved valuable in supporting GMB bids for recognition. European trade union colleagues have shown solidarity in offering support to our members and raising the issue with management in their national works councils or committees.

6. EU POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND CAMPAIGNS

Europe has been a key focus for GMB in 2007, with GMB's motion on the EU Reform Treaty to TUC Congress being one of the major debates of the week and receiving much media attention. GMB has been active in raising our members' concerns and influencing a large number of other specific EU policy and legislative issues both within the EU institutions and at the highest level of UK Government:

EU Reform Treaty - EU Governments wrestled in 2007 with the aftermath of the failed EU Constitutional Treaty and sealed agreement on the EU Reform Treaty (now called the Lisbon Treaty). Shamefully, our UK Government negotiated a protocol opting British workers out of the full scope of the Charter of Fundamental Rights as part of the negotiations, showing a clear and worrying lack of commitment to balancing the social and economic dimensions of European development. GMB challenged this failure to represent the interests of British workers in Europe in a motion to TUC Congress, calling on the Government to honour its manifesto commitment at the last election to hold a referendum on the EU Constitutional Treaty and to support a strong social Europe, which was overwhelmingly carried. The Government has refused to hold a referendum and placed the European Union (Amendment) Bill before Parliament at the end of 2007, anticipating ratification by summer 2008.

EU Labour Law - In spring 2007, GMB submitted a comprehensive response to the EU Commission Green Paper consultation on Labour Law, raising concerns about the focus on individual rights, ignoring the major role of collective bargaining, the emphasis on the need for flexibility over security in employment, the failure to address the threat of the increasing levels of precarious work and vulnerable workers in Europe, with the risk of atypical work becoming the typical form of employment. GMB emphasised the importance of quality of jobs and secure employment. GMB submitted its views in the process towards the European Parliament opinion on the consultation, where most of our concerns were reflected.

Flexicurity - the combination of flexibility and security measures in employment - was the key focus of debate on Europe's employment strategy. The model originated in Scandinavia, where it is supported with high levels of security, social support, trade union involvement and social dialogue, and continuous training, including between jobs. Beyond Scandinavia, there is generally flexibility but without matching security. The Green Paper on Labour law included the model, and in the summer 2007 the EU Commission brought forward a Communication on flexicurity. Though this was not a consultative text, GMB wrote formally to the EU Commissioner for Employment and Social policy, raising our concerns

about the model, and circulated this to colleagues in the European Parliament. The European Socialist Group of the European Parliament produced a response to the proposals for flexicurity highlighting the pre-conditions and principles required to provide necessary security and enable the system to work. A flexicurity strategy was adopted at the European Summit of Heads of State and Government in December 2007. GMB has concerns about the UK Government's commitment to delivering a balanced flexicurity model in the UK. We are already one of the most flexible labour markets in Europe, but doubt that the ingredients to ensure security, social support, training and protections will be delivered.

Viking and Laval European court cases – The European Court of Justice delivered its decisions on two very important trade union cases - Viking and Laval - relating to the rights of collective action and ability to enforce collective agreements in December 2007, which were disappointing from the trade union side, but with some positive aspects which need to be maximised. GMB has been in discussions with ETUC, TUC and other trade union and legal colleagues on the implications of these judgments. An initial briefing has been prepared, and further analysis of the judgments is ongoing.

Services in the Internal Market Directive –The UK Government launched its consultation on the implementation of the Services Directive in the UK in November 2007 with a deadline in February 2008. GMB has been involved in a series of meetings with the Government department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), responsible for implementing the provisions, as well as with TUC. GMB plans to submit a response in co-operation with TUC, raising concerns about the Government's "light touch" approach in areas, and ensuring that trade union rights and collective agreements are not undermined. The Laval and Viking judgments indicate we will have to be particularly vigilant in this area.

Working Time Directive Revision – remains unfinished business at EU level, despite attempts by the Portuguese Presidency of the EU to get agreement in December 2007, by grouping this Directive with the proposals for Temporary agency Workers Directive in an attempt to get a compromise agreement across the two texts. GMB and our European trade union colleagues remain concerned about the attempts of some Member State governments (our own proving to be the ringleader) to undermine key protections of the Directive. Major concerns remain: protections for on-call workers, with established European Court Judgments, which clearly confirm on-call time at the workplace as working time, being challenged, with attempts to introduce a new category of "inactive on-call time". Worryingly, a majority of Governments support this development as they claim to face staffing problems, particularly in their healthcare sectors. The opt-out continues to be a thorny issue. It is clear that some governments across Europe are intent on watering down our working time protections in the name of flexibility, and GMB continues to work with TUC and our European trade union colleagues in defence of workers rights in this area. The European Office provides regular updates on the position, and, supported by our GMB MEP's, we continue to urge the EU institutions and our Government to change their positions on this issue. A letter was sent from the GMB General Secretary to the Prime Minister prior to the December Council, urging the Government not to threaten workers' protections in a poor compromise on two such important areas of workplace rights.

Temporary Agency Workers Directive – now grouped together with the Working Time Directive revision in Council discussions as mentioned above, this issue also remains unresolved. However, it appears that the blocking minority of governments that the UK Government has worked so hard to maintain has now evaporated, though the Presidency and Commission did not want to isolate the UK and Germany by pushing a vote in the December 2007 Council meeting. Despite assurances we were given by the Government at Warwick, our Government remains the least flexible in the EU Council on finding a positive solution to this issue, insisting that temporary agency workers should be subject to long qualifying periods before they are entitled to equal treatment rights. GMB continues to campaign at European and National level to seek progress on this issue. This issue was covered in the GMB General Secretary's letter to the Prime Minister mentioned above sent in advance of the EU Council meeting. There are indications that the UK Government may consider domestic legislation in the absence of agreement at EU level, but in view of the fact that they are the main sticking block at this level, we have little hope that this route will deliver the level of protections we have been seeking at EU level. Meanwhile, the vulnerability of such workers increases, with temporary agency workers who are migrant workers being particularly badly exploited.

Social Europe – the EU Commission launched a wide ranging year-long consultation on *“Europe’s social reality – A stock take”* early in 2007. GMB submitted a detailed response focusing on key issues and areas of concern to our members. The consultation is intended to prepare for the publication of a new EU Social Agenda in the middle of 2008. A key starting point for the Agenda from the GMB’s point of view would be to re-establish a balance between the social and economic/internal market dimensions of Europe, which we consider is weighted far too heavily towards the internal market to the detriment of social considerations and workers’ rights.

EU Health and Safety strategy 2007-2012 – The EU Commission launched its strategy early in 2007, and GMB MEP Glenis Willmott was appointed author of the report for the European Parliament. GMB welcomed the opportunity of co-operating with her on this report. Glenis’ final report was very positive, addressing all of GMB’s concerns in terms of carcinogens, third party violence, vulnerability of disabled workers and of migrant workers.

Public Procurement – continued to be a major issue in the trade union consortium campaign to save the Remploy factories, following the devastating announcements in spring 2007. Already a central part of the consortium alternative plan for Remploy, the European Officer has been working in close co-operation with National Secretary Phil Davies and the Remploy stewards and consortium officers to ensure that the rights we secured at EU level to reserve contracts for supported employment workplaces for disabled people are implemented and used at all levels of public contracting. This has involved regular meetings with Government Ministers and departments and Members of the Welsh and Scottish Assemblies. Following the commitments given at Labour Party Conference to provide more public contract opportunities to Remploy, there was a clear step change in government departments focusing on providing contracts to Remploy. However, the Minister’s announcement to proceed with the closure of 18 factories a month later was seen as a bitter betrayal. GMB and our trade union colleagues continue to work with the Government and local authorities to provide as much public procurement work as possible for Remploy factories as the best hope for sparing them all. The GMB Brussels office has been co-ordinating the support of MEP’s for the campaign, which has been very positive with active commitment. A delegation of Remploy stewards, convenors and officers held a series of meetings in Brussels in June 2007 with EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equality, Vladimír Špidla, and with a large number of MEP’s, to urge greater use of the reserved contract provisions, and to encourage a more balanced policy for employment for people with disabilities based on real choice. The European Officer and a delegation of GMB Remploy convenors attended a European conference on Social Procurement in Lille in December 2007 to raise awareness and support for contracting to supported employment workplaces for people with disabilities, and were encouraged by the positive response and interest, which has been followed up.

GMB continues to campaign to ensure that wider social, employment, ethical and environmental considerations are included in public contracting. Working in co-operation with our EU Public Sector federation (EPSU), and with the support of Stephen Hughes MEP in the European Parliament in putting forward formal questions, we have put pressure on the EU Commission to come forward with a guide to Social Procurement. A study will be launched early in 2008 and a guide by the end of the year. Meetings have been arranged with the EU Commission to discuss and influence the specific content of the guide.

Decent Work for All – The European Office continues to support the work of our international trade union colleagues in Costa Rica in co-operation with Bananalink in following up on complaints made under the EU’s Generalised System of Preferences Plus trade agreements regarding breaches of Labour Standards and freedom of association. The issue was raised again with Commissioner Mandelson at our GMB Congress 2007, and was followed up in further exchanges in the autumn. Specific cases of unfair dismissal and treatment of workers with a banana company supplying Asda were taken up by GMB and Bananalink with the company with a view to seeking their support in resolving the issue with their supplier.

7. SUPPORT FOR TRAINING, EU FUNDED PROJECTS, DELEGATIONS

The European Office continues to work in co-operation with GMB regions in developing training initiatives in the area of EU social and workplace rights and protections. GMB continues to be successful in receiving EU funding to support projects. The European Officer was pleased to support

the work of GMB South Western Region in leading a highly successful project on improving information and consultation in the workplace throughout 2007. The project involved trade union partners from Sweden (SIF) and Poland (Solidarność Śląsko-Dąbrowski Region). Links developed with Solidarność through this project have proved valuable in assisting GMB with organisation and recruitment initiatives aimed at Polish migrant workers.

The European Officer was pleased to be involved again in the now well established and successful North West and Irish Regional Womens' Conference, providing a presentation comparing EU Member State rights and policies supporting caring responsibilities.

Cardiff University Business School extends a standing invitation to the European Officer to give an annual lecture on GMB/Trade Unions in Europe, as part of its graduate programme, which provides a valuable opportunity for GMB to raise its profile and an understanding of our campaigning work at EU level as Britain's most pro-active union in this area.

The European Office was pleased to welcome the GMB senior management team to Brussels at the time of the migrant workers event in the European Parliament in April 2007. We have also provided a number of presentations on GMB work and EU activities to large delegations of trade union colleagues from the Danish HK trade union, and other trade union colleagues, as well as to students and lecturers from schools and colleges in the UK.

Ongoing support has also been provided to officers and members in co-ordinating meetings in Brussels as well as meetings and delegations elsewhere in Europe with companies or trade union colleagues.

8. REPORTS ON MOTIONS TO CONGRESS 2006

Motion 82 – Job Security for Ex Pats – the GMB European Office has been supporting the work of colleagues in GMB Southern Region, the region to which the GMB Brussels Branch is attached, in promoting positive contractual conditions and secure legal status and entitlements for our members living and working in Brussels, as well as encouraging good employment practice among MEP's.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In 2007 we built on the strong foundations of our solidarity work started in 2006. We continued to work in the priority areas of Colombia with Justice for Colombia and on the banana producing countries of Latin America with Banana. However, the main focus of our work in 2007 was developing a solidarity project with the Mumbai Port Trust, Dock and General Employees' Union (MPTDGEU) and the International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF); additionally we strengthened our involvement in numerous human rights campaigns.

SHIPBREAKING

In March 2007 GMB made a successful application to the TUC/DFID International Development Learning Fund (IDLF) for resources to develop a proposal to be submitted to the Civil Society Challenge Fund. To date we have received £21,500 which has enabled us to start developing a project designed to organise the workers in port, dock and allied industries in ship breaking in India.

As part of this project development, we have organised an exchange of visits with our comrades from MPTDGEU. Mr VV Rane addressed GMB Congress 2007 and was the key speaker at a packed fringe; at both events he informed us of the human rights violations that are being carried out against workers, who work a twelve hour shift for 50 pence. He told us about the shocking working and living conditions where there is virtually no health and safety and a complete absence of welfare benefits and job security, adding "we know we are being exploited but that is better than starvation". He then went on to tell us what can be achieved by being in a strong union and working with a strong union, he said of the developing partnership with the GMB when "We do not stand alone and we have a powerful voice then we can make a difference".

In June 2007, a small GMB delegation attended an IMF Ship Breaking Forum and a fact finding mission to discuss the problems and possible solutions surrounding workers in the industry. We discovered that the 1948 Factories Act of India is very similar to Labour Law in Great Britain making it easier to develop a legal response to the situation - we have been aided by Thompsons Solicitors, who have provided us with free legal guidance. We also recognised the need for a research document to analyse the situation facing the workers in the Mumbai and Jawaharal Nehru Port who are largely from the informal economy and are at tremendous risk. We concluded that health and safety should be at the very core of the work.

In October, a return delegation from India visited GMB to advance the preliminary discussions and consult with various structures of our union. Additionally we met with DFID, GMB MP's, TUC, Thompsons, the International Transport Federation and the IMF. Throughout this period relevant personnel have undergone training activities organised by the TUC SFPA team including; project design, logical framework analysis and project monitoring and implementation. This will culminate in a project design workshop in Mumbai in early 2008 with the central stakeholders equipping us to submit the required concept note and on acceptance, a full proposal to DFID. Throughout this period we have come to love and admire our Indian brothers and sisters and with them are also working on a project called 'Making a Difference'. This will be launched in 2008, it will hopefully involve branches and develop solidarity and much needed financial support to those who do so much with so little.

LATIN AMERICA

GMB has initiated and participated in many events that have brought together the solidarity groups campaigning on Latin America including:

- Latin America themed fringe meeting at Congress which attracted 200 people, one of the most well attended fringes to date, evidencing not only the growing interest in Latin America, but the region as an inspiration and beacon of hope.
- Latin America 2007, which has become one of the most popular solidarity meetings in the calendar with over 600 participants.
- STUC Latin America Fringe

COLOMBIA

In 2006 all ten Regions affiliated to Justice for Colombia and the campaign for peace and social justice. Consequently the campaign was taken up at a Regional level. Since it's formation in 2002 GMB has participated in the Delegations to Colombia and Richard Ascough, Regional Secretary of Southern Region was a delegate to Colombia in 2007 and on his return established a project for the relief of Victims of Torture Project. Similarly Joe Morgan, Regional Secretary of Birmingham Region initiated a fundraising project working with our friend Hernando Hernandez to raise funds for Political Prisoners, see regional reports for further information.

At a national level we continue to be involved in the campaign to end military aid to Colombia and to assist JFC in deputations to the Colombian Embassy and the British government to that end. The ISO also assisted JFC with the recording of the new DVD.

BANANA LINK

Banana Link is one of the international solidarity organisations working in close partnership with the GMB nationally. Their '*Union to Union*' programme builds solidarity between workers and their unions in Latin America, at one end of the international banana supply chain, and British trade unions, including the GMB and its members at the other.

The practical and political solidarity shown by GMB directly increases the capacity of eight unions in Peru, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica and Ecuador to educate and organise workers on the ground, whilst lobbying for changes to labour laws, company practices and trade rules at national and international level.

In 2007 achievements included:

- Increased capacity to organise workers: in 2007 trade union partners in Ecuador, Honduras and Costa Rica managed to increase their membership despite all the obstacles, with particular increases in the membership of women workers in Honduras.
- The signing of the first Collective Bargaining Agreement in the Costa Rican banana industry for over 20 years; this CBA governing labour relations on the Ecoturismo plantation constitutes a clear sign of progress in the face of Costa Rica's anti-union culture.
- The development of links with a new agricultural workers' union in Peru, SITAG: with support from UK trade unions, this new union is growing rapidly and organising workers on Dole supplier plantations for the first time in Peru. At the end of 2007, SITAG established the first-ever women workers' committee.
- Supporting political action: solidarity through the Union to Union programme has empowered Latin American banana workers trade unions to become more ambitious in the demands they make of governments and employers, with particular developments achieved in areas including; sub-contracting (Ecuador), minimum wage enforcement (Guatemala), respect for collective bargaining (Honduras) and fair compensation for health damage from chemical exposure (Nicaragua).

In the UK the GMB has:

- Supported Banana Link/GMB campaigns including:
- Dole campaign which is calling on the world's biggest fruit company to respect the freedom to organise independent trade unions on Dole owned and supplier plantations.
- The TescoPolly Alliance which is campaigning for the stricter controls of supermarket buyer power which currently has serious negative consequences for; small shops, local communities, the environment, farmers and workers worldwide.
- GMB has also directly lobbied both Tesco and Asda about labour rights violations on their banana and pineapple supplier plantations in Costa Rica.
 - GMB hosted a visit by Gilberth Bermúdez Umaña, Coordinator of COLSIBA, to the UK which included:
 - the opportunity to meet with government representatives to discuss the respect of core labour standards following an ILO mission to Costa Rica earlier in 2007 and the Decent Work Agenda. In 2006, GMB lodged a complaint submitted to the EC in response to the granting of GSP Plus status to Costa Rica despite ILO Convention abuses.
 - A workplace visit to Pratts banana importers where the GMB are trying to achieve recognition.
 - Addressing the Banana Link/GMB/Fairtrade Foundation coordinated fringe meeting, *'Fairtrade and the Trade Union Movement - Working Better Together'*. The well attended meeting aimed to engage trade union members and leadership in constructive debate about how the trade union movement can work with the Fairtrade movement to secure a better deal for workers in developing countries. This is part of GMB's commitment to work in close partnership with the Fairtrade Foundation and their newly appointed trade union officer to proactively address the challenges posed by the increased Fairtrade certification of plantations in partnership with both British and Latin American unions. This visit was funded through the TUC's Strategic Framework Partnership Agreement with DFID.

CUBA

At the heart of our work with the Cuba Solidarity Campaign is the defense of Cuba and the demand to see the end of the illegal blockade, to this end we have participated in:

- Continuing to campaign for the British Government to reject the proposals of the United States Administration as expressed through the "Commission for Transition to a Free Cuba".
- Continuing to campaign against the "common position" of the European Union.

- Actively participated in the Hilton Hotels Campaign in accordance with Emergency Motion 3 to Congress, resulting in a victory where the hotel group reversed their intention to ban Cuban nationals from hotels in the United Kingdom. We have similarly been involved in the campaign to pressurise Barclays Bank to restore services to Cuban customers.
- A high level delegation, led by President Mary Turner spent a week on a fact finding tour of Cuba in November 2007. They visited work places, schools, hospitals, environmental projects and a Committee for the Defence of the Revolution and the Cuban Women's Federation. It was a unique opportunity to forge stronger links with the Cuban Trade Union Confederation and the report of the delegation will contribute to the recommendations for work to mark the 50 years of achievement of the Cuban Revolution in 2008/9

VENEZUELA

GMB plays an active role in the work of the Venezuela Information Centre (VIC), including the participation in the following campaigns and events:

- Media work continued to be VIC's main priority in 2007. VIC continued to issue rebuttals of the intensified media disinformation campaign against Venezuela and to write briefings and articles for the press. The large numbers of letters sent by the Media Action Network undoubtedly made a considerable impact.
- VIC's inaugural AGM, held on 30 June, was a great success with over 100 delegates from all over the country in attendance and with a high level of discussion and enthusiasm. A 30-member Executive Committee was elected and a constitution adopted, the ISO was elected as Vice Chair of VIC.
- The first ever European Solidarity Conference on Venezuela took place in London on 10 November, co-organised by VIC with Le Monde Diplomatique and Memoire des Luttes. This was a resounding success with over 200 delegates from 12 European countries in attendance. The conference endorsed a statement in support of the achievements of the government of President Hugo Chavez and defending Venezuela's right to self-determination. The conference also agreed to establish an interim committee to co-ordinate support for Venezuela throughout Europe and to organise a similar conference in 2008.
- VIC lobbied for support for the FBU's motion 73 on Venezuela to Congress, amended by the NUM, which was carried unanimously. A successful VIC fringe meeting at the TUC Congress was attended by over 80 people.

PALESTINE

A considerable amount of time was spent in meetings throughout the duration of the Enough! Campaign, where we achieved a broad coalition of groups to sign up to a common agenda. Enough! was a coalition of charities, trade unions, faith and other campaign groups that came together to mark the 40th anniversary of the Six Day War, in which the Israeli army took military control of the Gaza Strip and West Bank, including East Jerusalem. GMB was a founder group who came together and sought with other members of the coalition to advocate peace for Israelis and Palestinians alike. There were many meetings, public events, a mass demonstration in June to mark the military occupation of Palestine and a mass lobby of Parliament in November which called for an end to the occupation.

The ISO is a member of the Trade Union Advisory Committee of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign who throughout the year were involved in numerous other activities to highlight the plight of the Palestinian people including the creation of a new education pack for activists

EMERGENCY ACTIONS

Additionally, and in line with GMB policy we have responded to emergency actions wherever trade unionists face injustice and human rights abuses. We have also been active on a variety of additional campaigns including Burma, Chagos Island, Zimbabwe, Iran, and Iraq, where we have written letters of solidarity, letters of appeal and attended demonstrations and deputations. We have also written to MP's concerning the Guantanamo Bay Detainees, Private Military Security Companies, Fair Trade and Corporate Accountability. We work with fellow trade unionists in the UK and brothers and sisters all over

the world, the TUC and the ITUC. We pursue matters through foreign embassies and at home with our own government – we do all that we can to assist in the struggle against injustice.

If you require any further information on any of these issues or how you can become involved please contact jeni.mcdougall@gmb.org.uk

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

INTRODUCTION

Probably the most important development for the department in 2007 was the appointment, at the end of the year, of Daniel Shears as the Health, Safety and Environmental Research and Policy Officer. With the doubling of the resources available to the Department there will be great expectations within GMB that there can now be a greater emphasis on a more proactive approach to health, safety and the environment. Daniel joined GMB from HSE and already he has shown a good understanding on the many issues which affect GMB members. It is envisaged that, initially at least, Daniel will concentrate on matters in the Commercial and Manufacturing sections of the newly restructured GMB. However as the department develops there should certainly be enough resources for GMB to play a much greater part in the ongoing development of health and safety campaigning across all sectors.

Where motions from Congress 2006 have been acted upon they are included in the following script.

Health & Safety Legislation

Two issues dominated health and safety legislation during 2006, namely the introduction of the smoking ban across the UK, and the possibility of a Corporate Manslaughter Bill on the statute books.

After the introduction in Scotland in 2005 and the phased introduction in Wales and Northern Ireland in April 2006 a full smoking ban in all workplaces across the UK came into effect on July 1st. Surprisingly to many there appears to have been less resistance than expected with few prosecutions for breaking the ban so far and there has been comprehensive guidance on such diverse areas as what constitutes a smoking shelter and what defines a company vehicle. Certainly for many GMB members working in the leisure industry this has literally been a breath of fresh air.

At Congress last year a very emotional debate on Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide concluded with a speech from the mother of Daniel Dennis, Althea, on the personal effect on how an un-necessary death blighted lives and how the lack of a prosecution prevented any sense of closure. At the time of the debate it was still uncertain as to the actual progress of the Bill through both Houses of Parliament.

Indeed this position remained right up until the last possible moment and was due to the possible inclusion, or otherwise, of deaths in custody within the Bill. When the Bill was passed GMB gave it limited welcome and this largely remains the case. However there are greater causes for optimism when the Bill becomes law in April 2008. Much of this is due to the guidance, from the Ministry of Justice, being issued to juries for them to take into account the “safety culture” of an organization and the demonstrable leadership within the company. Allied to this is some strong guidance issued jointly by the Health and Safety Commission and the Institute of Directors on what will be expected with regard to health and safety organization within companies and there may well be an improvement in health and safety performance and a timely fall in deaths at work.(Motion 58). Obviously only time will tell if the Bill will make a real difference or if there is a need to reinvigorate the campaign on this issue again.

Asbestos

Asbestos issues continue to evolve, particularly in the litigation and compensation areas. A decision during the year by the House of Lords to uphold the decision not to award any compensation for the development of Pleural Plaques was another demonstration of the vexatious nature of the Insurance industry. These injuries had been compensated for over twenty years, often as a full and final settlement, but not content in reducing the amount of compensation they have pushed the legislators to deny any future awards. GMB vigorously oppose this and have arranged two lobbies at the Houses of Parliament (June and January) on this. Some GMB members, particularly the Thermal Laggings, have a

real interest in getting this overturned (Composite 3). At the lobby in January there was a real commitment to keep the campaign momentum ongoing.

On the positive side the government has tabled an amendment to the upcoming Children's Act to fast track compensation for sufferers of Mesothelioma (Based on the original Pneumoconiosis Act in 1969). This is good news for sufferers, their families and those who cannot find the original company insurers. Following intense lobbying from GMB, other trade unions and victims support groups the final decision by NICE (National Institute of Clinical Health and Excellence) was to approve the use of Alimta, the palliative Mesothelioma drug, for all regardless of geographical location. There is a need to acknowledge that sometimes the government does get it right.

The HSE has been consulting on methods of reaching small builders and dealing with asbestos issues. GMB has had input into this guidance which is relevant in the context of last years changes to the exclusion of textured coatings from the licencing regime.

Richard Morgan, Midlands and East Coast, continues to represent GMB on the Asbestos Licencing Group(ALG) and in this past year have looked at occupational health provision for asbestos workers and the safe disposal of asbestos(Motion 55). Many thanks to him for his continuing involvement and commitment to this dangerous industry.

Government Consultation and Submissions

There have been a number of important consultations from various government departments, some not directly linked to health and safety issues but having an impact on reps ability to carry out their functions. The document from the DTI (as was) on facility time contained little of merit with regard to enhancements to the role of safety representatives, and indeed did not even acknowledge that there might be a valuable role that environmental reps could do. Needless to say the government response was predictably disappointing though there may be an opportunity to re-examine the environmental aspects when consultation on a new ACAS code is published later in the year.

Due, partly to the financial mess the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) found themselves in, there was a proposal to merge the HSC with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). GMB were not opposed to this in principle, as long as proper governance of the new management was guaranteed. We also suggested that any expansion of the board should include representatives from victim support groups as another method of ensuring worker representation, as well as representation from the local authority sector.

The department also had input into the review of Occupational Health provision by Dame Carol Black. It was felt that the importance of prevention of injury and long term illness should be emphasised and that there should be a consistent approach to the level of services provided which would involve minimum standards. In addition the current tendency to associate Repetitive Strain Injuries with Musculo-Skeletal Disorders (MSDs) in general should be changed and specialist treatment sought in these cases.

The House of Commons Select Committee asked for evidence on the performance of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as the trade unions were expressing their concerns over the proposed year on year cuts of 5% for the next three years. The proposal to re-locate their head quarters away from London to Bootle is also seen as a retrograde step. GMB fears that a loss of expertise and experience will occur among both policy and field operators leading to an increasing diminution of the service on behalf of working people. Following our submissions the department was asked to provide oral evidence to the committee which happened at the time of preparation of this report. GMB concerns on this were also expressed to the, then, Secretary of State, Peter Hain, by a letter from the General Secretary. (Motion 56).

In September the Department of Work and Pensions called a Construction Summit to tackle the increase in deaths in this sector. Again the department was involved and discussed the need for trade union involvement on sites. This is obviously an ongoing, and serious, issue.

Publications

With the addition to the department work has finally started on updating the Safety Reps Kit, which will hopefully be completed by Congress. During the year there were a couple of revamps of existing leaflets, on the Security Industry and Feeling the Heat, which concerns working at high temperatures. Unfortunately the summer was among the wettest in recent history though the leaflet can be used in an

ongoing situation. There will be an attempt to update all those other leaflets as yet not updated during the coming year and any suggestions for new topics are always welcome.

The department continued to publish a monthly electronic bulletin, Health & Safety Matters and the subjects covered this year included:

- (1) Guidance on Shift Work
- (2) Control of asbestos at Work Regulations
- (3) Worker Involvement
- (4) The Construction, Design and Management Regulations
- (5) Occupational Cancer
- (6) Radio Frequency Identification
- (7) The truth about Health & Safety myths
- (8) Smoking in enclosed public spaces
- (9) Proposal to merge the HSE and HSC
- (10) HSE – The Inspectorate faces a crisis
- (11) Health & Safety at Work- National Statistics
- (12) Tackling HIV Discrimination at Work

Some of these areas of interest were prompted by motions to last years Congress, principally Motions 56, 57 and 62.

In addition other one off specific guidance were written at the request of regions or sectors covering such diverse topics as Administration of medicines in children's homes, local authority green book advice and body mapping in casinos.

Government and other representation bodies

GMB continues to be represented on a number of Industrial Advisory Committees and HSE Forums. These reflect the diverse range of industries covered by GMB membership and include the rubber industry, waste, food and drink manufacturing and aviation. Currently the Local Authority Forum is not meeting but objections have been lodged with the HSE over this failure. In preparation for the Olympics in 2012 we have representation on the Olympic Delivery Authority (H&S technical board) and have toured the site and seen some of the efforts at trying to stage a sustainable games through environmental and recycling actions. In addition provision will be made for those workers , both local and migratory, who will need special skills training to leave a lasting legacy for the area (Motion 61).

In the private sector the ergonomic initiative undertaken jointly with ASDA is at present stalled due to a lack of accident and absence information from the company. The department has also attended a series of meetings in Brussels to participate in a European Commission working party on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). GMB have consistently pushed that the guidelines for workers using this technology should be the same as for citizens and consumers, in that full explanations on the use and full knowledge and permission on any consequences, should be freely available. However it would appear that the Commission is, currently, not minded to include workers within this scope for "political" reasons.

Conclusion

Historically health and safety issues have been of great benefit in helping with the recruitment and organising agenda and that position has not changed. GMB membership, where it is strong and well organised, will always mean improved health, safety and welfare conditions for our membership. And where we need to gain improvements the health and safety record of GMB will act as an organisational driver. It is acknowledged that the department has been crucial in the past at playing its' part in raising awareness, and campaigning on issues to help deliver justice to working peoples lives. With the increased resources the department now has, it is planned that the membership will become even more aware on how health and safety can be a continuing, positive benefit by supplying advice, guidance and knowledge on the complete range of subjects covered by a general trade union.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

PERSONNEL

The Department comprises Barry Smith, Legal Officer, and Maria Ludkin, Legal and Political Officer. Sarah King, Legal Research and Policy Officer, is currently on a two year secondment to the GMB European Office in Brussels.

ACTION ON CONGRESS MOTIONS

Composite 5 - Restoration of Trade Union Rights

We supported the Trade Union Freedom Bill. We supported the rally of Parliament on 18 October 2007. There was not sufficient Parliamentary time available for the Bill to be debated, but it had achieved widespread support across the trade union movement, and over 100 Labour MPs had pledged their support. We intend to play our part in articulating the continuing demand for the restoration of trade union rights.

Motion 79 – Trade Union Recognition

We have called on the Government to amend the existing statutory Recognition legislation to overturn the CBI-led changes that were made to the original proposals in 1997.

Motion 89 – Redundancy Act

We have called on the Government to amend the existing redundancy legislation to allow those who have worked with their employer for more than 20 years (the maximum currently allowed) to add their additional years service to their statutory redundancy payment.

Motion 92 – Age Discrimination

We have called on the Government to establish an unequivocal right for workers to work beyond the age of 65 if they so wish.

Motion 98 – Two Tier Workforce

We have called on the Government to introduce fair wages and conditions regulations that will apply to all workers, regardless of who employs them.

Motion 99 – TUPE Regulations

We have called on the Government to withdraw the changes that were made by the 2006 TUPE Regulations which make it much easier for employers to make changes to terms and conditions following a TUPE transfer for so called “ETO” reasons (economic, technical, or organisational reasons entailing changes in the workforce). We have asked GMB Regions to keep us informed of any examples of employers who take advantage of these changes to make adverse changes to members' terms and conditions.

Motion 100 – Trade Union Legal Support

We have worked with the TUC and other trade unions to campaign against insurance company-led proposals to undermine the legal services that we provide to GMB members who are injured at work. At the time of writing this report, the Government had rejected most of these proposals, including the proposal to raise the County Court Small Claims limit to £5,000 (which would have had an adverse impact on many of our personal injury claims). However, we intend to keep a careful watch on the position, and will keep Regions informed about developments such as those that may arise in the present Legal Services Bill.

SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT & ORGANISATION

The Department continues to give priority to supporting recruitment, particularly in the Commercial Services and Public Services Sections. Equalities remain, as ever, a crucial organising issue and features strongly in the work of the Legal Department.

A significant proportion of the Department's work relates to equal pay issues in the public sector, and in particular in local authorities and the NHS. We have continued to support National Officers in developing our equal pay agenda, working closely with GMB Solicitors. We support the pursuit of equal pay claims for our members, and at the time of writing this report GMB is supporting over 25,000 equal pay claims in the public sector.

GMB remains committed to pursuing litigation in the higher courts where necessary in order to achieve equal pay. The Union had a significant success in the House of Lords in *Derbyshire v St Helens Council*, a case dealing with the victimisation by the employer of women GMB members pursuing equal pay claims. In the coming year GMB will be litigating in the higher courts on significant equal pay issues, including cases relating to time limits, TUPE transfers, comparators, and statutory grievances.

We won our appeal in the case of *Allen v GMB* in the Employment Appeal Tribunal in 2007. The other side have appealed to the Court of Appeal, and the case will be heard later in 2008.

We continue to work closely with National Officers generally on equal pay issues.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

We have been working to co-ordinate the legal, political, and industrial aspects of the campaign to save Remploy factories from closure. We have been heavily involved in the negotiations with management, and with legal and political briefings of MP's and Government ministers.

The Department has been heavily involved in developing a legal and political strategy regarding the GMB campaign to draw attention to the negative aspects on an unregulated private equity industry, including briefing MP's, ministers, and international observers, and giving evidence to the Treasury Select Committee.

We have continued to work with the TUC and other unions to try remove the shackles placed on trade unions by the restrictive rules on industrial action. Criticised as far too onerous to comply with by international bodies, the burdens placed on trade unions in the UK are used by employers to thwart the democratic wishes of GMB members. We remain particularly concerned about the rules relating to pre-ballot notices and pre-action notices.

These concerns informed our support for the Trade Union Freedom Bill. We were involved in the lobby of Parliament on 18 October 2007. Although there was not sufficient Parliamentary time available for the Bill to be debated, it had obtained widespread support across the trade union movement, and over 100 Labour MPs had pledged their support for the Bill. We intend to play our part in continuing to demand freedom for trade unions, including the repeal of section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 with no pre-conditions.

We responded to public consultations on Statutory Disputes Resolution, and on Procedural Unfairness in Unfair Dismissal Cases (the "Polkey" decision).

We also responded to the public consultation on the ASLEF case, which deals with the legal ability of trade unions to expel BNP members. The Employment Simplification Bill contains proposals to make changes to the law following the public consultations.

PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION PROVISION

Each year sees the introduction of a raft of new employment-related legislation. We aim to keep up to date with the changes, and to disseminate this information in an accessible and user friendly format for Officers and Regions.

We have updated the GMB "Most Asked Questions", and it is now in its 13th edition. This consists of a series of one page answers to questions covering the breadth of employment issues, including Health and Safety, Contracts, and Pay, Maternity Rights etc. The aim is to provide a document which Regions can easily send or hand to members with common enquiries. This is posted on the GMB intranet and an amended version (which excludes Region-specific benefits) is posted on the GMB website.

SUPPORT FOR RECOGNITION

The Department continues to provide support, advice, and assistance to Officers in considering and preparing applications to the Central Arbitration Committee for awards for collective bargaining. Barry Smith is available to act as “devil’s advocate” on applications, and day to day advice on queries continues to be provided.

GMB continues to meet with considerable success across a wide range of companies, both in terms of new sites and sites where GMB members have remained loyal through years of employer hostility. GMB continues to make good use of the legislation, both as a framework for voluntary agreements (what is sometimes referred to as the “shadow effect”) and as a procedure for achieving recognition in the face of employer hostility. We provide a regular report on applications to the Central Executive Council.

SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The Department continues to provide day to day support to Regional and National Officers on industrial action issues and industrial action ballots. This represents a significant part of the Department’s work.

We continue to update our guidance on ballots to reflect changes in legislation and case law. Barry Smith is available to run briefings to Officers on the procedures to be followed.

We continue to support the call for a Trade Union Freedom Bill, and we continue to work with the National Officer in our efforts to secure the repeal of section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

STATUTORY DISCIPLINARY, DISMISSAL, & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

When the statutory disciplinary, dismissal, and grievance procedures were introduced in October 2004, we expressed our concern over the complexity of the new rules. Under these rules employers have to comply with the procedures before dismissing, and employees have to comply with grievance procedures before bringing most types of employment tribunal claim.

The Government is now proposing to repeal the procedures following a public consultation. We argued in our response that the beneficial aspects of the procedures should be retained (e.g. the right to have written reasons for the grounds for dismissal), but to reform the negative aspects such as the rules on grievances which can act as a barrier to justice.

The Employment Simplification Bill proposes the repeal of the procedures, and their replacement with a strengthened ACAS Code of Practice. We suspect that the devil will be in the detail and we will monitor the position closely. The procedures will probably be repealed in 2009, and we will keep Officers and Regions apprised of developments.

We also argued in our response to the consultation on Procedural Fairness in Unfair Dismissal Cases, that this would be the opportunity to re-instate the long-standing case of *Polkey*, which holds that a procedurally unfair dismissal is an unfair dismissal (though compensation can be reduced for so called “contributory fault”). We understand that the Government is intending to re-instate the Polkey principle which had been abolished in October 2004 when the statutory disputes resolution procedures were introduced.

We have also argued, in the same consultation, that it is now time to abolish the so called “range of reasonable responses” test from unfair dismissal cases. This is a longstanding GMB demand. We await the response from the Government at the time of writing this report.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT LAW

The Employment Simplification Bill also contains provisions to provide trade unions with greater autonomy to determine who their members are. This follows the public consultation, which we responded to, on the ASLEF case (which concerned that union’s decision to expel a member of the BNP). We await the final draft rules with interest.

We continue to provide day to day support to the Union's Officers on individual employment law matters, though as previously collective issues and policy matters remain the Legal Department's priority.

TRADE UNION LEGAL SERVICES

We continue to play our part in defending trade union legal services from attack. We have worked with the TUC and other unions in resisting proposals to increase the County Courts Small Claims Limit to £5,000. We made submissions to the Department of Constitutional Affairs on the Code of Practice which exempts trade unions from the new rules that relate to "claims farmers" under the Compensation Act 2006. We will continue to lobby hard to prevent any adverse impact on trade union legal services that might arise in the present Legal Services Bill.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Barry Smith was Secretary to the Congress 2007 Standing Orders Committee (SOC). He is Secretary to the Congress 2008 SOC.

PENSIONS DEPARTMENT

1. ACTIONS TAKEN ON MOTIONS CARRIED IN CONGRESS 2007

Motion 63 – Pensionable Age

We have continued to press for a reversal of the government's decision to increase the state pension age to 68 by 2044. GMB's campaign has continued in the press, in relevant government consultation responses and in meetings with the Pensions Ministers and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

Motion 64 – Pensions

GMB continue to campaign for a cash injection to the basic state pension and the restoration of the link to earnings. In addition we have continued to apply pressure on the government to remove reliance on means testing in the provision of core pension benefits. Again these policy priorities have been pursued through the press, consultation responses and meetings with Ministers and the Secretary of State. We have also developed a cooperative relationship with the National Pensioners Convention and have participated in their conferences and fringe meetings promoting the union's agenda on these and other pension issues.

Motion 66 – A New and Fairer Pension Scheme

GMB is at the centre of the process for developing Personal Accounts, the new workplace based pension arrangement that will be introduced in 2012. We continue to meet Ministers and civil servants as they develop the detail of the new scheme. GMB has already had a number of recommendations accepted by government relating to the enforcement of employer obligations associated with Personal Accounts and we will continue to ensure they are a secure and advantageous mechanism for saving.

Motion 67 – Pensions

GMB is part of the trade union review group for the Financial Assistance Scheme alongside Amicus and Community. Throughout this year we have worked with the DWP to improve the efficiency of the FAS and increase the payments to eligible members. This and the continued lobbying of the government for increased funding for the FAS has culminated in the publication of the Young Review and the Pensions Bill which provide additional funds and therefore benefits for those in FAS.

Motion 68 – Pensions

We are working with the government to ensure that Personal Accounts, when established, provide a valuable mechanism for pension saving for atypical workers who previously would not have had access to occupational pension provision. The introduction of Personal Accounts should mean that many of those workers who have historically fallen through the net will now have a right to save and a right to employer contributions to their pension saving.

Motion 69 – Pension Changes for Former FTAs

GMB continues to argue against the pension discrimination of any groups of workers. Although we have had successes this year in defeating all the major attacks on workers' pension saving that were threatened through the government's Deregulation Review, there has been little opportunity to improve retrospective protection. We will continue to seek better access and security for workplace saving irrespective of the type of contract held by the individual.

2. SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT & ORGANISING

Website

GMB's Pensions Department maintains a subsite of the main GMB website, which can be seen at www.gmb.org.uk/pensions

The website aims to keep members and officers updated on both the work of the Department and changes in the world of pensions in the UK. It also acts as a means of advertising the work on pensions done by GMB to prospective members. Particular focus is given to the politics of pension reforms, public sector pension schemes, general occupational pension issues and trustee issues. Over 70 documents were posted on the website in 2007.

The site also links to external sites which give information on pension legislation, advice on the state pensions, public sector pension schemes and other statutory pension bodies. A comprehensive guide to the Local Government Pension Scheme and a useful member retirement checklist can also be obtained from the site. The latest news section on the site's homepage details recent additions.

The Department is also involved in running the Public Sector Pensions Campaign webpage and the Age Discrimination section of the website.

GMB Pensions Handbook

In the Autumn, the Department published a 76-page guide to pensions called "Pensions – GMB Putting You in the Picture". This is intended as an introductory guide to pensions and can be read as a whole or used as a reference book. It will be particularly useful for officers or shop stewards who may be advising or negotiating on pensions or to those who simply would like an increased understanding of their pension arrangements. The guide focuses on pensions payable from the State, occupational pension schemes, personal pension schemes, GMB's role in the pensions world and recent developments in pensions. Copies of the GMB Pensions Handbook should be requested from GMB Regional Offices.

MNT Network

The Department continues to support the 150 strong member nominated trustee database. The trustees have received numerous mailings throughout the year which include bulletins, briefings and publications from external sources such as the Pensions Regulator.

Press

During the course of the year the Department produced a number of press releases on policy and individual industrial issues and seeks to maintain GMB's high profile on pensions through involvement with other organisations such as the National Pensioners' Convention.

3. INDUSTRIAL SUPPORT

The Pensions Department continues to support the new industrial sections of GMB. The Department has been involved in numerous negotiations and consultations both at a national and regional level. Unfortunately however, there have been a number of scheme closures, forced transfers and other significant alterations to members' pension benefits.

Commercial Services

The Pensions Department has provided ongoing support to national officials including substantial work on pension issues occurring with employers such as the nuclear industry, DHL, Ofgem and the NUJ. This has involved responding to consultation documents, advising regional representatives, attending meetings and producing member communication bulletins. The Department is involved in establishing a pension forum at Wincanton with the aim of ensuring effective communication throughout the company.

Centrica started a consultation in December over various proposed changes to the pension schemes. Centrica's determination to reduce member security by removing the ballot rule where members must be balloted over any potential changes to the scheme is being met with resistance. The Department is also supporting the section to prevent Centrica implementing a number of other detrimental proposals, including implementing a money purchase pension for new employees in the Services section of the business. In addition, Ofgem mounted an attack on members' pensions in the gas distribution section. The Department supported the National Secretary in resisting the proposal to limit the funding made available to pensions schemes.

Manufacturing

Major issues have arisen in Remploy and United Biscuits this year with regard to their pension schemes and the Department has been heavily involved in the discussions with both these employers for much of 2007. In United Biscuits this culminated in an improved offer from the company following a consultative ballot of members across four unions led by GMB. The Department have attended numerous meetings regarding Remploy's pension scheme including meeting a number of the trustees of the scheme along with their advisers. The valuation is imminent and the Pensions Department will continue to support the section in ensuring the scheme is adequately funded. The Department has also been involved in pension consultations in companies such as Ibstock, Pilkington Glass and FinnForest.

Public Services

GMB's Pensions Department continues to devote significant resources to supporting the negotiations on the new Local Government Pension Schemes in England & Wales and Scotland. In addition to meetings with government officials, employers and other trade unions, the Department has submitted over eleven formal responses to LGPS consultations. The Department has also produced more than thirty briefing papers for members, GMB officers and other stakeholders most of which are available through the Department's webpage.

Following the Public Sector Forum agreement the Department has been involved with the negotiations on both the NHS and Civil Service pension schemes. GMB holds the seat representing the industrial trade unions in the civil service negotiations. Both have developed a new scheme for new joiners with a pension age of 65. The NHS retains a final salary pension scheme while the civil service has implemented a career average revalued earnings scheme with a strong accrual rate of a 2.3%. A guide to the civil service pension scheme has been produced and a NHS guide is being prepared.

In addition, the Department has been involved in addressing pension and age discrimination issues with the Legal Services Commission and The Rent Service.

Regions

Regionally, the Department has assisted members at Luxfer, B Braun, QinetQ, British Dental Association and Bayer Cropscience among others. This has involved supporting regional officers, attending meetings, producing member communications, drafting press releases and writing to the companies involved setting out GMB's position on pension changes. In Bayer Cropscience the Department and Region were successful in obtaining negotiating rights over the money purchase section of the pension scheme.

4. POLICY/POLITICAL LOBBYING

In addition to the specific actions taken on Congress 2007 motions, the Department has also been active in detailed work on pensions policy and implementation issues with Ministers and civil servants from the Department for Work and Pensions, The Pensions Regulator and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Particular attention was paid to the Deregulation of Pensions Review where the Department successfully lobbied for significantly less drastic reforms than were originally proposed. Participation in the Financial Assistance Scheme Review Group has meant GMB has been central to the successful campaign to improve the level of benefits provided through FAS. The Department has also been seeking to improve the benefits provided by the Pension Protection Fund, in particular focusing on the lack of provision of ill health pension access in the PPF.

2007 saw one major Pensions Bill progress into an Act and another launched in December. GMB continues to play an active part in the stakeholder dialogue on the development of new Pensions legislation. In addition, the Pensions Department has continued to coordinate the union's work on age

discrimination and has been working with the DWP to clarify the new legislation and seek fair and sustainable resolutions to issues raised by the introduction of anti age discrimination laws.

5. CASEWORK

The Pensions Department continues to advise on, and manage, a large number of cases and queries originating from all nine Regions. In 2007 the Department received over 200 new cases of which approximately 60% related to individual member queries or problems and 40% related to industrial matters. Replies to the vast majority of these cases are sent within one week of receipt.

In all cases, the Department acts in support of full time representative officers and will advise or take on casework as appropriate. As such individual and industrial cases should be submitted from a regional officer in the first instance. Pensions Department will keep regional officers advised on case progress at all times.

The Department deals with pension cases on all pension schemes operating in the UK: occupational, state, personal and stakeholder schemes. The cases worked on within the Pensions Department are complex and frequently involve Internal Disputes Resolution Procedures, the Pensions Regulator, Pensions Ombudsman, Financial Ombudsman, and/or the Financial Services Authority.

Some of the more complex cases, particularly those concerning individual pension rights can take a significant length of time to resolve, particularly when ill health pensions are being disputed and medical evidence is required. The Department recognises the anxiety that uncertainty and grievances relating to pensions can cause and aims to deal with all individual queries in an efficient and sensitive manner.

6. COMMITTEES AND CONFERENCES

The Department attended the following conferences and events to provide information to members and represent GMB to other organisations: NHS lay delegates' health conference, RMA annual conference, NAPF local government conference, National Pensioners' Convention conference, TUC Trustees' Conference, an age discrimination seminar organised by the Employers' Forum on Age and a Pensions Deregulation Consultation Event organised by the Department for Work and Pensions.

The joint GMB-UNITE (T&G) Local Government Pensions Committee organised by the Department continues to meet quarterly and the annual conference was held in November at the T&G's Eastbourne Centre with over 100 attendees.

7. TRAINING

The Department has continued to develop and grow the pensions training programme, which was re-launched in April 2005. Most Regions have now received the Officer training course, which was a one day course.

The national advanced pension course was hosted by GMB North West and Irish Region in October. The course was a five day course and was over-subscribed with twenty members including three Officers participating. The course was invaluable for the trustees and those requiring advanced pensions knowledge.

The Department has continued to develop the member training programme. Predominantly a two day introductory pension course is run in Regional offices. This has been delivered for five Regions during the course of 2007. There was also a scheme specific course run for Remploy national reps in April.

8. STAFFING

In November Heidi Benzing, Pensions Research and Policy Officer, reduced her pensions workload. Heidi splits her time between the Pensions Department and the Political Department. Within the Pensions Department she is in the process of handing over various industrial responsibilities. However, Heidi will maintain management of the pensions training programme for both officers and members.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

The Political Department has had a productive year and has supported various campaigns, meetings and elections. We have continued to increase GMB profile at all levels of the political process.

The National Political Officer, Iain McNicol, was joined in the Political Department by Steve Kemp and Heidi Benzing. Steve Kemp joins GMB from NUM and Heidi moved from the Pensions Department. Heidi will retain running the pensions training programme.

1. ACTIONS TAKEN ON MOTIONS CARRIED IN CONGRESS 2007

Composite 4, Motion 72 & Motion 73

With regards to Composite 4 and Motions 72 and 73, we continue to press the Government for increased employment rights. This will feature as part of the next Labour Party manifesto discussions.

Motion 82

With regards to Motion 82, the concerns expressed in the motion have been raised direct with Ministers and the Government in communications. To date, we have not had a response.

Motion 83

Similarly with Motion 83 on Insolvency, these issues have been raised with Government, we await a response.

Composite 6

GMB is playing a key role in the Temporary Agency campaign (see section below).

Composite 8

With regard to Composite 8, the Political Department has made many representations to the DTI now DBERR on the actions of gangmasters and the expansion of the GLA to cover other sections of the economy.

Composite 9 & 15

These composites recommendations' have featured highly in this year's political work. See section below on Private Equity. A number of meetings have also taken place with the Treasury and other Government Departments to progress fair pay and economic concerns.

Composite 17

In many respects the sentiments of this composite were overtaken by events at last year's congress. GMB invited all 6 deputy leadership candidates to Congress for a hustings event. Following the speeches and question and answer session, Congress took the decision to support Peter Hain for Deputy Leadership. The results from the ballot of GMB members is listed below. The most important note is that where we recommended Peter Hain, GMB members respected the recommendation and voted to support him. Peter won nearly 20,000 more first preference votes than any other candidate.

- Hilary Benn 4,659
- Hazel Blears 2,322
- John Cruddas 3,734
- Peter Hain 24,118
- Harriet Harman 3,834
- Alan Johnson 3,495

Motion 180, Motion 181 & Composite 19

Following these motions, a new political strategy paper was put to the CEC, the recommendations of this, which are clearly in line with these motions are now being implemented.

Motion 183 & Motion 184

The executive and senior officials who deal with the Labour Party have as the motion requires vigorously opposed any legislation that will weaken the Trade Union Labour Party link. Especially the General Secretary who has robustly defended GMB position in meetings with Jack Straw.

Composite 18, Motion 189 & Motion 191

The implementation of the Warwick agreement has been at the forefront of the Political Department's work. Many meetings have taken place in our drive to ensure all aspects are implemented before the next General Election. A full report will be made to the CEC. GMB took the lead on pensions where there were 10 pledges, 6 of these have been complete, 2 are in progress and 2 are still outstanding. Labour party conference policy making is in a trial process for the next 2 years. We will be monitoring the new system and if not satisfied will, as Motion 189 demands, help make the Labour Party understand the need for democracy.

Motion 191

Motion 191 was passed with a qualification about how the regions work with their politicians. Not withstanding this, the Political Department has endeavoured to show how much each of our MP's does or does not support the union. This information is being used to assess support.

Motion 191

We continue to lobby the Government over the political levy ballot (Motion 195). Some of these discussions are tied up and have progressed further in the current funding of political parties debate.

Composite 20, Motion 198 & Motion 199

This features heavily in the continuing work of GMB Scotland.

Motion 198

No discussions are currently taking place on the future of the House of Lords (Motion 198). Once they do we will make GMB position known.

Motion 199

Representation was made in relation to Motion 199.

Motion 202

See section on Anti fascist Anti BNP work

Motion 227, Motion 228, Motion 229, Motion 230 & Motion 231

These request GMB's involvement in the housing debate, this has been ongoing and discussions took place at the Labour Party conference. Subsequent meetings have also taken place with different Housing Ministers. The points made in the Motions were raised directly.

Motion 232

We have written to Government regarding council tax banding. No response has yet been received.

2. WESTMINSTER OFFICE

The House of Commons office has continued to provide a useful base to arrange lobbies, meetings and receptions. A reception was held at the House for members of the CEC in November 2007. A large number of meetings have been organised in the House of Commons with MPs, where various GMB representations have been made. For example, we held 3 meetings in the Commons for the members of the Interpreters Branch. We also met and briefed over 30 MPs on Remploy.

3. LABOUR PARTY

Mary Turner and Debbie Coulter (NEC representatives) have continued to play an integral role in holding the Labour Party and Prime Minister to account. Issues raised include; two tier work force issues, asbestosis and Remploy. We have continued to take a central role in policy discussions through the National Policy Forum and are in the process of arranging a substantial contribution to the Partnership in Power consultation documents.

4. LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

GMB made a strong and positive contribution to the annual conference in September 2007. The GMB motion on Remploy was carried after an extensive compositing session (the last ever Labour Party composite). In addition, 4 delegates spoke on the conference floor and many more participated in the policy sessions.

5. PARLIAMENTARY PANEL

There have been 6 rounds of interviews for the Parliamentary Panel. 38 people have been successful and have been put forward to the Labour Party.

GMB Parliamentary Panel candidates have been successful in a number of constituencies which include;

- Swansea West
- Nuneaton and Bedworth
- Bristol West
- Brentwood and Ongar
- Kensington and Chelsea
- Guildford
- Kettering.

6. GOVERNMENT

Over the last year, regular meetings have been arranged with Government Ministers and Departments. These have ranged from meetings with Ministers and the General Secretary to National Officers, Regional Officers, Branch Officers and members.

Gordon Brown	Prime Minister
Tony Blair	When Prime Minister
Alistair Darling	Chancellor of the Exchequer
Ed Balls	Secretary of State for Children, Schools & Families
John Healey	Minister – Department for Communities & Local Government
Yvette Cooper	Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Jack Straw	Secretary of State for Justice
Phil Woolas	Minister – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Jim Knight	Minister – Schools and Learners
Jim Murphy	Minister – State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Hazel Blears	Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Anne McGuire	Parliamentary Under Secretary – Work & Pensions
Gerry Sutcliffe	Parliamentary Under Secretary – Culture, Media & Sport
Alan Johnson	Secretary of State for Health
Hilary Benn	Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
John Hutton	Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform
Peter Hain	Former Secretary of State – Work & Pensions
Shahid Malik	Minister – International Development

7. LOCAL ELECTIONS

The Political Department assisted with Local Elections throughout the country during 2007. The most notable result being Nottingham Local Elections, in consultation with Midlands and East Coast Region, GMB offered financial and organisational support using new campaigning techniques. The result was an increase of 10 Labour Councillors and a local authority Labour Party looking to build relations with GMB. This joint working will deliver benefits to Nottingham members.

In addition, we supported the Elections in both Wales and Scotland, including coordinating a direct mail strategy in Wales. Remploy print services were threatened with closure so in an attempt to help and stave off the closure we used their print works to run the direct mail work - to great effect.

8. REGIONAL POLITICAL OFFICERS

There have been a number of meetings throughout the year with the Regional Political Officers to exchange information and co-ordinate political work. This has continued to allow the sharing of best practice and highlight Regional experiences and approaches.

The Regional Political Officers are:

Richard Ascough	Southern
Justin Bowden	London
Pamela Drake	South Western
Martin Hird	Birmingham & West Midlands
Cheryl Pidgeon	Midland & East Coast
Steve Jennings	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire
Glyn Thornton	North West & Irish
Julie Elliott	Northern
Richard Leonard	Scotland

9. POLITICAL EDUCATION

The Department organised two regional training briefing events one for Birmingham the other for Southern Region. Both events took place in Westminster; officers were given presentations from MPs and political advisers, with discussion and debate on benefit of GMB involvement in the political process. We will be seeking to roll this out in 2008 and a number of other regions are looking to do the same. Lay reps political training will also be rolled out during 2008.

10. CAMPAIGNING/LOBBYING

Mayoral/Greater London Assembly Elections

The Political Department is working closely with both TULO and Ken Livingstone's office to co-ordinate our support for the 2008 elections. The campaign will include 3 direct mails to the 5 target GLA constituencies: Lambeth & Southwark, Enfield & Haringey, Brent & Harrow, Ealing & Hillingdon and Barnet & Camden. In addition, all other constituencies will receive 1 direct mail.

Pleural Plaques

The Department is working with the Health and Environment team to forward our campaign on Pleural Plaques. We have co-ordinated various meetings in Parliament with different MPs along with emailing an Early Day Motion to MPs. In addition, a number of press releases were issued including an article for Tribune. The Department organised a lobby of Parliament which occurred in January 2008.

Remploy

The Political Department has been heavily involved in the campaign to save Remploy factories. We have worked closely with the National Secretary to communicate to all MP's, relevant Government Ministers and Departments the importance of finding a secure future for Remploy. We worked together to develop a new business plan as an alternative to Remploy Management proposals, and met intensively with MP's and Government officials, as well as Remploy management, to show how an alternative future for Remploy would work and be in the best interests for workers, and other stakeholders. To date the Government has agreed that the number of factories earmarked for closure or merger should be reduced from 43 to 28 factories, and we are continuing to work to save the remaining factories.

Early Day Motions

The following Early Day Motions were circulated to MPs with requests for support:

EDM 809	FUTURE OF REMPLOY
EDM 742	EACHERS' PAY SETTLEMENT

EDM 638	CARMEN MAYUSA
EDM 692	AGENCY WORKERS
EDM 501	REFERENDUM IN VENEZUELA
EDM 532	PLEURAL PLAQUES AND THE LAW LORDS' DECISION
EDM 421	REMPLOY COMPROMISE PROGRAMME
EDM 368	INVESTMENT IN COUNCIL HOUSING
EDM 305	HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN GAZA
EDM 113	IMMIGRATION STATUS OF SENIOR CARE WORKERS

ANTI-BNP

As a result of the GMB strong anti fascist and anti racist organising activities in 2007, through the Hope Not hate campaign, we have now trained over 70 activists and officers in key regions, where we have membership strength, in on the ground organising and new campaigning initiatives. We have been the lead union in combating the racist and fascist threat of the BNP and their politics of race hate, and community dissolution with the political process.

We have started making the GMB bespoke interactive DVD and campaign literature for activists, branches and regions on anti fascist/anti racist politics. We have depicted the GMB's leadership in these activities from Cable Street in the east end of London over 70 years ago and fighting Mosely and the British Union of Fascists, to our membership heroics in fighting Franco's and Hitler's fascists in the 30's and 40's, right through to the National Front of the late 70's and the modern equivalent of the BNP today. The DVD is being designed to also be a teaching aid for regional anti fascist/anti racist courses, as well as an in-depth visual aid for Branches and Regions to provoke discussion and dialogue of the threat that right wing extremist activity is having in our communities and society overall.

In the past year we have organised against the BNP in Sandwell and Dudley in the West Midlands, where as a union we took the lead initiative in organising teams in wards where the BNP had gained seats in recent years. In one particular event, we helped secure a turnout of over 220 activists in a single day, with our union helping to secure Billy Bragg to help out. As a result the initiative helped deliver door to door delivery of a specially commissioned tabloid Hope Not Hate newspaper, explaining to locals the real extremists in the local BNP party make up. As a result the BNP share of the vote reduced, and they also lost seats.

In Barking and Dagenham: our growing network of activists/stewards and local Officers from GMB London Region have played an integral part in organising against the BNP and their do nothing councillors. There is still a great deal of work to be done in getting rid of the 11 BNP councillors. But through the activity, training and organising skills of our activists we have built some good solid foundations to help an all out concerted attack to remove the fascist BNP from office, and reduce their share of the vote at the next elections.

In West Yorkshire: GMB activists in the Yorkshire Hope Not Hate anti fascist group have played an integral role in organising against the BNP in Morley and Robin Hood on the outskirts of Leeds and Wakefield. They have also ensured the Hope Not Hate 2007 anti fascist fortnight was a resounding success in the cities of Leeds, Sheffield and Bradford, which put a serious dent in the BNP's votes, and helped to deselect local councillors in Bradford and elsewhere. There is no doubt that there are still some major problems in West and South Yorkshire from the threat of organised fascism. This is in part due to the shrinking trade union membership from a variety of communities as a result of the collapse and closure of traditional industries, such as coal, steel, rail freight, engineering, manufacturing and textiles since the mid 1980's. This has left those communities disengaged, and a feeling of being ignored. However through Hope Not Hate, GMB activists, the Regional TUC and other affiliated trade union organisations, there is now a concerted and organised effort to combat the BNP and its politics of Hatred.

Other regions throughout 2007: the North West and Scotland took part in various initiatives. Most notably the GMB sponsored Billy Bragg Hope Not Hate tour, and the Hope Not Hate/Daily Mirror red bus tour. This celebrated modern Britain and our cultural diversity. It utilised celebrities, linked up with communities and trade unions through an anti fascist fortnight of political and cultural activity. The event finished in Glasgow, with the now Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, speaking against the scourge of

political extremism and the politics of Hatred. Other notable celebrities came from Emmerdale, Coronation Street, Eastenders, the music industry, boxing, football and ruby.

GMB is also gearing up for the Hope Not Hate 2008 anti fascist fortnight. We are supporting and helping to organise initiatives with searchlight, the TUC, and other TUC affiliated trade unions to embark on the Big Red Bus tour, along with three major events in London.

In late 2007 we utilised the facilities of the Holocaust Educational Trust for anti fascist organising and training for key activists from Remploy and the manufacturing section. We could consider organising a trip each year to the former Nazi concentration camp Auschwitz for some of our activists. At the moment we are considering how best we can organise this activity if indeed it is decided to support this regular initiative.

Our continued organisational approach in all our anti fascist activities in the last year has been based on the following:

- engaging with people on the doorstep;
- promoting the politics of hope; and
- dispelling the myths, lies and the politics of Hatred of the BNP

We have aimed to reinvigorate and regenerate local political activity along with involvement in the political process. We have pursued the positive promotion of GMB policies at all times.

On a personal note, I have enjoyed the last three years helping to coordinate the GMB National anti fascist/anti racist campaigns. Sometimes it has been tough, and sometimes due to the BNP resources, and in part due to some of the mainstream political parties abandonment of some of our communities, all seemed hopeless and an uphill struggle. However utilising an approach based on political engagement, encouraging cooperation, persuading, utilising and harnessing the great talents of our members and activists we have built some great organising initiatives. We have put in place organising and training on a bespoke model that the TUC now use. In key areas where we have membership strength, we have the capacity along with others to pose a formidable and confident threat to the BNP. I am pleased that the political unit nationally will be taking over these initiatives and I wish my successor Steve Kemp every success in helping coordinate these important membership, workplace and community initiatives.

(Mick Rix – National Officer)

Temporary Agency Workers

The Warwick agreement in 2004 which GMB participated in concluded that a key element of the agreement was a commitment from the Labour Party to support the principles of the European Directive on temporary and agency workers. Significantly if the Labour Government could not reach an agreement on this issue with Europe then Labour would introduce protection for agency workers within British law.

GMB has been at the forefront of the campaign to protect agency workers. Many of whom are treated appallingly. They regularly finding themselves on very low wages, poor terms and conditions and working for anti-union employers. GMB has also been active in campaigning for migrant workers who are often employed on agency terms, and permanent employees who find their negotiated terms and conditions attacked. In many cases this leads to social division in the workplace and beyond.

GMB therefore is supporting the Private Member's Bill submitted by Andrew Miller MP which is to be heard in Parliament 22 February. The subject of the Bill will be the provision of protection for agency workers.

Because progress has all but stalled in Europe - due to the British Government's actions - the Temporary and Agency Workers (Equal Treatment) Bill provides a superb chance and indeed an opportunity to progress this issue through the UK parliament.

GMB were outraged last year when a Private Member's bill on a similar topic was 'talked out' in parliament. Hopefully this Bill will have the support it deserves and agency workers will have the same rights as everybody at the workplace. The Tories, right wing press and the CBI are already saying that it will put thousands of people out of work and close businesses down. These are exactly the same arguments put forward to attack the National Minimum Wage from the same organizations.

Private Equity

The Political Department worked closely with Southern Region officials, and the National Legal and Press Departments to create a successful campaign to highlight our concerns related to our experiences of the negative aspects of a private equity takeover of the AA. The campaign attracted national media attention, as well as raising so many questions at Government level that a Treasury Select Committee hearing was called, at which GMB gave evidence. We have produced numerous reports and responses to national consultations by Government, and related industry groups. We are also contributing to the national debate by speaking at conferences and to the media on a regular basis. The Department is currently working jointly with Unite to support a Bill brought forward by John Heppel MP, to extend TUPE protections to workers in private equity takeovers.

Nottingham Tram Safety

The National Political Officer took a delegation of members, stewards and officers from Midlands and East Coast region to meet Tom Harris MP, the Transport Minister. The issue of violence against Nottingham Tram staff and more generally transport staff was raised. The minister explained how he was willing to assist where he could and Department officials were asked to further assist.

APPOINTMENT AND ELECTION OF OFFICIALS

1 JANUARY 2007 – 31 DECEMBER 2007

APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL SECRETARY

Tim Roache, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL SECRETARY

Gary Smith, Commercial Services Section

APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL OFFICER

Mick Rix

ELECTION OF NATIONAL OFFICER

Mick Rix

APPOINTMENT OF EQUALITY & INCLUSION OFFICER

Kamaljeet Jandu

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS

London Region	-	-	Warren Kenny Richard O'Leary
Midland & East Coast Region	-		Sue Boyd

APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR ORGANISERS

Midland & East Coast Region	-	Martin Allen
North West & Irish Region	-	Terry Mellor

ELECTION OF ORGANISERS

London Region	-	-	Mick Ainsley
			Stephanie Attwood
			Richard O'Leary

Midland & East Coast	-	-	Sue Boyd
North West & Irish Region	-	-	Sandra Blight
	-	-	Brian Derbyshire
	-	-	Karen Lewis
	-	-	Colin Priest
South Western Region	-	-	Kelly Andrews
	-	-	Rob Gibbs
	-	-	Gareth Morgan

APPOINTMENT OF ORGANISING OFFICERS

Midland & East Coast Region	-	-	Shaune Clarkson
	-	-	Colin Wyhatt
Northern Region	-	-	Michael Blench
Southern Region	-	-	Donna Dowling
	-	-	Brendan Kemp
	-	-	Jim McDermott
	-	-	Nicola Nixon
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region	-	-	Bob McNeill
	-	-	Jon Smith

GOLD BADGE AND YOUTH AWARDS 2007

MEN'S GOLD BADGE

The GMB Men's Gold Badge recipient in 2007 was Albert Rollinson (Midland & East Coast Region). Albert was nominated for the TUC Safety Rep Award 2007

WOMEN'S GOLD BADGE

The GMB Women's Gold Badge recipient in 2007 was Edna Rolph (London Region). Edna was nominated for the TUC Women's Award 2007

AWARD FOR YOUTH

The GMB Youth Award recipient in 2007 was Lucinda Yeadon (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region). Lucinda was not nominated for the TUC Youth Award 2008 as she did not meet their qualifying age limit.

DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

I am conscious as I am writing my report that by Congress 2008 I will no longer hold the post of Deputy General Secretary. As delegates will be aware I announced to the Central Executive Committee in December 2007 that it was not my intention to seek nominations for the DGS position. I did not reach this decision lightly but am convinced that it is the right decision. I have been privileged to have held this post for the past 5 years and am honoured to have been able to represent my union in a leadership role.

A significant proportion of my time this past year has been centred on my role as a Labour Party National Executive Committee Officer. Even the most casual political observer will be aware that the Party has been beset by problems in relation to party funding and at the time of writing this report there are a number of external and internal reviews and inquiries which will address how these difficulties arose and determine what measures will be undertaken to ensure that there is no repeat of past

mistakes. In addition, the NEC are to receive reports on the fund-raising efforts by Deputy Leadership candidates with a view to capping spending limits and installing additional guidelines to avoid a repeat of the arms-race spending witnessed during the 2007 campaign which I know many delegates have expressed concern about.

Myself and Mary Turner continue to represent GMB interests on the NEC as well as participating in a number of NEC sub-committees and I continue to co-convene the Joint Policy Commission and Mary co-convenes the Health Policy Commission.

The National Policy Forum on 24-27 July 2008 will consider six policy documents produced by Labour's policy commissions and the NPF, setting out the key challenges in our next manifesto for a fourth term Labour government. The six second year documents are:

- Prosperity and Work
- Britain in the World.
- Creating Sustainable Communities
- Crime, Justice, Citizenship and Equalities
- Education and Skills
- Health

GMB representatives on the NPF are Paul Kenny, Mary Turner, Debbie Coulter, Joe Morgan, Jean Chaplow and Linda Clarke. Your NPF representatives have throughout 2007 contributed to the policy documents via the NPF Conferences and policy commissions and GMB will be submitting final comments to be considered at the July NPF.

Throughout the past year I have been working with the TUC Commission on Vulnerable Employment (CoVE). As one of 16 Commission members drawn from employer, academic, trade union and civil society backgrounds, we have been meeting with people who are in vulnerable work, running a public consultation and undertaking new research into the issues surrounding vulnerable employment. The Commission will be producing its final report during 2008 and its recommendations will consider how government, civil society organisations, employers and trade unions can work together to improve the lives of Britain's most vulnerable workers. This body of work will hopefully compliment the work of the DTI established Vulnerable Worker Enforcement Forum who is tasked with exploring how enforcement of employment rights and safety standards, in particular for vulnerable workers, can be improved.

Congress 2007 accepted the following recommendations contained in my report *Progressing Equalities Issues in the GMB*:

1. The current separate equality bodies be replaced by a single equality body which will bring together GMB equality experts and act as a single source of information, advice and guidance, a single point of contact for all stakeholders
2. The newly-formed GMB National Equalities Forum will be responsible for driving the union's equality and diversity agenda and providing a powerful vision and a strategic direction to our organization.
3. The National Equalities Forum will comprise of:-
 - 2 representatives specialising on gender based equality issues
 - 2 representatives specialising in race based issues
 - 2 representatives specialising in LGBT issues
 - 2 representatives specialising in young member issues
 - 2 representatives specialising in disability issues
 - 2 representatives specialising in migrant worker issues
 - 1 National Officer specialising in Equality and Diversity
4. Regions to organize an annual Equalities event to profile the equalities work of the GMB and to elect representatives to attend National Conferences for each of the separate equality strands.

5. National Conferences for each equalities strand will be held annually and will aim to be proactive and inclusive of a broad range of members. The National Conferences will be advisory but they will have the ability to submit one motion to GMB Annual Congress.
6. The post of National Equality & Diversity officer is established to develop the function of the National Equalities Forum and to mainstream equalities throughout all sections of the GMB.
7. A working group consisting of Representatives from the CEC Organisation Sub-Committee, SMT, Equalities National Officer and lay officers from the respective Equality Committees meet at the earliest opportunity to progress these proposals and agree a more detailed workable equalities framework.

Discussions with all stakeholder groups have continued throughout the year to ensure that there is clear understanding of our objectives and I can confirm that the working group identified in paragraph 7 met in July 2007 to begin the process of implementing the recommendations. However, it soon became clear to the working group that the prerequisite to developing this new agenda was the appointment of a National Equality and Diversity Officer. In December 2007, we appointed Kamaljeet Jandu to this post and he has subsequently presented his Equality and Inclusion Strategy to the Senior Management Team and the CEC for endorsement.

I am convinced that the new equalities structure will allow for genuine involvement and engagement of activists on equality related issues that will be linked to our campaigning and organising agenda and the real life experiences of our membership. Our equalities work will be the envy of other trade unions and I have every confidence in Kamaljeet's ability to drive the campaign for equal rights for workers and ensure that GMB is at the forefront in the field of equalities.

Each year I commend the work of the RMA who are largely self-organising but lead admirably by Monica Smith as National Secretary. The RMA have had another successful year, buoyed by their new-found financial independence they continue to play a pivotal role within the National Pensioners Convention, hold regular, well-attended regional and national meetings as well as a lively national conference, which was this year attended by fraternal delegates from ASLEF.

2008 will witness the Centenary of the Old Age Pension and our founders were key players in the movement that secured the pension 100 years ago. The RMA are preparing to play a major role in the centenary celebrations which will involve a national and regional rallies and a parliamentary lobby.

Congress 2008 will discuss my report to the CEC which set out to examine the role and responsibilities of the DGS within a revised management structure. Regions are currently consulting on this document and the three options which I have proposed. It is my sincere hope that whatever the outcome of this debate that the Union continues to prosper and maintains the spirit of cooperation and shared sense of purpose that has developed under Paul Kenny's leadership.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

INTRODUCTION

Since last year's Congress a great deal of work has gone into setting up the new Section, particularly with the appointment of staff and officers. The new Section National Committee has met and agreed a plan for the Section in 2008. The focus will be growing the Section, building Shop Steward organisation and campaigning on behalf of members.

SECURITY INDUSTRY

The security industry remains a high priority organising area for GMB with massive potential for membership growth. As such, much work has been done over the last few months to identify key objectives, target companies and to develop a strategic approach, to ensure that a robust organising and negotiating agenda is delivered for GMB members.

To that end the Commercial Services National Committee agreed a detailed strategic report at its January meeting to:

- Further develop collective bargaining structures

- Undertake membership mapping
- Build a sustainable shop stewards network
- Develop a robust industrial agenda
- Begin a campaign around standards and training
- Identify target companies for medium and long term development.

i. Cash and Valuables in Transit

A key area of our work continues to be our attacks campaign. Following pressure and lobbying from GMB, the Home Office convened a conference on the issue of CVIT attacks. This involved major stakeholders including senior police officers, the banking industry association, local government, CVIT employers and GMB. Following on from this conference, a Government Minister now chairs a regular round table of all the stakeholders on the issue of CVIT attacks. As a result of our work we have seen increased police activity in high attack areas. This has had a positive impact on the number of attacks. However, the overall levels of attacks still remain too high.

GMB has also influenced the debate on parking restrictions for CVIT vehicles. There has been a reduction in the number of parking penalties issued to CVIT vehicles and in many areas it is becoming easier for our members to park closer to the establishments they are servicing.

In April there will be a GMB CVIT Conference; this will be attended by around 70 delegates. Vernon Coaker, Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, has agreed to speak.

In the Spring GMB will do a presentation to the European Commission on Third Party Violence. This will specifically focus on CVIT Attacks.

ii. G4S Cash Services

There has been no pay claim submitted for G4S road crews as they are still covered by a multi year deal. Admin & Clerical Staff settled for 3.5%.

New collective bargaining machinery has been established, after protracted negotiations. The new agreement strengthens the position of GMB and enhances lay member democracy.

Negotiations are ongoing about the establishment of a compensation scheme for G4S workers seriously injured in attacks on them whilst at work. This is in line with Congress 2007 Motion 110.

We are also undertaking negotiations over a job evaluation scheme to ensure that G4S Cash is complying with equalities legislation. This is in line with Congress 2007 Motion 38.

iii. G4S Security Services

Membership within this area continues to grow at a steady pace, with the vast majority of recruitment being done at the induction training sessions. Union density is currently around 50%. A lot of work needs to be done to develop strong shop steward organisation.

As part of our strategy to develop the shop steward structure and improve organisational strength, we have delivered on the implementation of new collective bargaining structures. The new structures will strengthen our members' voice within G4S Security Services. The new structures expand the role of the National Negotiating Committee. A priority for the NNC will be seeking improvements to G4S standard contract, which covers 70% of security officers.

In line with GMB@Work we have also undertaken a mapping exercise of the business. This mapping exercise is essential to building the membership and increasing the number of shop stewards, particularly on the Regional Contracts.

The various negotiating bodies for the strategic accounts have continued to meet over the last year, dealing with a range of issues including pay negotiations. All pay offers have been put to the members via consultation ballots. IBM settled for a two-year deal, giving 3.2% and 2.5% respectively. Prime/Trillium settled at 3.2% for one year, and at the time of writing Patrol and Response was still in negotiations.

iv. G4S Aviation Services

Responsibility for Aviation Services transferred to National Office in October. This is a growing area of G4S. There has been a mapping exercise undertaken and we are well placed to develop our membership as the business grows.

Bargaining priorities for Aviation Services have been agreed by the shop stewards. It is anticipated that in April 2008 we will see the introduction of a new national sick pay scheme. This will be a significant improvement and could have profound implications for the wider G4S security services business, which tends to operate on statutory minimums. Delivery of the new sick pay arrangements will be thanks to the efforts of the NNC shop steward team and the London representatives who have pushed this agenda.

Discussions are also under way about improving the current collective bargaining arrangements. This would enhance the role of the national shop stewards and perhaps pave the way for national bargaining on pay.

v. GSL

At the time of writing this report GSL is subject to a proposed buy out by G4S. This is being reviewed by the competition authorities. In respect of GSL Court Services an agreement on pay has yet to be finalised. However, there has been progress in securing agreement in respect of protocols on working time and other associated matters. A government review into court service provision in England and Wales could have significant implications for our members in this sector. Government's proposed cuts in budgets has serious implications for the criminal justice sector as well.

In the past period we have seen damning reports into private sector prisons and detention centres. Such reports will inform our bargaining agenda moving forward. Apart from improving facilities for those who are in the service, it is imperative that the industry addresses the poor pay and conditions of our members in the private sector.

The low pay and long hours culture along with the challenges of working in the criminal justice sector can have a demoralising effect on employees and we will be lobbying Government and employers over these issues. GMB is working with the Prison Officers Association over Section 127 of the Criminal Justice Act. Section 127 continues to prevent our members from taking lawful industrial action. Campaigning to repeal Section 127 will remain a major campaign priority for us.

vi. Securitas

Securitas are the second largest security company in the UK. Although the relationship with Securitas has not yet matured and our membership remains small, progress has now been made on the development of a national and regional collective bargaining and consultation machinery. We have carried out a mapping exercise in the business and the development of a shop stewards structure to populate the current bargaining machinery is a priority.

Despite the generally positive relations with the Company, in January management tried to impose unilateral changes to terms and conditions of employment and have sought to force employees to meet the cost of the SIA licensing fee. GMB is vigorously opposing management's proposals.

vii. Security Plus

Recognition at Security Plus was secured by the North West & Irish Region. The members were serviced out of the North West & Irish Region and at present they are in the midst of a two year pay deal. With the Company now expanding into six GMB Regions it has been agreed that responsibility will now transfer to National Office.

Our priority for the coming year will be to expand our membership and shop steward base on the new sites the Company has opened.

viii. Loomis/Brinks

In August 2007 Loomis acquired Brinks. For a considerable period of time Brinks had struggled to be a financially viable business. Over 300 employees transferred to Loomis under TUPE. In Scotland Brinks employees transferred to G4S. Brinks was previously serviced from our London Region and at the time of writing London Region is pursuing litigation over the mishandling of the TUPE transfer by the companies. The acquisition of Brinks is still subject to a Competition Commission enquiry. Whilst the Brinks NNC remains in place, it will be necessary to put in place a national negotiating machinery for the new business.

The merger process has caused some dislocation in the operating of the Loomis consultation and negotiating arrangements.

ix. Skills For Security

GMB have now actively taken a seat on the Board of Directors. A new NVQ qualification is now planned for the security sector. It is important that we are engaged in this process as this may become a future requirement for licensing. Our involvement in Skills for Security is enhancing the Union's profile and providing us with the opportunity to link learning to our organising agenda. GMB will play a major part in an industry wide conference on the issue of training in June 2008.

DHL

i. DHL Express Domestic & Hubs

The 2008 element of the pay and conditions package has been introduced. Over 2,500 employees from a bargaining unit of 4,500 have received in excess of a 20% increase in pay during the past 20 month period. The remaining employees received between 14% and 18%. In addition there have been improvements to other allowances.

Over the past period, new bargaining structures have been put in place. We have also successfully negotiated a raft of new policies and procedures, including a no-compulsory redundancy agreement. Trading conditions for the Company remain difficult, not least due to the expansion in internet shopping. There will be ongoing restructuring of the business. This restructuring has impacted on membership levels. However, we are now undertaking a process of mapping in the Company and a GMB@Work training course has been set up for senior shop stewards and this will have a positive impact on membership levels in 2008.

There is currently a review going on regarding managerial/ admin & clerical grades. The aim is to try and agree a single pay spine with a properly defined career structure.

ii. DHL Freight

In 2007 DHL Freight established a delineated company from DHL Express. This has meant change in our national bargaining structures. The change in the business structure does give us a platform to grow our membership in DHL Freight.

We have now signed a new national framework agreement covering two areas of the ECO international part of the business as well as Containers. We have made progress in developing the membership in these areas. We have 100% density at Heathrow. The site at East Midlands Airport is being organised in the face of local opposition from another trade union.

At the time of compiling this report DHL Freight Eco pay negotiations are underway. A pay and conditions claim is being compiled for DHL Freight Connect.

iii. DHL Express International

There is no recognition in DHL Express International (except ECO International). But activities across the rest of DHL are raising our profile in DHL Express. We are doing a mapping exercise across the whole of DHL Express. Our resources will be focused on areas of DHL Express where we do have recognition and where there are dual sites between DHL Express Domestic and International.

AVIATION

Whilst the aviation sector continues to grow, the industry is extremely competitive. This presents real challenges in trying to improve terms, conditions and working conditions for our members.

At a strategic level GMB is heavily engaged in debates about the environment and airport expansion. It is difficult to balance environmental considerations, with wider economic considerations and the employment of our members.

GMB is supporting measures to green the industry, arguing for instance, in favour of investment in public transport to get passengers to and from airports. GMB is supporting campaigns calling for investment and expansion at Heathrow and Stansted.

The Union is involved with the TUC in discussions with Government over the future of taxation in aviation.

GROUND HANDLING

Trading conditions in ground handling remain difficult. The growth of low cost airlines continues to exert downward pressure on margins. This is making negotiations with the ground handling companies

difficult. The companies continue to engage in cut throat competition and it seems they are currently engaged in a race to the bottom.

However, huge opportunities remain to grow across the aviation sector. We are putting in place a new stronger recognition agreement for Servisair. New access arrangements have been put in place for recruitment in Servisair. Servisair accepted a 2 year pay deal with an increase in the 1st year of 4.3%.

In Aviance we are starting talks about the future shape of the business and strengthening the lay member structure.

Responsibility for servicing British Airways has returned to National Office.

PRIVATE HIRE, CHAUFFEURS AND HACKNEY CARRIAGE CAMPAIGN

Lay activists have developed an excellent campaign around private hire, chauffeurs and hackney carriage drivers. Membership in the sector is growing as a result of the campaigning activities such as around health and safety. The activists' work has been supported by the National Organising Department. Recently there have been representations made to Government over Health and Safety and Operating Licences (in line with Congress 2007 Motion 111). Some of GMB activities on Workers' Memorial Day 2008 will focus on the health and safety of drivers.

CIU CLUBS/ CORCA AGREEMENT

The CORCA NJIC has continued to meet on a regular basis and has dealt with a number of issues facing the sector. Pay negotiations were concluded in September, members accepted a 3.5% headline rate with additional improvements in bank holiday payments and lieu time arrangements. A National Working Group is currently reviewing the responsibilities and pay for Club Stewards.

JARVIS HOTELS

This remains a challenging area in which to work. Union density is poor and consideration will need to be given to how we improve our organisation with this employer. Members accepted a 3.5% increase in pay.

ROADCHEF

The last round of pay negotiations raised 400 employees above the National Minimum Wage. There will be ongoing discussions with Roadchef about moving further away from the NMW. Membership and shop steward organisation remains patchy.

ASDA

i. ASDA Distribution

Over the course of the year we have continued to make progress in growing the membership in Asda Distribution. We have one new collective agreement at Skelmersdale site. Credit goes to the local Officer and activists for the great work they did in securing this agreement. At the time of writing this report we anticipate that there will be more recognition ballots in the early part of 2008. The National Organising Team are supporting this work.

Pay Settlements are negotiated at a local level and trade union sites continue to have higher levels of settlement than non-unionised sites. The Company constantly pushes the issue of pick rates and productivity. The National Health & Safety Department have been supporting lay activists and the National Secretary in working through ergonomic surveys. Campaigning on ergonomics, pick rates and safety generally will continue to be a major piece of our work. We are currently undertaking a health and safety survey of our members in Distribution.

Proposals to strengthen the current National Shop Stewards Forum and National Joint Council have been tabled by the Trade Union Side and we hope that we will be entering into meaningful negotiation over a new collective bargaining machinery.

The Union is now taking a very robust agenda in Distribution.

ii. ASDA Stores

For the first time in many years the membership is growing in ASDA Stores. Following on from the previous dispute with ASDA we did gain access to new store inductions. However, management continues to try and make recruitment difficult. Credit goes to those activists and Officers who are

growing the Union despite ASDA continuing to be such a challenging environment. The organising activity is supported by the National Organising Team.

Last year we were involved in difficult discussions (in line with Congress 2007 Emergency Motion 1) over new contracts of employment. These contracts are known as "Top Rate". Top Rate is a complicated issue and it impacted on individuals in different ways, with many losing but some apparently gaining. Ultimately the Company imposed Top Rate in August 2007. Although the Trade Union won some concessions through the discussions over Top Rate, the Company rejected the main points raised by the Union in a national grievance.

Again, we are going to develop an assertive agenda for Asda Stores, this will focus upon ensuring that Asda Store workers are not denied the right to collective bargaining through an independent trade union; that the Company adheres to its obligations under equalities law; (in line with Congress 2007 Motions 38 and 141); the rights of GMB Safety Representatives are respected and that there are proper family friendly policies in place. This is in line with Congress 2007 Motions 122 and 123. There will also be a major health and safety survey of ASDA store members.

ENERGY

The issue of energy has again dominated headlines over the past year. Rising fuel and energy prices have had profound implications for all the industries we deal with. The impact has also been felt by our members more generally. GMB has been at the fore in the debate about energy policy. The Union has argued that liberalisation of the UK's energy markets has been a failure and the Government's policy on fuel poverty is in tatters as a result.

GMB has advocated and supported the development of a balanced energy policy which would include clean coal, renewables and nuclear new build. This is in line with Congress 2007 Motions C10, 115 and 119.

Along with colleagues in the Manufacturing Section we are trying to ensure that the implementation of a new energy policy maximises opportunities for employment in UK manufacturing and fabrication.

OFGEM

GMB has campaigned hard against the Gas Distribution Price Review which is overseen by OFGEM. This Review effectively determines budgets for the gas distribution companies for the next five years. Through the consultation OFGEM did raise questions about future pension provision in the gas distribution industry. We made direct representations to OFGEM with the thinly veiled threat of industrial action if they attacked our members' pensions. This combined with our political lobbying has forced OFGEM to back off on their pension plans. This in line with Congress 2007 Emergency Motion 5.

GMB's campaign around the Gas Distribution Price Review was supported by senior shop stewards from National Grid, Wales & West Utilities and Scottish & Southern Energy. Our pressure resulted in significant gains in the money allowed for new apprenticeships and training. OFGEM had originally proposed no money to be allowed for apprenticeship and training. After intense lobbying of MPs and Ministers, £80m will be made available for training and apprenticeships.

Whilst we secured some concessions over funding for operating expenditure, the settlement from OFGEM was tough. As a result there will be job losses in gas distribution this year.

The inability of the industry to find a common position in their negotiations with OFGEM hindered our lobbying. If the employers could have presented a truly united front with the Union more could have been achieved.

NATIONAL GRID

i. National Grid Industrials

There have been no pay negotiations for National Grid Industrial Staff as we are still covered by a three year deal. We are continuing to bed in the new agreement for National Grid Industrials, known as GO21. The introduction of the GO21 Agreement has been hugely challenging. We are currently undertaking a review of GO21 and there are clearly areas of the agreement that will have to be renegotiated. As part of GO21 there was a commitment to a direct labour force. At the time of writing this report recruitment has begun for new direct labour employees. This is a reversal in trends over recent years to use contract labour. As a result of GO21 there are 2 new training centres under construction. These training centres will be vital to developing the apprenticeship base.

ii. National Grid Staff

The new deal for National Grid Staff was successfully implemented. Our members employed in the PMC part of National Grid have also voted in favour of the Staff terms and conditions of employment. A pay claim has been drafted for the Staff Side in 2008. We are currently involved in negotiations over redundancies and restructuring amongst Gas Staff. This is a direct result of the cuts in budgets imposed by OFGEM.

BRITISH GAS

i. British Gas Industrials

Our British Gas Industrial membership continues to be an example of excellent Trade Union organisation. A new set of terms and conditions have been agreed for the Service Force employees (SFL). This has successfully brought them in to the core British Gas Services Business. The British Gas Industrials settled on 4.13% on pensionable pay. In addition there were some significant improvements to other payments.

ii. British Gas Staff

We are still in discussions with the Company about the constitutional arrangements for new Staff bargaining structures in British Gas Energy and Services.

We have been heavily critical of the huge profits made by British Gas at a time when the Company continues to attack staff terms and conditions of employment. In particular the Company has sought to make wholesale changes to pension provision for staff. This has involved weakening protections for pension scheme members in the Centrica Pension Scheme. They are also trying to close the Centrica Income Retirement Section to new employees and introduce a very poor money purchase scheme for new starters.

We have linked the huge profits being made by British Gas and the hikes in price rises to the Company's attack on workers' pensions. This has resulted in a number of employees in the Staff Pension Schemes being transferred over to the Industrial Pension Schemes, where we believe they will be better protected. A case in point is the GMB members employed at the National Distribution Centre.

NUCLEAR INDUSTRY

The break up and sell off of the British Nuclear Industry continues. A contract to run the Sellafield site for the next 17 years will be awarded in summer 2008. GMB locally, regionally and nationally have been heavily engaged with the companies and consortiums bidding for this contract. There has also been a series of meetings with Government Ministers and special advisors over the future of Sellafield. We meet regularly with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) about the issue of Sellafield and the wider socio-economic implications from the transferring of the site to a private sector company. GMB has led the fight to ensure that the Sellafield site does have a viable future. We have argued strongly that the Plutonium and Uranium, which could be used to make fissile material stored on the site, should be transformed from its current highly hazardous state into socially useful nuclear fuel.

Despite the success the GMB had in lobbying Government over NDA funding, there remain tight budgetary constraints. The NDA is putting a significant amount of money aside to cover contingencies at Sellafield. The NDA claim this is impacting on the funding for the Magnox sites, Dounreay and other parts of the nuclear estate. At present there are redundancy consultations under way on the Magnox sites.

GMB has supported a major event, held next to the Scottish Parliament, about the future of the Caithness economy and the opportunities in developing renewable energy sources. GMB is backing plans for the development of a major tidal power project in the Caithness area. This project could provide much needed quality employment in the area as decommissioning work at Dounreay gathers pace.

We have established a National Nuclear Shop Stewards Forum to ensure that we have a consistent position across the Nuclear Industry. The Union nationally is also supporting lobbying on behalf of URENCO, where we have members. Like much of the British nuclear industry URENCO could potentially benefit from a renaissance in the industry globally.

Our members at Sellafield settled for 4.85%. The UKAEA settlement involved a basic increase of 2%, together with further performance related increases and performance related pay progression. These three elements will result in an average "Increase for Staff in Post" of 3.99%. Magnox Electric settled for an increase on salary scales and allowances of 4.5%.

MANUFACTURING SECTION

INTRODUCTION (Phil Davies, National Secretary)

The CFTA, Engineering, Process, Clothing & Textiles Sections and a large part of the Food & Leisure Section have now merged to form the new Manufacturing Section. When the transfer of members into the new Section is complete the Manufacturing Section will have over 150,000 members. The new Section Committee is made up of members who work or have worked in all the major industries that the Section covers.

The decline in manufacturing has continued but today UK manufacturing is still an important part of the economy and employs just under 3m people directly and a similar number in the supply chain. It accounts for 14.5% of the economy measured by gross added value and consists of 154,925 different enterprises ranging from SMEs to large multinational conglomerates with a combined turnover of £465bn.

The manufacturing sector also spends more on R&D than any other sector of the economy and exports account for just over a third of manufacturing sales, this ranges from between 5% in building materials to over 50% in the case of aerospace.

However manufacturing employment has continued to fall with 1.147m job losses in the 9 years from 1997 to 2006 equating to a reduction of a third of all manufacturing jobs in this 9 year period. The UK Government has been slow to respond to this situation. The previous Tory administration took the view that the market would prevail and that manufacturing was a thing of the past and the future of the UK was in a financial and service sector economy. The incoming Labour administration of 1997 seemed to take a similar view. Only belatedly after pressure from the trade union movement and a number of large manufacturing employers did they start to take notice.

As a result the DTI (now BERR) has set up a Manufacturing Advisory Service and a Manufacturing Forum was formed. This consists of DTI, CBI and some employers, TUC, Unite and GMB trade unions along with some University Academics. This has established the "Seven Pillars" necessary to build "a successful knowledge intensive, highly skilled, manufacturing sector". These are:

- Macro Economic stability
- Investment
- Science and innovation
- Best Practice
- Skills and Education
- Modern Infrastructure
- Market Framework

The GMB is concerned that BERR is more interested in the higher tech side of manufacturing which includes aerospace, electronics and pharmaceuticals rather than the lower skilled widget, nuts and bolts end of manufacturing where a lot of the ordinary jobs are. The trade unions have expressed concern that these jobs in manufacturing are often better paid than similar jobs in the service sector. The majority of the jobs are semi-skilled where alternatives in the service sector are either very skilled or basic skilled, the loss of these types of job cause problems for the redundant workforce. It is often these semi-skilled workers who do not find new jobs and this can lead to political unrest such as the Bradford riots or support for fringe parties such as UKIP and the BNP in post industrial areas of Britain.

The GMB has expressed concern that reliance on the high tech top end of manufacturing may be building problems in the future. Although the UK is one of the world leading countries for pharmaceutical research, development and production any global consolidation in the sector could quickly move this work out of the UK. Again in aerospace although the UK has a strong aerospace sector it no longer has a controlling stake in Airbus since the sale of the BAE Systems 20% stake to the Franco German EADS

which means the UK no longer has a financial interest or hold over future investment or production plans.

The Government has secured short term commitments over existing production, but Airbus are already expanding production of components for older models to China. The one remaining UK plane manufacturing plant owned by BAE Systems at Brough in Humberside is still building the Hawk jet, but has no more work after 2012 while Bombardier have orders of 15 of the Q400 regional aircraft from Flybe which is part built in the Belfast plant.

Charles King who is now the Research and Policy Officer for the Section has been working with the sector Skills Councils covering the manufacturing sector to raise the profile and promote the GMB's agenda on training and apprenticeships.

He has also represented the GMB at the European Commission's and responded to their consultation on ship recycling, encouraging safe ship recycling in the UK. The GMB has also been heavily involved with the TUC and BERR in linking investment and energy policy to UK manufacturing policy.

The section have also responded to the DWP consultation on Specialist disability Employment Services making the case for trade union involvement and that Remploy must remain part of the solution of providing employment for disabled people.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Section's PAs: Marilene Smith and Auriol Ware who have worked tremendously hard. The amount of work generated by the Remploy dispute has been dealt with effectively and efficiently and always with a smile.

REMPLOY LTD

We were once proud in this country to be able to say that over 10,000 disabled workers had meaningful employment in 98 factory sites from Aberdeen to Penzance. Communities where those less fortunate individuals could be given dignified jobs and also where our servicemen and women could be brought back into society. There was a place for the injured miners and steelworkers and those with mental health issues could be cared for and supported to enable all, whatever their disability, to earn a decent living without exploitation and without discrimination.

Well that was the reality in 1999 but unfortunately by 2006 the Secretary of State, John Hutton ably assisted by Anne McGuire, Minister for the Disabled had hatched a devious plan – a new conspiracy to fail plan.

First the report from the National Audit Committee was used to cast doubts about the viability for Remploy to continue with factory employment. The next stage was for John Hutton to commission the PricewaterhouseCooper report at a cost of over £800,000. The conclusions of the report gave four options: close all 83 factory sites; do nothing; close 47 factory sites or close 54 factory sites. The company was given the green light by Anne McGuire and the new Secretary of State, Peter Hain to put forward a so called modernisation plan. At the same time a new Remploy Chairman was appointed; Ian Russell, the ex Chair of Scottish Power who according to the Financial Times failed at Scottish Power but nevertheless received a golden handshake of nearly £9m. It could be thought that Mr Russell had friends in very high places but when he visited me in my office at Wimbledon he was keen to point out that he was not going to take the £58,000 per year salary – is this a pointer to a Knighthood!

A six month period of so called consultation was conducted by the management but on the 22nd May 2007 the Remploy Consortium was summoned to a meeting to be told that 43 factory sites were to close with the loss of around 2100 jobs. At precisely the same time that this announcement was being made a DVD was being played to Remploy workers informing them that they were to lose their jobs. It was a disgraceful and callous act of industrial sabotage.

Leading up to the 2007 Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth, Peter Hain appointed a retired Unison Officer, Roger Poole to try to bring the unions and the Directors of Remploy closer together. This was to prove a miserable failure.

At the 2007 Labour Party Conference Peter Hain announced that no factory would close unless authorised by Ministers. Every disabled person would be given a choice and there would be no compulsory redundancies. Jobs would be found and trade unions would be consulted.

We did indeed meet with the company and with the help of Grant Thornton the unions produced an alternative business plan. Sadly the plan and our pleas for commonsense all fell on deaf ears.

On the 29th November 2008 Peter Hain announced the endorsement of the Remploy company plan to close 28 factory sites, transfer workers to other Remploy sites and allow employees to volunteer for redundancy. What Mr Hain failed to inform the House of Commons was that he and Anne McGuire had given the green light for Remploy senior managers to bully and harass our members into taking voluntary redundancy payments. The whole sordid affair has been aimed at removing thousands of disabled people from supported employment.

Tens of millions of pounds of public money has been wasted in bribing Remploy workers into volunteering for redundancy with the added sweetener of a £5000 bonus if they volunteered by the deadline. Short term greed has replaced long term need.

At the time of writing this report the members at Treforest, York, CCU Birkenhead and Aintree are engaged in strike action. The GMB can hold its head high; what could be done was done and our General Secretary, Paul Kenny worked as hard as he could to bring some dignity back into the whole process. The GMB will continue to fight for people's rights at work even though this may bring us into conflict with a Labour Government.

This year's pay settlement was as follows: With effect from 1 January 2007 all rates of pay and salaries within the bargaining group are increased by 3.5%.

	<u>Weekly Pay Rate</u>
Skill Grade T	£264.30
Skill Grade A	£252.11
Skill Grade B	£244.51
Skill Grade C	£234.27
Skill Grade D	£228.17
Skill Grade E (Introductory rate)	£193.80

The following grade ranges for monthly paid employees will apply:

	<u>Min Annual Salary</u>	<u>Max Annual Salary</u>
Grade 1	£10,113	£14,820
Grade 2	£10,128	£16,791
Grade 3	£11,728	£19,159
Grade 4	£13,327	£20,715
Grade 5	£14,926	£22,784
Grade 6	£16,525	£25,129
Grade 7	£18,125	£27,070
Grade 8	£19,723	£29,576

This also provides Team Leader levels of:

Entry level	£14,884
Trained and Competent	£18,007
Advancing	£21,494
Advanced	£23,807

Section 6 - 2 Service Days of the Accord be amended as follows:

The Standard annual holiday entitlement (less than 2 years service) = total currently 175 hours (equating to 5 standard weeks) and for long serving employees this entitlement is extended as follows:

On completion of 2 years service: add one additional day reflecting the hours worked on that day

On completion of 5 years service: add one further day and reflects the hours worked on that day

Leading Hands Allowance from 1st January 2007 per standard week increased to £14.27 per standard week.

From April 2008 the Company will increase its contributions to the final salary pension scheme for future benefits by 4.4% to 13%.

CO-OP FUNERALCARE

The non caring, non sharing Co-op derecognised the GMB in March 2007 and since then our members in the London and Southern regions have been under tremendous pressure to leave the GMB and join Usdaw. The company has tried to bully our senior shop stewards and activists and we are now down to under 300 members.

This is a dreadful management and is made worse by the actions of Usdaw. The GMB will not be bullied into submission and our Officers have had a very difficult time trying to hold the membership and supporting them.

The main points of the 2007 increase are:

Basic increase: a 4% increase to all job pay rates (not including allowances) with effect from the beginning of the Society's financial year – 14th January 2007 with the exception of those employees who are on protected or red-circled rates unless the 4% increase takes the rate for their role above their protected/red-circled rate. All casual pay rates will also be uplifted in accordance with the terms of this pay offer.

Funeral Directors: A further increase of £250 per annum (pro rata if part time) for all Funeral Directors, Senior Funeral Directors and Principle Funeral Directors within the business with effect from 14th January 2007 (with the exception of those employees who are on protected or red-circled rates unless the 4% increase takes the rate for their role above their protected/red-circled rate).

Standby rates: The harmonisation of standby rates across the Funeralcare business to create one rate only of £18 per standby occasion for those participating in standby with effect from 14th January 2007.

London Weighting: An increase to Inner London Weighting from £1,700 per annum to £1,800 per annum (pro rata for part time employees) with effect from 14th January 2007 for those employees employed out of the units at Woolwich, Purley, Earlsfield, Manor Park, Hayes, Watford, Enfield and their associated branches.

London Weighting Outer: An increase to Outer London Weighting from £1,050 per annum to £1,110 per annum (pro rata for part time employees) with effect from 14th January 2007 for those employees employed out of the units at Gravesend, Southend and Welwyn Garden City and their associated branches.

INSTITUTE OF ORGAN BUILDERS (IBO)

The organ building industry has gone from strength to strength although some of the employers still cry poverty. There is no doubt that our members are highly skilled woodworkers and the quality of some of the church and cathedral organs speak for themselves. On a recent visit to Manders I was privileged to watch one of our craftspeople work on a small organ (20ft high). He had built the organ from the drawing stage and the quality of his work was outstanding. On the whole the employers are decent people.

The 2008 settlement was as follows:

The Journeyman's minimum hourly rate will be increased to £7.00 (from the former £6.70) a rise of 4.5%.

Minimum hourly rates:

Group	Age	Hourly rate		
		Year one	Year two	Year three
1	16-17	£3.40	£4.00	£4.60
2	18-21	£4.60	£5.80	*
3	22 and over	£5.52	£6.25	*

BRITISH SAWMILLING INDUSTRY

The industry continues to have worldwide problems and for the first time sawmills in Canada are being closed. Timber is now a worldwide commodity and is traded as such. The whole of the world's environment is governed not only by the emissions that industrialised economies make but how we take care of the woodlands and forests will determine if the air we all breath is clean. Timber has been the main sustainable material for over 3,000 years and will continue to be used for the next 3,000 years if we take the care needed for sustainable farming of the forests.

The 2008 pay settlement is: With effect from the first full pay week in January 2008:

An increase of 20p per hour for woodcutting machinists making a new national basic minimum rate of £6.44 per hour

An increase of 16p per hour for labourers making a new national basic minimum rate of £5.48 per hour (with the proviso of an agreed minimum earnings level of £5.67 per hour)

An increase for Death in Service payment to a level of £11,000

FLAT GLASS (GREEN BOOK) NATIONAL AGREEMENT

A difficult year for the glass industry with the penetration of cheap glass from all over the world. By and large the industry has remained intact and pay rates are well in advance of those shown in the Green Book. The main players within the industry are decent employers who generally recognise the GMB. A consolidation exercise is required and if undertaken the membership could well double.

The pay settlement for 2008 was:

An increase of 3.5% on the basic hourly rate across the board as follows:

Specialist Advanced Craftsperson and Specialist Processor	£6.94
Advanced Craftsperson and Multi Skilled Processor	£6.49
Craftsperson and Skilled Processor	£6.19
General Operative and General Processor	£5.90

Solaglas Manufacturing

Industrial relations remain very good and while the company has gone through some difficult times increases have been negotiated in a respectable manner.

Solaglas Windowcare

The Windowcare Division appears to be moving into profit and our members have received reasonable increases.

Solaglas Contracting

Solaglas Contracting has continued to improve and a 3.5% increase was agreed for the 2007 pay increase.

Pilkington

Our members continue to lose valuable well paid jobs from the UK into low paid wage economies. The company has entered into discussion with the GMB with a view of improving the downstream pension scheme.

FINNFOREST

This is probably one of the largest timber importers in the UK. While there have been some very difficult issues within the European sector of Finforest the UK sector seems to be under less stress. Industrial relations remain very good.

This year's increase for our members was as follows:

- 4% on all rates of pay
- £100 increase in the First Aid payments
- 3 extra days sick pay
- 6% increase on supervisor supplement
- Bereavement leave to be paid at average pay including shift allowances

BRITISH FURNITURE INDUSTRY

The move offshore continues with UK manufacturers moving production to China and other low wage economies. We have suffered several closures and some very big household names have virtually ceased production. Nevertheless the industry continues to employ over 100,000 people in manufacturing. The GMB still has around 16,000 members.

Pay remains reasonable with most craftspeople earning from between £8 to £16 per hour. The National Agreement continues to disappoint and very few of our members are paid the national rates. The 2008 agreement introduced a new minimum earnings level for 39 hours of £245 and whilst this is low it is a start with a fallback rate of £6.28. This means that when there is little work to operate the bonus scheme the fallback earning will be at least £245.

The industry is worth over £5.5b per year to the UK economy and the industry must be a prime recruitment area.

The new British Furniture Confederation (BFC) continues to do some very good work in the areas of health and safety and or raising the developing risk of imported furniture that is not compliant with UK flammability regulations. The BFC is made up of employers, academics and the GMB. Its prime

function is to increase employment in the British furniture manufacturing industry. The increase for 2008 was 19p per hour.

TEXTILES

Another industry that has moved around the world to find the lowest possible wages. The industry masters have no problems placing orders where there is child labour or slave labour. The BCIA agreement has the dubious record of containing the lowest pay rates within any national agreement, with rates of pay constantly being overtaken by the minimum wage. The only saving grace is the conditions which are as good if not better than most national agreements and are a testament to the negotiating skills of past clothing and textile lay members.

This year's pay settlement was an increase of 2.75% on all rates of pay.

INTERNATIONAL

We continue to be well supported by Kathleen Walker Shaw and our Brussels team. The work that Kathleen has done over the last 14 years on public procurement directives is not only going to be a life saver for supported employment including Remploy but may well have a profound effect on the UK manufacturing industry. We continue to affiliate in the Section to the following European and international trade union organisations:

- International Federation of Metalworkers (IMF)
- European Federation of Metalworkers (EMF)
- International Chemical & Mining Federation (ICEM)
- European Mining & Chemical Federation (EMCEF)
- Building & Wood Workers International (BWI)
- International Textiles, Garment & Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF)
- International Union of Foodworkers (IUF)
- European Federation of Foodworkers and Allied Trades (EFFAT)
- European Federation of Building and Woodworkers (EFBWW)

The new Manufacturing Section Committee will make sure that all the international seats are taken up and our members' interests are represented at all levels.

ENGINEERING INDUSTRY (Keith Hazlewood – National Secretary)

As previously reported in past Congress Reports, in general engineering, not a lot has changed with the same sad story of redundancies, pay cuts and pay freezes to save jobs. Which, as a substantial impact on UK Manufacturing, we need to work together with UK Government, Employers and the DTI in an attempt to re-stabilise UK Manufacturing and to formulate a survival strategy.

We are still having to compete on an unlevelled playing field when tendering for some orders, and having to contend with comments like, "it is more economical to import work" or to offshore work to countries like China rather than manufacture in the UK, blaming the strength of the currency. Of course, it is easier and quicker to close UK establishments than in other parts of Europe.

As in all other Engineering and Construction related industries, we are experiencing skill shortages which need addressing, by investment in training and the re introduction of apprenticeships for the engineering related industries to survive. We also have a problem with the age profile with people leaving the Industry or retiring and not being replaced, and an ever increasing use of companies employing non UK labour and in some cases exploiting our European colleagues by paying well under the rate for the job, making them a cheap alternative.

THERMAL INSULATION CONTRACTING INDUSTRY (TICA)

The Thermal Insulation Industry's 2007 pay negotiations resulted in a three year deal of 20.02% increase and five days extra holidays over three years.

The negotiations demonstrated there is a future for the Industry and at last the employers realised that with future work including the current new build and maintenance contracts in the Engineering Construction Industry, Aircraft carrier and Type 45 work for the Royal Navy, and 2012 Olympics to name but a few.

A problem the Industry has is in attracting apprentices which has resulted in company's increasingly having to use non UK labour which in some cases is causing competency issues. The Thermal Insulation Industry has potential for future growth but we need to attract young people to the Industry.

SHIPBUILDING

The Industry is once again an Industry of mixed fortunes. Firstly, the almost demise of commercial shipbuilding in the UK with Ferguson's in Scotland one of only two commercial yards left and they are on the verge of closure; a sad day for commercial shipbuilding with also the recent closure of Swan Hunter on the Tyne. On the other hand we have in the UK Defence shipbuilding industry, the biggest order book ever with the ongoing build of six Type 45 Destroyers, two super Aircraft carriers and beyond that a programme of ships called MARS all for the Royal Navy. These orders will maintain and create jobs in UK shipbuilding for the next decade and beyond.

The Industry is now working under an Alliance between the UK yards in conjunction with the Ministry Of Defence under the UK Defence Industrial Strategy, which will stabilise the Industry and eliminate the cut throat competition between yards which has resulted in too many casualties in the past.

The Industry needs to recruit apprentices to survive. Companies like BAE Systems are setting an example by recruiting 300 apprentices in the last 4 years and they are still recruiting.

The Aircraft Carriers are too big to be built in any one yard so the plans are for them to be built in five blocks in different yards in the UK and then assembled at the Rosyth yard in Scotland. The first one is expected to be completed by 2014 and the second 2016.

OFFSHORE INDUSTRY

I can confirm that the long standing issue regarding the interpretation of the Working Time Directive and holiday entitlement for people working in the Offshore Industry has at last been resolved during the 2007 pay negotiations. This resulted in a one year deal of 3% and four weeks' extra holidays over two years bringing the Industry in line with the EU Working Time Directive.

The offshore Industry like many more industries is feeling the effect of skill shortages and an ageing workforce. In an attempt to address the issue short term, we negotiated an agreement to use Philippino labour on a top-up basis, and not instead of UK labour. The agreement is that the Philipinos are paid the industry rate and allowances; this agreement has worked well so far.

We are running a recruitment campaign offshore which so far has been successful, mainly at the heliports when people are going offshore. We are in the process of starting the 2008 pay negotiations.

NATIONAL AGREEMENT FOR THE ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY (NAECI)

Throughout 2007 a major review of the Engineering Construction Industry took place because the major clients were questioning the validity of the National Agreement and said what was needed to maintain a future for the Industry was an Agreement that was fit for purpose and that the current agreement was out dated. This process took eleven months to conclude and an agreement was reached and was endorsed by the workforce throughout the Industry. This is the agreement they are now working to (not without teething problems as would be expected after working to the previous agreement for so long).

The 2007 pay negotiations resulted in a three year deal of a 4.4% increase for 2007, 4.4% increase for 2008, and 5.5% increase for 2009, and the implementation of the new National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry.

The Industry, like others is suffering with the shortage of skills and is employing a substantial amount of non UK labour. This along with increasing and demanding order books can only be addressed by attracting fresh blood and apprentices to the industry.

AEROSPACE

Since the last Congress Report there has been very little change with an Industry that has mixed fortunes with some factory's closing with work being sent to other locations in the UK and some being sent outside the UK. Companies like BAE Systems, Airbus and Bombardier all have to fight hard to maintain current work and equally as difficult, trying to get new work. The Aerospace Industry is a global Industry and all we want is a level playing field when competing for orders, which isn't happening. We are constantly lobbying the UK Government to try and save the Aerospace industry by giving it a level playing field and we will continue the lobbying to save jobs across the Aerospace related industries.

STEEL

In my last Congress Report, CSN from Brazil and TATA of India were bidding for Corus. I can now confirm that TATA was the successful bidder.

The fierce competition between the bidders cause us concern as to the future investment in the UK, future bargaining and pension arrangements.

When we met with TATA they said they had not yet made any decisions or intended changes to existing arrangements at the time of the meeting, so we are watching the situation very closely.

Pay negotiations with Corus Strip Products and Long Products are in the process of starting.

UK CAR MANUFACTURING

Since my last Report to Congress about the car industry that is serviced by the Birmingham Region, very little has changed. We have heard of factory closures of MG Rover, Jaguar and Peugeot all in the West Midlands. These are very worrying times within the UK car industry, along with the supply chain industry which employs thousands of British workers.

It is important that companies like Ford, Honda, Toyota, Nissan and BMW Mini keep a presence in the UK. The manufacture of cars and their components in this country is an industry of long significance and remains vital for UK Manufacturing.

INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN

It is imperative that we keep a presence internationally and in Europe because in the main we deal with Multi National companies and more and more legislation is coming from Europe in industries like Ship breaking. It is important we have International standards across the world when we see countries like India running ships upon the beach to strip them; we do need to work together and formulate ILO working standards.

In the last twelve months I have visited the ship breaking yards in India as part of a project with the TUC and International Metalworkers Federation and GMB.

EMF

The GMB Brussels office keeps us updated on issues raised at the EMF and keeps our input on issues like the EU Green paper on Ship breaking. Kathleen Walker Shaw and Sarah King work very hard on all EU issues on behalf of the GMB.

INTRODUCTION (Allan Black – National Officer)

The internal re-organisation of the Union into three new Sections has left me with a diverse industrial sheet embracing manufacturing companies from the Food, Chemicals, Paper and Building Materials Sectors of the economy.

Each of these 'sectors' presents different key characteristics and challenges for the Union, for our officers and for our activists. There are however, some common characteristics across the sheet:-

- soaring energy costs are a key concern for all the Employers in manufacturing
- the huge pressure to minimise environmental impact, particularly in the chemicals and building materials sector is a common thread
- the temptation for the Employers to relocate production to areas of cheap labour or minimum legislation or both remains a threat to UK (and Western European) manufacturing jobs.
- the still strong (although somewhat stalled) growth of equity capital investment in the sector will be an issue for the foreseeable future.

My Report to Congress, Conference is deliberately brief and is probably best expanded upon verbally at the revamped Section Conference.

BUILDING MATERIALS

The established liking on the part of both the Employers and our members for long term pay and conditions settlements in these basic industries has continued.

LAFARGE CEMENT

We have at the time of Congress a further 18 months to run on a 3 year settlement for our process worker members in Lafarge Cement. The second year with effect from 1st January 2008, produced inflation related increases (RPI+0.25%) of 4.38% on basic rates of pay. In the winter of 2007, the company made the welcome announcement that it was their intention to move along the construction of the long talked about new cement works in North Kent. If built – and it looks much more likely than before – this will represent a welcome capital investment of more than £80 million in UK manufacturing industry. The plant would not come on stream until 2011 and therefore, offers no help in the short terms as the Lafarge Northfleet plant (also in North Kent/Essex) closes with significant job loss. This is due to the exhaustion of natural resources and has been planned for several years. It will be handled under the unique Lafarge agreement without compulsory redundancies.

LAFARGE LORRY DRIVERS

Lafarge Cement has its own in-house LGV fleet and the drivers have a separate agreement which is signed by the GMB. Again a long term deal is in place and we are currently in the second year (wef 01.01.08) of a two year deal. A Delegate Conference will be held jointly with the TGWU Section of Unite to draw up a drivers pay claim for 2009.

CASTLE CEMENT

A two year RPI related settlement with effect from 1st January 2008 is in place. Castle Cement is in fact a subsidiary of the German multi-national Heidelberg. This group has just increased its UK presence massively by acquiring the Hanson Group (see below).

AGGREGATE INDUSTRIES (QUARRIES)

This is again a UK subsidiary of a European (Swiss) multi national. After negotiating difficulties, I am pleased to report that a two year deal running from 1st April 2007 was concluded covering all 19 sites in England and Wales. This was accepted following a ballot of GMB members concerned.

AGGREGATE INDUSTRIES (CONCRETE)

The 2007/08 pay round was conducted in a thoroughly unsatisfactory way and to avoid any repetition of this in the future, a very early Delegate Conference was convened in the Autumn of 2007. This allowed us to prepare a joint pay claim in good time and submit it to the Company. At the time of writing, the first meeting on the 2008/09 pay round is a week ahead.

HANSON AGGREGATES

We have just come out of a two year RPI based deal with Hanson Aggregates (ended 31.2.07) and at the time of writing, a new two year deal has gone out to ballot with a recommendation to accept. The offer in the first year equates to 3.65% on basic rates with an RPI trigger in year two. We have also set up a working party to update the 2001 agreement.

HANSON BUILDING PRODUCTS (BRICK)

This national agreement continues to cause difficulties. The GMB is the smaller of the two recognised unions and this year, like last has proved difficult in negotiating terms.

It now seems that the British Division of Hanson is about to improve a 3% increase in basic rates with effect from 1st January 2008. The Company is emboldened in this high handed approach as the largest site, Stewartby in Bedfordshire, is due to close at the end of February 2008.

HANSON BUILDING PRODUCTS (CONCRETE)

This small division of the Hanson Group sustains a separate national agreement. At the time of writing a Joint Delegate Conference is being arranged to prepare a pay claim for implementation with effect from 1st April 2008.

HEIDELBERG ACQUISITION OF HANSON

One of the biggest changes in the building materials sector since last GMB Congress has been the purchase (at a premium) of the whole of the Hanson Group by the giant Heidelberg multi national from Germany. The long term future for some plants may be up for debate but thus far there is no sign of any real threat to the job of GMB members. One of the changes that we may be able to promote with the new owners is an agreement incorporating common conditions of employment across the Group.

The continuation of three entirely separating bargaining groups does not make sense from the point of view of the GMB and should not make sense from the point of the Company.

On a different point a joint meeting of GMB shop stewards from Hanson and Caste Cement (also owned by Heidelberg) is planned to decide tactics for the Heidelberg European Works Councils amongst other things.

BUILDING BRICK NC

A one year deal on pay and conditions was implemented from May 2007 and at the time of writing a Delegate Conference is being convened to draw up a claim for 2008/09.

PRE-CAST CONCRETE NJC

We are due to come to the end of a two year deal on 31st March 2008 and a claim has been drawn up following consideration at a Delegate Conference for submission to the Employers. However, a decision has been taken by Tarmac the largest employer covered by the agreement, to withdraw from with effect from March. This casts very serious doubt as to the viability of the NJC going forward and urgent talks are being sought with the Employers side to discuss the future.

I now want to turn briefly to the Process industries and Companies on my sheet.

ASTRA ZENECA

We have a large membership in AZ primarily in the North West Region. Our dealings with the Company since the last Congress included a two year pay settlement running from the middle of last year and involving increases in the basic rates of 6%. This rather unusual deal, which was accepted after a ballot of our members, was prompted by the fact that everything else in the Company is overshadowed by a huge job loss centred on the Macclesfield site and due to come into effect over the next eighteen months or so. The Company is fully consulting the recognised Unions, primarily GMB and in concert with Neil Holden our local Officer and the excellent and experienced AZ Shop Stewards, we are determined that the painful headcount reduction will be achieved on a voluntary basis.

CHEMICAL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (CIA) NATIONAL AGREEMENT

We continue to maintain our National Agreement with the CIA. This includes a National level disputes resolution mechanism and since last Congress this has been used on three occasions to help resolve disputes.

CORRUGATED PAPER AND BOARD AGREEMENT

A pay settlement was concluded in the autumn of last year to take this particular section of our members through to beyond Congress. In the consultations on these negotiations with our members, it became clear that our internal mechanisms for communication needed radical overhaul and the necessary steps have been taken to ensure proper membership involvement in the future.

PAPER INDUSTRY AGREEMENT

A new and radical Partnership Agreement for the paper industry was concluded between the Unions (including the GMB) and the Employers in the autumn of last year. This meant that the 2008/09 pay negotiations were centred exclusively on the basic rates of pay. An increase of 3.65% was secured with effect from 1st February 2008 after endorsement by our members in a consultative ballot.

Finally by way of industrial report I turn to the Food Manufacturing sector

UNITED BISCUITS

Much of my time in the latter half of last year was spent in discussions with UB in an attempt to protect the key aspects of the final salary pension scheme which covers about 40% of the Company's workforce in its 11 UK factories. The GMB is the largest Union in the Company and hence it fell to us to lead the negotiations. The Company equity capital owners were determined to cut the cost of the pension scheme to them as employers and to pass on future risk to the employees. With a large amount of assistance and expertise from Naomi Cooke from the National Pensions Department, we were able to see off the worst intentions of the Company and go a long way to safeguard our members' position.

At the time of writing this Report pay negotiations covering four of UB's factories which negotiate jointly at National level are underway with the full involvement of our Shop Stewards.

NESTLE

I have continued to be involved with Nestle UK at National level, but not for pay bargaining purposes as negotiations are decentralised. The debate we are having with the Company centres around protecting UK jobs and securing a commitment to sustaining the current plant configuration. The large capital investment currently being undertaken at the York plant gives us some cause for optimism for the future.

PREMIER FOODS

Last autumn I was involved, with the other recognised Unions in discussions with the Company concerning their decision to close six UK plants formerly operated by RHM now part of Premier. These discussions were difficult and ultimately unsuccessful and we saw the plants close with the loss of GMB members jobs in three of them.

OTHER FOOD COMPANIES

I have also had some involvement from national level with Unilever, Northern Foods and at the margins with other parts of the sector where we have members.

INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

As a consequence, of the wide areas of the economy covered by the Manufacturing Section, we are responsible for the GMB affiliations to a large numbers of European and world Trade Union federations. Without going into detail I am the GMB contact point for those in the chemicals and food sectors. I was privileged to attend in the autumn of 2007, the Congress of the International Chemical Workers in Thailand with Bob Welham who was at that time a CEC member. The Conference was interesting and wide ranging and a full report was submitted to the CEC. I would like to record my thanks to the Union for this opportunity.

CONCLUSION

At the time of writing this Report it is very early days for the new Manufacturing Section but in my view we have made a promising start. I believe that over the next period we can focus on growth areas in manufacturing -they do exist- and with the commitment of a little resource and the enthusiasm of our Officers and activists, we can grow our membership in the Section.

RESPONSE TO 2007 CONGRESS MOTIONS:

Motion 129 – Defence Investment

Regular meetings with the MOD who argue that the placing of orders for the Royal Navy of seven Type 45 Destroyers, two Aircraft carriers and the MARS programme, the biggest shipbuilding orders ever, helps to alleviate any fears of investment cutbacks.

Motion 130 – Royal Navy Downsizing

Under the auspices of the CSEU, we have had regular meetings with the MOD and can confirm that some of the old Naval Ships are getting ready for Replacement; the current orders for the build of seven Type 45 Destroyers is well under way, and the order for two super Aircraft Carriers has now been placed. A follow up programme called MARS is in the system.

Motion 131 – Shipbuilding

We have a commitment from the MOD that all ships that are deemed warlike will be built in the UK yards, but with work on the Type 45 Destroyers, the Aircraft carriers and MARS, there could be a skills issue.

Motion 132 – Cammell Laird 1984

Ongoing discussions by the GMB General Secretary and Minister are still taking place.

Motion 169 – Trident Missile System

The UK Government has made the decision to go ahead with Trident. This decision was made between the time of publishing the final agenda and Congress. As the decision has been made by the Government to pursue Trident we are no longer in a position to pursue motion 169, but can make sure consideration of this motion's sentiments are still raised at every opportunity.

Composite 11 (Motions 127 & 128) – Remploy

The actions called upon in the Composite have been fully carried out by the GMB and in fact the campaign by the GMB and affiliated unions has gone beyond the Composite.

Composite 12 (Motions 133 & 134) – Manufacturing/Public Procurement

We have been very active with regard to public procurement with meetings with the Minister and government departments. There has been some success with the shipbuilding industry where regional meetings with the Ministry of Defence Procurement Minister have taken place on a regular basis. As a result an alliance of shipbuilding yards has been formed securing the UK shipbuilding industry. A further report on public procurement within Remploy will be given at Congress.

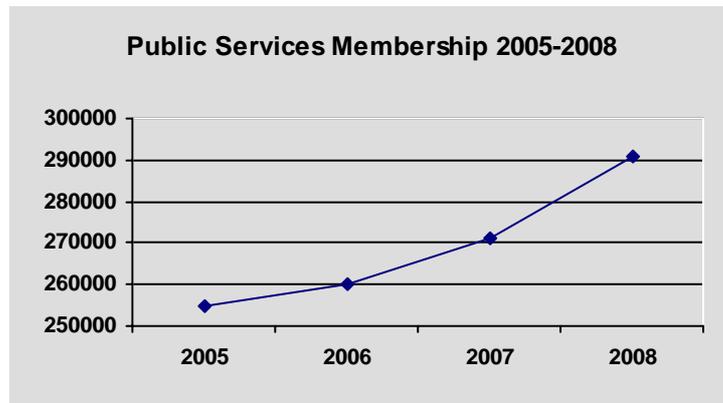
Composite 13 (Motions 135 & 136) – Manufacturing

The union has carried out the sentiments of the Composite when it has been drawn to our attention that British manufacturers have closed down UK manufacturing and move offshore, namely Burberry, Remploy and Christie Tyler and we have publicly condemned these companies for closing down production.

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

1. PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION MEMBERSHIP

The Public Services Section continues to grow and at the time of writing this report membership stands at 291,000. Organisation and recruitment, the bedrock of trade union strength, underpin all our activities at National and Regional level. The outstanding work done by our branch secretaries, shop stewards and other activists for our members; backed up by professional and committed full-time Officer support;



all within clear member-led national policy direction; makes GMB the union of choice and the fastest growing union in the public sector. The Public Services National Committee wishes to place on record its thanks to all the lay activists and Officers whose hard work and service to members has contributed to this success.

2. NATIONAL COMMITTEE

It is the role of the National Committee to consider and determine policy issues and Public Services Section activities at national level.

The National Committee has met six times since last Congress. The National Committee membership is (since CEC elections in December 2007):

- Mary Turner - President - London Region
- Elizabeth Blackman - Midland & East Coast Region
- Dana Bruno - North West & Irish Region
- Linda Clarke - Birmingham & West Midlands Region
- Gary Doolan – London Region
- George Fraser - London Region
- Gordon Gibbs - Birmingham & West Midlands Region
- Pamela Hughes - Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
- James Jones - Northern Region
- Kevin Jones - South Western Region
- Evelyn Martin - London Region
- June Minnery - GMB Scotland

Peter Murphy – Southern Region
David Noble - Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Lorraine Parker - Southern Region
Vivien Smart - Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Billy Tonner - Southern Region
Michael Widdison - Midland & East Coast Region
Peter Dow - MPO
Heather Starr – MPO
Steve Rice - ASU Representative
Richard Passmore - NHS NAG Representative
Barry Lambert - HE Representative

Thanks are due to members who left the Committee during the year: Vic Baines (Midland & East Coast); Paul Bedford (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire); Jean Chaplow (Northern); Keith Cook (GMB Scotland); Jackie Faulds (GMB Scotland); Brian Jackson (Birmingham & West Midlands); Jim McDermott (North West & Irish); Jimmy Philbin (North West & Irish); Robin Richardson (London) and Eileen Theaker (Southern).

The Section's National Office staff are Brian Strutton, National Secretary; Rehana Azam and Sharon Holder, National Officers; Mick Hubbard, Productivity Services Officer; Gerry Carr, Research and Policy Officer; Angela Sayer, Section Administrator and PA; and Rita Compton, PA.

As part of its work the National Committee considers issues raised through Regions and Regional reports; brought directly by Committee members themselves; being current in national negotiations; and arising from Section Conference and Congress. The Committee's meetings are minuted and distributed to Branches as well as being posted on the GMB website. Matters considered by the Committee have included:

- Membership, organisation and recruitment
- School Support Staff
- Equal Pay
- Local Government single status
- Pensions
- Public Sector Pay
- NHS Agenda for Change
- Housing and the Rent Service
- Prisons and Probation
- Further and Higher Education
- Care sector and care services
- MPO
- Privatisation and PFI/PPP

The Section has had excellent support from National Office departments and the National Organising team to help deliver its objectives.

3. PUBLIC SERVICES

Despite the continuing onslaught of privatisation in its various guises there are six million public sector workers. But the privatisation agenda - accelerated under this Labour government - remains a fundamental threat to service standards and to the jobs, pay and conditions of public sector workers.

The GMB remains committed to challenging all forms of privatisation and that also means calling for the rigorous monitoring of contracts already placed. We do this at every opportunity including Ministerial meetings and the Cabinet Office Public Service Forum in 2007 and 2008. These are also opportunities to raise other social effects including the run-down of residential and home care for the elderly which GMB believes should meet national minimum standards. We have also called for other benefits for the elderly including free TV licences, free bus travel, increases to winter fuel allowances and we have objected to the programme of post office closures which particularly affect the elderly and vulnerable.

GMB has given strong support to campaigns for new council house building and investing in the current housing stock. We made this a principle issue at Labour Party Conference in September which secured

concessions from Government and has helped re-direct policy. But the shortage of housing is a worrying problem and one of the most serious social issues we face.

4. PUBLIC SECTOR PAY POLICY

The overriding concern of our members has been the imposition of public sector pay policy in recent years. In 2007 the Government set a limit of 2% growth in public sector pay overall which meant that most negotiations were capped at this level. In addition, Government has argued that inflation should not be measured by the RPI but by the CPI (Consumer Prices Index) which yields a lower number. They have also made it part of their anti-inflation policy to keep public sector pay down. For 2008 this policy is slightly more relaxed but it remains the case that Government, a Labour government, is using public sector workers pay as a tool of economic management.

As a result, pay settlements in the public sector have lagged considerably behind the cost of living. This is an appalling and untenable situation which all public sector trade unions are determined to break through.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The 2007/8 negotiating round followed a 3-year RPI based deal that had yielded increases of 2.75% in 2004; 2.95% in 2005 and 2.95% in 2006. For 2007/8 the employers made an opening offer of 2% which was rejected out of hand by the unions. There was then a considerable delay, caused by political uncertainties, with a final offer being tabled in August of 2.475% with the establishment of a new minimum hourly rate of £6. The unions decided to consult members on this offer but then one union changed its mind and instead initiated an industrial action ballot. GMB kept its promise to members and consulted, with members voting reluctantly to accept. The union that held an industrial action ballot got a marginal vote to strike on a low turnout but decided to accept the pay offer anyway. This all caused even further delay so that the pay award was not implemented until December or even January for some - which is nine or ten months late and overlaps with when the 2008 negotiations should have started. The lesson, that has got to be learned, is that the Trade Unions have got to work *together* and in line with the wishes of *members* if we are to end the low pay cycle in local government.

6. SINGLE STATUS AND EQUAL PAY

It is a serious indictment of society and this Government that equal pay for women remains a stubbornly hard nut to crack and that where we are making progress - for example, in local government - the ramifications for our members are often problematic. The simple fact is that the eradication of pay inequality costs money or else it just ends up with some people losing out to fund other people's entitlements. In practice this is what has happened in many local authorities.

2007/8 has seen a significant advance in the implementation of single status. Now 50% of local authorities have completed the process, giving a route to equal pay for around 400,000 women. We have successfully delivered pay rises of up to 40%; and backpay compensation of up to £50,000. Where Councils refuse to negotiate with us properly we are more than ready to use the law and to prove the point GMB has 25,000 equal pay claims going through the Employment Tribunal system, one third of their entire equal pay caseload. The GMB has established itself as the lead union and the leading authority on equal pay.

Money-grabbing no-win-no-fee lawyers who prey on low paid women continue to attempt to undermine Trade Unions and collective bargaining. But the main test case - *Allen v. GMB* - was found in our favour at the EAT and at the time of writing this report we expect this to be upheld at the Court of Appeal. Allegations by no-win-no-fee lawyers that they are suing us in the High Court on behalf of thousands of our members remain just allegations and no such claims have materialised. GMB has for decades fought for equal pay for women and we continue that fight - successfully - despite the efforts of those against us.

7. SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

GMB's policy to establish a national framework of terms and conditions for school support staff continues to advance. In September the Secretary of State for Education announced that a support staff national body would be established and that was repeated in the Government's Children's Plan in January 2008.

The proposal is that a new National Negotiating Council for all support staff will be ready hopefully for the September 2008 term. Before then, a shadow body would be formed, with an Independent Chair, to design the future Council and how people would migrate from the current NJC to any new arrangements. Of course, GMB has already committed to member consultation.

The Section's work at national level is dovetailed with the GMB's organising agenda in schools and thanks are due to Avril Chambers and Eamon O'Hearn Large for their assistance in this.

8. LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION

GMB is well established and organised in the Legal Services Commission with sole recognition up to senior grades. We have a good network of reps throughout the country led and co-ordinated by Peter Earley from Newcastle.

The Commission has been subject to various Government reform programmes as changes are made to the system of legal aid - often in ways that GMB considers detrimental to social justice and which we campaign against. The effects on the Commission have resulted in job losses and office closures. However, GMB negotiations have put in place good redundancy avoidance policies and a voluntary approach.

As a stand alone government agency the Legal Services Commission has been able to use restructuring and efficiency arguments to justify better than average pay increases; in 2007 the award was valued at 3.2% consolidated plus 1.6% non-consolidated. GMB members overwhelmingly accepted this.

A Conference was held for lay delegates in January and this was well attended, discussing 2008 pay policy and the future of the Commission.

9. THE PRISON SERVICE

During 2007, GMB responsibility for HM Prisons in the Public Sector moved to the Public Services Section. GMB represents industrial grades, that is maintenance, catering, cleaning and other staff. Negotiations are conducted through the Prison Service Joint Industrial Council (PSJIC) on which GMB is recognised along with Unite and Ucat.

Serious workforce issues prevail in the Prison Service exemplified by the 2007/8 pay negotiations. Due in April 2007, a first offer was eventually made in December 2007 (for 2%) and imposed in January while the TUs were still consulting members! This is unacceptable behaviour and GMB is raising this with Prison Ministers and the Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice - how about a bit of justice for prison workers?

A lay Delegates' Conference in February agreed to a programme of non-co-operation with management but also to refresh GMB organising activities following an address by Martin Smith of the GMB's National Organising Team.

10. HIGHER EDUCATION

There continues to be significant changes and developments in Higher Education in particular to our members' employment pay and conditions in recent years. GMB representatives have faced many challenges in negotiating modernisation of pay and conditions in Universities and Colleges. Some key areas of the framework agreement have been the promotion of equality, transparency and harmonisation. This challenge certainly cannot be underestimated and our representatives have made a significant contribution in meeting this challenge. However, the challenge to achieve pay parity continues in the sector.

The 2006 pay negotiations were lengthy and complicated and finally a three-year pay agreement was reached with an overall total pay increase of 13.1 per cent by 2009. The agreement also provided for two important reviews:

- Review of the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES) by July 2007
- Review of HE Financial and Pay Data in autumn 2008

The Review of JNCHES concluded with a negotiated agreement by all signatory trade unions to single table bargaining. This agreement was put to all trade unions' respective committees for approval including the GMB HE committee. All unions responded with approval that this was the best that could be achieved through negotiations, central to the negotiations being the agreement to single table

bargaining. At the time of writing this report the academic union UCU despite being part of the negotiations to the final agreement are now ambivalent about single table bargaining and we are currently awaiting the outcome of their ballot on this issue.

The Review of HE Financial pay data commenced earlier this year. A major review will be undertaken to assess and evaluate financial pay data within institutions. A review group will consider commonly accepted data on universities' and HE colleges' income and expenditure in 2006-07, 2007-08, and forecasts for 2008-09 and later years; the outcomes of the Framework Agreement, the earnings of HE staff following its implementation; and relativities to the earnings of other UK employees. This review will draw on independent data sources and will report by autumn 2008 to inform subsequent negotiations in the JNCHES machinery for academic year 2009-10 and later.

The new GMB Higher Education Committee has now had some time to embed into the Public Service section. The Committee has continued to strengthen its profile in the GMB with all regions now represented. The first edition of GMB HE news was circulated to all members earlier this year with a comprehensive questionnaire requesting detailed information of the sector.

Working alongside the NOT team the HE Committee will steer the three organising pilots agreed in the GMB. Initially GMB workplace mapping and assessment of activists has started at University Arts London and Plymouth University. The Committee has placed significant importance on the management of these pilots as they are seen as being central to membership development. The goal is to develop a model for Higher Education workplace organisation.

Finally the HE Committee need to be congratulated for the excellent work they have undertaken in a short time, in particular highlighting the contribution Barry Lambert and Pat Maddock made in negotiating the Single table proposal.

11. FURTHER EDUCATION

The six trade unions including the GMB have submitted the 2008/09 pay claim. Highlights of the claim included 6% or £1500 with a minimum of £7.38 hourly rate. The sector is putting emphasis on this years' claim as a catch up claim due to the below inflation increases awarded over the last few years.

In England the vast majority of colleges are members of the Association of Colleges (AOC), an employers' organisation which negotiates with the GMB alongside other recognised trade unions to produce recommendations for individual colleges to adopt, but there is a problem as colleges can adopt locally independent positions on any pay issue. A national campaign is being launched to change this situation and the GMB could be looking to secure recognition locally if this is not achieved and where it may remain the case.

A recently organised GMB representatives meeting agreed a stronger presence on the AOC National Joint Forum (NJF). Mick McGarry from Yorkshire and Rory McQueen from London were nominated to work alongside the National Official on key areas of pay and conditions in the sector. The GMB is undertaking a consultation exercise to assess which colleges in England conform to the national AOC recommendations. Responses will shape the GMB's campaign in this area. Some joint working between colleges in London was agreed in order to explore cross networking of stewards and strengthening of local bargaining arrangements. The GMB FE Representatives are keen to develop a network for the sector.

12. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The sector has faced many challenges, none more significant than the emergency response to the floods that hit Britain recently. Many of our members have been on the front line in responding to this challenge. Mike Sutton and Terry Sadler have led most members' negotiations until August 2007 when the decision was made to bring the sector under the National Public Services section. The 2007 pay and conditions claim settled at 3.9%. At the time of writing the 2008 pay claim is about to be submitted with members highlighting their concerns regarding the Government's position on public sector pay.

The GMB has strengthened its presence in the sector and has been challenging the agency in their response to outsource workers which includes some craft workers. Greater emphasis has been requested on local consultation and involvement of stewards.

After a brief evaluation of the sector it has been agreed that the National Officer will assist and lead on all national negotiations working alongside convenors. A GMB membership assessment has been carried out and the implementation of a robust communication policy in the sector has been set up.

Initial work on this is proving to be a success as local representatives are responding more effectively to pay and conditions consultations and arrangements.

13. POLICE STAFF

The terms and conditions are negotiated through the Police Staff Council (PSC), and until July 2007 Yorkshire Region led nationally. This sector has also been brought under the National Public Section and the National Officer leads on all negotiations working alongside Robert Wright, GMB PSC member. Much of the year's work was taken up with the pay claim submitted as many difficulties had to be overcome during this process. GMB are keen to ensure that similar difficulties do not occur in future pay negotiations and is therefore currently pursuing timely discussions with both Employer and Signatory trade unions. After extensive negotiations with the employer's association a pay settlement of 2.5% has been agreed and accepted by the GMB membership. The GMB have supported the Police Federation position on pay and lobbied the Home Secretary to implement the arbitration panel's recommendation.

GMB stewards from the regions will be meeting shortly to discuss the 2008 pay claim and key challenges facing the Police sector. Forces will need to be encouraged to carry out equality impact assessments and the GMB has worked with other unions in preparing some guidance on this. GMB membership has been audited and this has highlighted difficulties local stewards face in securing GMB recognition. The audit will form some basis to developing GMB workplace organisation in the sector.

14. MPO

The Managerial and Professional Officers group which merged into GMB in 2001 retains a distinct identity for senior managers in the public sector. Mainly for Chief Officer grades in local government, the Probation Service and The Rent Service. MPO's National Committee and lay activists forge close links with their colleagues in other parts of the GMB. MPO leads negotiations for senior grades in local government and has sole recognition for its bargaining area in the Probation (led by David Walton) and The Rent Service (through Heather Starr). MPO President and member of the Public Services National Committee is Peter Dow.

15. ASU

In January 2008 the membership of the Ambulance Services Union transferred into the GMB within the Public Services Section. Joining the ASU up with our existing GMB ambulance membership in the NHS means that we can give an even better focus to this vital emergency service and the people that work in it. ASU member of the Public Services National Committee is Steve Rice.

16. HEALTH SECTOR

Significant developments included:

- Lord Darzi published his interim report 'Our NHS, our future', in October, which set out his emerging vision to develop a universal world class NHS *'personalised to individuals, available to all'*. In early January, 2008, he launched consultations aimed at the public, staff and stakeholders.
- During 2007 smoking was banned in workplaces and public buildings throughout England, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- In November 2007 the Department of Health in England announced a hospital "deep clean" programme with £57.5 million funding, to be completed by March 2008.
- Health Services in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland all launched policies designed to tackle violence against staff.
- In the same month, the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review set out the central departmental spending commitments in the years to 2010/11. The NHS will get a 4% real terms increase per year, taking its budget from £90bn in 2007/08 to £110bn by 2010/11.
- The Department of Health, in November, announced that in the financial year 2007/08 the NHS would have a £1.8bn surplus compared to the £547m deficit in 2005/06.

Workforce initiatives

Criticism levied against the Department of Health in 2006, regarding the lack of engagement between the DH and its policy development teams, led to a review of the Social Partnership arrangements between the Department of Health and NHS unions.

Ann Keen, parliamentary Under Secretary of State, took over last year as Chair. Relationships between the Department of Health and ourselves have much improved.

Arising from the Social Partnership Forum has been a number of policy implementation initiatives, which GMB has co-operated in the development of since Congress 2007.

Firstly, the Darzi Next Stage Review, '*Our NHS, Our Future.*' GMB expressed concern that the Review is largely being considered from a clinical perspective without taking into account the wider healthcare workforce, particularly staff on lower grades; i.e., cleaners, porters and administrative staff without whom the clinicians could not do their work. This expressed view was welcomed and the Darzi Review Team has made greater efforts to engage staff from those lower grades, whilst consulting at local Trust level.

Secondly, the 'Annual Staff Attitude Survey' which, over three years, continues to show very little improvement in the treatment of staff by NHS organisations on key issues such as career development, bullying and harassment. GMB is currently involved in an initiative looking at the health and wellbeing of staff in the NHS. The main objective is to develop steps to improve the experience of our members at work and eliminate barriers to those improvements.

Thirdly, the development of knowledge and skills for all staff in the NHS. The NHS 'Knowledge and Skills Framework' (NHS KSF) is a key strand of the Agenda for Change agreement but has not been fully implemented throughout the NHS. This remains of grave concern to GMB members, as this Tool, and its associated development review process, lies at the heart of NHS staff developing up pay bands. Its implementation, therefore, has long term economic benefits for staff. Representation last year to the ministers on the failure of some NHS Organisations to implement brought about a commitment by ministers to support a re-launch of KSF in autumn 2007 and resources from the Department of Health to fund activities and events. These included a video, staff communication and local Partnership events which were well attended by senior Trust officials, officers and staff side representatives. A number of emerging themes were raised which the NHS Staff Council and KSF Group will be tasked with to carry forward. How successful the events had been to increase momentum is yet to be fully evaluated.

Other policy areas progressing or emerging in 2008 are:

- The accountability of Foundation Trusts.
- A possible NHS Constitution being taken forward as part of the Next Stage Review which could lead to ever greater autonomy in the NHS.
- The 60th Anniversary of the NHS to be launched in early July.
- World Class Commissioning.' Setting the framework for commissioning in health, social care and amongst multi-disciplinary providers; i.e., local authorities and including the private and voluntary sector.
- Health Care Acquired Infections (HCAI's) Strategy. Ensuring all Trusts complete their deep-clean programme and that the programme is fully-funded and resourced.

Pay

Like other Public Sector departments, NHS pay in 2007 was staged by Central Government. GMB voiced its deep disappointment with the decision to reduce the NHS Pay Review Body's recommended award, (which, in itself, was significantly below the rate of inflation), from 2.5% to 1.9%. Income Data Services found that 94% of NHS staff thought that the staging of last year's award was unfair. The Government and Independent Review Body in England have been advised that expectations from GMB members in the NHS would be to receive "*a better deal for 2008,*" particularly as colleagues in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales were not subjected to a staged award and received the full 2.5%. Rates of pay between the English regions and the other three nations were different during this period and, therefore, the value of pay less for those in England.

In response to the threat of industrial action in England, the Department of Health offered NHS staff additional funding for learning and development opportunities in the form of £25 per person for non-clinical grades and 50% contribution towards annual registration fees for the clinical grades. In addition, the Department of Health agreed to enter into talks on the potential for reaching a negotiated agreement on a range of bargaining issues, which could mutually benefit staff and NHS organisations over the next comprehensive spending review period, 2008 – 2011.

Talks continued until January 2008 when it became evident that little progress had been made. Any possibility of a joint proposition to this year's Review Body process had also run out of time.

Staff side Evidence to the NHS PRB was submitted to the Review Body in October 2007. GMB, following consultation amongst regions, submitted its own individual organisation's evidence and oral evidence to the Review body for the first time, additional to the joint staff side. Coverage from 2007 includes all NHS staff represented by GMB.

The claim for 2008.

- A pay award significantly above inflation (RPI) on AfC pay scales and applied uniformly to NHS staff in all four countries.
- A reduction in the number of incremental points.
- Support from the Review Body for full implementation of the KSF.
- A pay uplift in related pay allowances including a high cost area supplement for South Cambridgeshire.

17. SOCIAL CARE

The Health and Social Care Bill was published, in November 2007, setting out proposals to establish the Care Quality Commission which would replace the existing regulators by 2009 and establishing powers to regulate health professionals and the health and social care workforce.

The 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) confirmed that adult social care spending will only rise by 1% per annum in real terms with a direct funding increase of between £190m to £1.5bn by 2010/11, compared to a 4% real terms annual increase for the NHS.

An adult social care green paper is anticipated in spring 2008, which is expected to set out proposals to tackle the funding crisis in social care. A Treasury statement said that any new system must promote independence, be affordable to the public purse and "*be consistent with the principles of progressive universalism*". The latter phrase suggests a system with at least some state-funded services available to all in need, with some more support for the most disadvantaged.

The vast majority of GMB's private sector social care membership remains in Southern Cross Healthcare, the largest private care sector provider in the UK.

The implications of funding in the care sector, low pay, inadequate staffing levels and the treatment of senior care workers refused an extension of their permit to work in the UK, has formed the basis of GMB's activities in this Company since Congress 2007.

The Borders and Immigration Agency (BIA), formerly known as the Immigration and Nationality Directorate agency of the Home Office, is now responsible for issuing work permits. In summer 2007, it changed the 'occupational' guidance used when considering applications for work permits from applicants outside the European Economic Area as the occupational requirements often stated on the application forms for Senior Care Worker (SCW) posts could not be justified. Later, under pressure from the sector and GMB, the BIA relaxed its guidance.

Membership in this Company, and in other care sector providers, has increased across the union. Continuing efforts to recruit, organise, service and retain membership are key elements of the overall strategy GMB has planned in this Company as a national target. The National Organising Team is providing great support to this project.

At the time of writing this report, the first National Committee of regional Southern Cross representatives is shortly to be convened and officers are now receiving joint national briefings where it's requested.

18. MOD

Reports of MOD budget cuts has led to speculation that orders for Euro fighter, joint strike aircraft and naval ships will all be reduced or delayed. The GMB had a joint meeting of our MOD and CSEU members with Lord Drayson, the Minister for defence procurement, to express our concerns.

On the pay front, 2007 was the second year of the two year pay deal. This deal further managed to improve rates at the bottom of the scale while proving a 2.5% increase to all others. On the Productivity Bonus we finally got the MOD to agree that bonuses could be applied to all Industrial staff, not just a percentage. This is a huge leap forward in MOD thinking.

The GMB are leading the way with discussions on Equal Pay opportunities and along with the other trade unions will be looking at promotional opportunities for women in the MOD

For the 2008 pay round we will again be looking at the pay rates and pay system, along with another improvement in the productivity bonus. However, this has to be seen in the light of the Government's announcement of restricting public sector pay to around 2% per annum. We also expect a further review of services regarding more privatisation and outsourcing.

We would like to pay a small tribute to Bob Gunn, our national lay rep who retired in 2007. Bob has worked hard for GMB in representing MOD members in Northern Ireland when a member of FTAT and in his national role across the MOD as the GMB national lay representative.

19. PRODUCTIVITY SERVICES

Introduction

Based at National Office and part of the Public Services Section, the Productivity Services Centre (PSC) is operated by Mick Hubbard. Areas of expertise cover a wide range of productivity, pay and work organisational issues, and have developed over the years to reflect the changing nature of management initiatives in both the Private and Public Sectors. The range of work has included:

- Job Evaluation
- Pay and Grading Systems
- Performance, incentive and competency schemes
- Teamworking
- Work Study
- Work Organisation

Activities in 2007/08

While the work of PSC has been wide-ranging, the bulk of the work in the last year has been concentrated in three areas: Local Government Single Status job evaluation and work study, in an advisory and educational capacity. Following is a summary of those particular areas:

Local Government Single Status

Under pressure to complete their new pay and grading systems by March 2008, many Local Authorities have struggled to complete the exercise within the deadline. As of February 2008, some Authorities had yet to start their job evaluations, and others are trying to take shortcuts, some of which defy the principles of good practice in job evaluation. PSC continues to provide training courses in job evaluation, pay and grading to Officers and Representatives to assist them in their negotiations. Additionally, in anticipation of appeals against evaluation results, specific Appeals Training Courses have been provided and have proved popular.

Job Evaluation

Aside from Local Government, PSC has been involved in job evaluation in the private sector. Astra Zeneca have virtually completed a two year job evaluation and re-grading project. Advice provided to the Joint Trade Unions and Management Steering Group and training for Representatives of the three Trade Unions has proved invaluable, and the outcome of the exercise has been well received by GMB members.

The job evaluation exercise at Her Majesty's Prison Service continues and was due for completion this year. However, that looks unlikely in view of the slow progress being made. PSC involvement took the form of membership of the Advisory Group and advice to the Industrial Staff Representatives. It has not proved easy and we have issues with many management decisions. The terms of reference of the Advisory Group are being reviewed and the Trade Unions are considering their future role.

Work Study

Bookers at Haydock have introduced a performance related incentive scheme following a large scale work study project, which has been monitored. Despite initial caution, we can report that GMB members' earnings have increased by an average of 10% across the site since implementation.

Future Projects

Following restructure of the GMB Sections, Mick Hubbard has been assigned to the Public Services Team, where he will continue to provide support for Single Status issues. He has also developed a training course – Tackling the Two-Tier Workforce – based on the Best Value Code of Practice. The Course is designed to make Officers and Representatives aware of their rights in contracting out of Public Services.

Assignment to the Public Services Team is a move intended to prioritise resources in recognition of the membership profile of the GMB. While this means that support for the other Sections will be limited for the foreseeable future, it does mean that the Productivity Services role can concentrate on Public Services issues, adding valuable resources to the Team.

20. SUMMARY

The Public Services Section of the GMB has had another highly successful year. We continue to grow and organise better while providing an excellent service to our members. The strong focus that we give to public sector pay policy and equal pay as two of the main challenges facing our members; the effort we are committing for school staff; and the additional resource we are putting into supporting the NHS including the Ambulance Service; and Further and Higher Education; all mean that the Public Services National Committee has every reason to expect the year ahead to be just as successful.

BIRMINGHAM AND WEST MIDLANDS REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	13,839
MANUFACTURING SECTION	15,754
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	22,443
Grade 1 members	38,555
Grade 2 members	9,484
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	3,997
Male Membership	29,935
Female Membership	22,101
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	8,650
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	+2,490
Membership on Check-off	36,220
Membership on Direct Debit	11,560

RESPONSE TO ORGANISING AGENDA

I am pleased to report that the Organising Agenda within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region continues to be the priority. All Officers, staff and activists within the region are fully on board with our Organising Agenda which I believe shows in the improved recruitment figures and financial membership. Since my last report to Congress we have refreshed the Organising Team by placing different Officers within it. The team still have the same priorities which are to drive the organising agenda amongst the Officers within the region. Each member of the team is allocated a specific area of responsibility within the national and regional projects. They then ensure that that particular project is driven and has cohesion. The region continues to operate a system where each area team dedicates

one week out of every four to solely organising which is still done in addition to general day-to-day organising. Also, with regards to the schools campaign, Officers diaries are accessible to a member of the Organising Team and where there are significant free spaces, school visits are allocated into their diaries and the Officers then visit the appropriate school. The GMB@Work Training for new activists and existing activists has been rolled out across the region throughout 2007. This has proved quite successful and as a result of that training, we have seen a marked improvement in both our recruitment figures but also in the quality of service provided to rank and file members by shop stewards who have attended the training. The use of lay representatives to assist in the area teams to organise, continues to be a success and the use of accompanying representatives to handle first line grievances and disciplinaries continue to be utilised which allows Full Time Officers more opportunities to devote time to organising and servicing the membership. Again, as with my last report, I am very pleased to report that the Organising Agenda continues to be positive throughout the region and all Full Time Officers and staff are totally committed to the Organising Agenda and the success of the region. In line with Motion 21 at Congress 2007, branches continue to adopt branch recruitment plans in accordance with Rule 37 and where requested, the region assists with funding to assist the branch recruitment plan. We also continue to receive funding from branch commission funds to assist recruitment plans within the region. As a result of the commitment of all involved in the Organising Agenda, it gives me great pleasure to report an increase in financial membership on the twelve month period of two thousand, four hundred and ninety which I believe is a credit to all Officers, staff and activists within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region.

RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS

Obviously through 2007, we have been concentrating on the main national targets which were Public Services, where School Support Staff and Catering Staff are providing us with a constant steady stream of members and we are ensuring that when we do make new members in schools, we appoint a person as a contact who we are finding in turn, then become representatives in certain cases. As well as Public Services, G4S and latterly Asda have been targeted and again G4S has brought us a steady flow of new membership. Asda is slightly more difficult with regards to accessing the stores however we have begun to see an increase in our Asda membership and this will remain a target for organising. The other national target has been Southern Cross Care Homes, as a result of this we ran a very successful Southern Cross week whereby all Officers across the region were given specific homes to visit in the same week which resulted in an increase in Southern Cross membership of over one hundred and forty new members. As it was a success, it is our intention to make this an annual event in Southern Cross but also in other areas such as Asda, Wilkinson Stores and Casino's. As well as the national targets, we also have our regional project board and work in progress throughout 2007 have included the following companies or organisations; JD Heating, Father Hudson, which is a charitable society, GSA Cleaning, Private Hire Taxis, Euro Packaging Ltd, Trading Post Ltd, the Isle of Capri Casino, Rockline Ltd, Taylors Ltd and Nicklin Ltd. As well as the regional projects we ensure that the Organising Team and all the area teams have Greenfield targets in an effort to expand our membership base and from January 2007 through to December 2007, the following recognition agreements were secured; Transform in Telford, Whitefriars House, JCB World Parts Centre and West Mercia Women's Aid.

OVERVIEW OF THE REGION'S ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The Birmingham and West Midlands Region continues to lobby Government in an effort to get a coherent and sustainable manufacturing strategy for the region. As we are continuing to haemorrhage within the Manufacturing Sector, I have had a series of meetings with senior Government Ministers and towards the end of 2007 I met with the newly appointed Minister for the West Midlands, Liam Byrne and put our case forward very forcefully for a vibrant Manufacturing Policy. The issue of public procurement was argued for vociferously and this has resulted in a paper coming forward from the Minister for a strategy for the West Midlands. Never-the-less, this is not a quick fix and will have to be monitored over time. The West Midlands continues to have a high unemployment rate, the UK average unemployment rate is 5.3% and yet the West Midlands unemployment rate stands at 6.2% of the working population.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	4
Membership Development Officers	Nil
Regional Organisers	16
Organising Officers	2
No. of Branches	116
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	18
Branch Youth Officers	9

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	50.00
Total Disablement	Nil
Working Accident	1,322
Occupational Fatal Accident	4,000
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	3,040
Funeral	9,259

4. JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The Birmingham and West Midlands Regional magazine, GMB Centrepoint is now well established within the region. We have taken a conscious decision to make it a members magazine with branch and members stories as opposed to Full Time Officers. We also have within the magazine, a dedicated Women's Section in line with our Birmingham and West Midlands Regional Women's Charter. We also have a regional website which provides a variety of information and regional activity for members logging on and we continue to have a significant amount of on-line joiners. We also have links to branch websites and national and regional sister organisations. Throughout 2007, press releases have been published in most of the regional newspapers with interviews taking place on both TV and radio. Press releases and radio TV interviews were on the following subjects; compensation recovered through our legal services, pensions within the Local Government, fighting job losses in Severn Trent Water, Workers Memorial Day, Single Status, JCB Strike Ballot, GMB at the V Festival, GMB Women's Conference, Council Tax, Black History Month, Sandwell Council Schools under threat of closure and Asda stores deducting their employees pay. Regular news letters are circulated amongst our Section membership and we have now bedded in and utilised a fairly new service whereby we send text messages on a variety of subjects to our activists which is proving very successful and is welcomed by them. In conclusion, we have established for some time now and maintain a useful and informative media strategy.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
860	860

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
593	277	6	£4,119,124.60	£500,000	£4,619,124.69
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			916		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	98 ET cases and advice matters (of which 33 are equal value pay cases)
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
19	4	0	23 £169,342.92		£169,342.92
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			39		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
53 (compromise agreements)	0	£0	2

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
16	3	6

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

During the past year the main work of the Committee has focused on raising the profile of the GMB as the champion organisation for addressing inequality issues. This has extended to Regional Council, Regional Committee, full time and lay officials, representatives, employers, members and non-members. Full-time Officers have also been encouraged to use RERAC as a resource for organising in the workplace and utilising Committee members in recruitment campaigns throughout the Region. During the past year the primary work of the Committee has focused on how the Committee can become involved in organising. The Organising Team have been encouraged to utilise the Committee in terms of information and assisting with recruitment/organising campaigns. The Committee helped with the setting-up of the LGBT Shout Forum with a commitment from the Regional Secretary to financially support its work. RERAC members were involved with helping Ann Lafferty in organising a women's conference which was attended by over 120 women members.

Regional Race Advisory Committee Report

During the past 12 months the main work of the regional race committee has been focused on raising the profile of the Black History Month event. This was organised and held on 27th October 2007 in Chamberlain Square, Birmingham.

The committee started to have regular meetings along with the regional secretary and made it a high profile event that required a poster campaign. The committee agreed it would be best if the school children designed the posters as we believed this would provide an ideal opportunity for children, schools and the wider community to celebrate the cultural and religious diversity of the black and ethnic minority communities in British society. The competition was welcomed by the school children and the designs/drawings received were of high standard, the winning poster was designed by Lucy Franks, aged 11 from Park View School in Birmingham.

The prize for the winning poster was presented at the Black History month event by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham. The committee gives special thanks to all the schools and children that participated in the competition.

We would also like to thank the speakers who attended and participated in the event which were:-

- Little Young - The first ethnic representative for the GMB
- Bob Hazel - Ex footballer
- Roger McKenzie - Regional Secretary, TUC
- The Lord Mayor of Birmingham
- Joe Morgan - Regional Secretary, GMB Birmingham and West Midlands Region.

We would also like to extend our thanks to those other branches who supported us for this event and the local people who made it a successful day for the awareness of the Black History Month.

The committee have put together an action plan for the forthcoming year of 2008 which include:-

- Regional race meetings
- Regional race events
- National race events
- Training
- Information
- Internal publicity
- Branch organisation
- Local elections

7. YOUTH REPORT

The young members have continued to maintain a presence at the music festival, raising the profile of GMB amongst young workers.

A letter of invitation has gone out to all members, 27 and under, inviting them to join a steering committee, in order for them to lead a campaign to encourage young people to get involved in campaigning on issues that are of interest to them and find ways of educating school leavers on the merits of Trade unions. The response from this has been good and those people not volunteering for the committee have asked to be involved in the young members network.

We will be sending a delegation of young members to congress this year, in order for them to see the workings of the unions decision making body, hopefully helping them to engage with their branch.

Two volunteers will also be attending the TUC young members conference in March.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB @ Work	3	35	9	44	132
Induction course	5	62	11	73	365
ULR training	5	17	10	27	135

(b) GMB advanced courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Industrial Relations 1&2 (10 Days)	2	14	2	16	32
Health & Safety Intermediate	2	23	3	26	52
Health & Safety Advanced	2	25	1	26	52

(c) TUC Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Union reps stage 1 (10 days)	2	1	1	2	4
Union reps stage 2 (10 days)	6	6	0	6	36
Health & Safety 1 (10 days)	4	3	1	4	16

Health & Safety Techsp	6	4	2	6	36
Representing unions on public bodies	1	0	1	1	1
Employment Law Cert (36 Days)	1	1	0	1	1
ECLD	1	1	0	1	1
How to take a disciplinary hearing	1	1	1	2	2
Accident investigation	2	2	0	2	4
Successful negotiating	1	1	0	1	1

(d) Northern College					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Advanced health & safety	2	2	0	4	8
Understanding DDA	3	3	0	3	9
Employment Law (5 Days)	3	3	0	3	9
Understanding Pensions (5 Days)	2	2	0	2	4

(e) GFTU					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Organise Now (3 days)	1		1	1	1
Preparation for retirement	4	4	0	4	16
Tackling discrimination (3 Days)	1	0	1	1	1
Tackling workplace hazards	1	1	0	1	1
Bullying & Harassment	1	0	1	1	1
Advocacy skills	1	1	0	1	1
International issues	1	1	0	1	1
Organisational behaviour	2	2	0	2	4
Introduction to powerpoint	1	1	0	1	1
Public speaking	1	1	0	1	1
Advanced course	1	1	0	1	1

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Birmingham and West Midlands Region has continued to carry out the Union's policy with regard to health and safety. The Region continues to offer advice and assistance to our representatives by providing both an information service and workplace visits when requested. The department has been instrumental in driving health and safety issues forward and raising awareness throughout the Region. This has been achieved by using the Media Officer to promote health and safety campaigns in the media in conjunction with providing materials for the *Centrepoint* regional website.

In the past year the health and safety department has been involved in a number of workplace organising campaigns. One of the key strategies was to link the Health and Safety Euro Week into an organising week. Officers were first asked to identify workplaces where MSD was an issue. Information was then given to the workplace reps to go around their workplaces using workplace inspection as a tool to highlight the issue of MSD with members and non-members; with the latter group being explained the benefits of joining the GMB. Workers Memorial Day was again commemorated with a multi-faith service held at St John's Church close to Regional Office and was attended by over fifty people. We also linked in with the Women's' Charter Group. The Department has been instrumental in

driving health and safety issues forward and raising awareness throughout the Region. This has been achieved by using the Media Officer to promote health and safety campaigns in the media along with providing materials for the *Centrepoint* Regional magazine and the regional website.

Lifelong learning:

The Regional Learning Co-ordinator (RLC) Jackie Wyatt has been working with various employers on promoting the learning agenda. We have learners going through a number of centres – one at Pilkington's the other at Abro Donnington We have more than doubled the amount of ULRs in the Region, with most of the ULR's starting to do work with their employers in pushing forward the learning agenda and putting learners through various courses. One of the projects involves working in partnership with Walsall branch's 'Union Learning Reps', and 'Walsall College of Continuing Education' and Nextstep in supporting Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council's commitment to 'GO' awards which was recently launched to support employers help their employees develop Skills for Life.

LONDON REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	34,291
MANUFACTURING SECTION	9,016
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	48,392
Grade 1 members	59,723
Grade 2 members	23,623
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	8,353
Male Membership	44,153
Female Membership	47,546
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	16,368
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	3,932
Membership on Check-off	56,768
Membership on Direct Debit	28,323

During the period January 1st to December 31st 2007 the GMB London Region grew by 3,932 members. This strong membership performance reflects the hard work of the officers, staff, Branch Secretaries and Shop Stewards in the Region. The growth in membership has been due in large part to our recruitment campaigns in schools. We are now the largest education union in many London Boroughs and County Councils.

We have also continued to make excellent recruitment progress in aviation, particularly within Aircraft Handling Agents. We have recently made great strides in the food processing industry with over 1000 members recruited in the month of December in the Bakkovar Katsouris plants in West London. The NHS has also proved to be a good sector for recruitment with a number of carefully targeted hospitals seeing large increases in membership.

Throughout 2007, the manufacturing sector in the London Region has continued to decline at an alarming rate. The London Region has seen many thousands of our members jobs lost during the period with many major plants closing and many dozens of other manufacturing plants shedding large numbers of our members.

Without the strong recruitment in the sectors outlined above there is no doubt that the Region rather than growing would have sustained substantial losses if we were still heavily dependent upon our manufacturing base.

It is difficult to see this decline in manufacturing changing given the current world and British economic outlook.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	2
Membership Development Officers	4
Regional Organisers	15
Organising Officers	8
No. of Branches	123
New Branches	0
Branch Equality Officers	26
Branch Youth Officers	9

The GMB London Region continues to focus on recruitment, increased resources being devoted to our Organising Team and support staff to the Organising Team.

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	16,470.00
Total Disablement	NIL
Working Accident	2,774.75
Occupational Fatal Accident	Nil
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	Nil
Funeral	16,090.50

4. JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

PRESS

London Region continues to issue press releases when it is considered, by the relevant Organiser, that raising public awareness of a dispute will assist in a settlement.

We have continued to report on the many employment issues and problems that effect the airports, where GMB London Region members work either for the aviation or construction industries. We have also endeavoured to ensure that the public know that GMB supports the expansion of London Stansted and Heathrow and have reported on the GMB's evidence to the Stansted enquiry. Other issues include the BA pension scheme, settlement with Labour Source at Stansted and the reinstatement of our member at Eurest over the dress code.

The department has reported on major pay issues, including the local government and NHS pay claims. We have also reacted to the Government proposals on all issues affecting our members in the public services. We reacted swiftly, slamming Gordon Brown's suggestion of a three year deal for Local Government workers and the MPs claim for a large percentage pay rise. We are also continuously fighting the outsourcing and downgrading of in-house services by Hammersmith and Fulham Council which turned Tory last May.

The press office have sought to raise the general profile of the work done by our members in public services by publishing government figures on Leisure Centre charges, recycling systems and associated issues. Care homes in several boroughs continue to have employment problems which are highlighted by the press department.

The press office highlighted East London's Antifascist Day, and the exploitation of migrant workers by several companies.

GMB named the nationwide courier company CitySprint as "Scrooge Employer of 2007" for its sacking of GMB London Region member Paul Whieldon when he asked for Christmas Eve off work to be with his partner on her 40th birthday.

The London Region website (www.gmbunion.org.uk) hosts all the press releases that have been issued this year on the NEWS page. They are also shown on the Press page on the national site www.gmb.org.uk

CAMPAIGNS

Remploy

The Government's decision to close Remploy factories, in the face of the GMB's clear programme for funding the maintenance of all 83 is unjustifiable. Industrial action ballots will be held at the threatened factories and the fight will be taken to the Labour Party Spring Conference in Birmingham. The recent award of a £6,000,000 Ministry of Defence contract to Remploy will keep two factories open for at least two years, demonstrates clearly that GMB's campaign for a higher public procurement spend is the way to save all 83 factories.

Private Hire Drivers Health and Safety

We are beginning the work on the mini cab driver lone working problems that have led to nine deaths since March 2007. The campaign was launched at the start of February and there will be a lobby of Parliament on Workers Memorial Day (28th April). The campaign aims are to get funding for CCTV and shield in cabs. Sheffield has led the way by introducing these and cutting attacks on driver by 72%.

Thermal Insulation Engineers Fight for Re-instatement of Pleural Plaques Compensation

The press office assisted in highlighting the rally of Parliament to support the reinstatement of compensation for Pleural Plaques.

CANDID

The GMB London Region's Press Officer, Rose Conroy continues to spend part of her time on secondment to GMB National Office, Communications Department.

CANDID has featured a whole series of major campaigns including those at Bakkovar Katsouris, British Airways and Swissport.

GMB CANDID has been produced four times per year during 2007, and is now mailed to over 90,000 GMB London Region members. The journal has proved to be very popular with members. In order to provide an even better journal the London Region is now incorporating a national supplement to its journal which will make the CANDID magazine 32 pages long.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
803	793

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
773	375	2	388 £4,425,705.74	8 £144,578.01	£4,570,283.75
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			1,397		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	
	91

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
73	27	1	35 £285,631.20	10 £106,567.25	£392,198.45
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			213		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
798	-	£590,790.83	660

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
2	1	-

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

Regional Events

GMB/Vulnerable Workers Project held a class at POSK Polish Centre in Hammersmith on 12th November 2007 to advise workers on their employment rights. The event was a joint initiative by GMB London Security Branch with TUC VWP and was well attended. The evening social at the Loweizanka restaurant was sponsored by a number of London Region Branches.

A very successful Diwali/Eid/Christmas social event, organised and funded by four GMB Branches, was held on 17th November 2007 in Wembley and was attended by GMB National President, Mary Turner, and 35 GMB Representatives.

Katsouris/Pratts Bananas

GMB has undertaken two very successful recruitment campaigns at the above companies, whereby hundreds of new members from Asian and Polish backgrounds have been signed up.

Heathrow Unfair Dismissal - Mrs. Amrit Lalji

Mrs Amrit Lalji, a BA Euresst worker, was dismissed on 13th September 2007 for wearing a nose stud, which is a symbolic part of her Hindu religion. GMB argued it could constitute religious discrimination and Euresst agreed that the dismissal resulted from a misunderstanding of the rules. Mrs. Lalji was reinstated with no loss of earnings.

Recognising Strengths & Building Partnerships: Trade Unions & Muslim Organisations Seminar

The above seminar was held on 29th October 2007 at London's City Hall. The seminar discussed links between Muslim organisations and Trade Unions.

Global Support (Malawi)

A GMB delegation has recently visited G4S establishments in Malawi, one of the poorest countries in Southern Africa - London Region was represented by Raj Gill, London Security Branch Secretary. Our delegation met union leaders from TGLSSWU, who have sole negotiating rights, and Union membership is low density. The delegation went with the support of G4S and its remit was to lend practical advice to assist G4S workers in Malawi to organise their own trade union structure and assess what financial assistance could be provided for Workforce Representatives. Full reports will be presented.

7. YOUTH

The GMB London Region Young Members held their conference on Saturday 10th November 2007 at Congress House. This heralded a campaign to build a strong young members committee to put GMB young members at the forefront of the young workers issues.

The conference was supported and attended by Senior GMB London Region Officers and activists who spoke and lent their vast experience to the conference.

Regional Secretary Ed Blissett and National President Mary Turner spoke as did Gary Doolan and Vaughan West from the Islington Branches. Former GMB London Region Organiser Dawn Butler MP also took part.

A workshop on 'Organisation' confirmed the group's commitment to enhancing the organising and recruitment work of the rest of the Region.

The work of this group is driven by a dedicated team of young members who are a credit to GMB London Region.

YOUNG MEMBERS BY GMB SECTIONS

GMB Young members predominate in the Commercial Services Section. The total number of young members in each of the three newly established GMB Sections is as follows: Commercial Services Section has 2,419, Public Services Section has 1,521 and Manufacturing has 386.

GMB SECTION	NO. & (%) OF YOUNG MEMBERS
GMB Commercial Services Section	2,419 (56%)
Commercial Services	1,244
Food & Leisure	602
Energy & Utilities	573
GMB Public services Section	1,521 (35%)
GMB Manufacturing Section	386 (9%)
Construction, Furniture Trades & Allied	212
Clothing & Textiles	16
Engineering	60
Process	98

ON-LINE JOINING

The new on-line joining facility is also attracting younger workers to GMB London. The latest report shows that workers in the 25 to 35 age group are the largest group to join on line followed by 35 to 45, 45 to 55 and then the under 21s. In total so far 178 young members have joined London Region on-line which reflects the 5% percentage of young members in the Region as a whole.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (3 days)	17	154	71	225	675
GMB/Follow On (5 days)	7	49	15	64	320
Branch Officers Secretaries	1	13	3	16	48
3 Day Put it in Writing	7	51	24	75	225
3 Day Advanced Negotiations	6	50	20	70	210
3 Day Say Your Piece	4	28	10	38	114
3 Day Stress, Bullying & Harassment	5	44	17	61	183

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Not applicable	-	-	-	-	-

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day Health & Safety	7	56	16	72	360
3 Day Health & Safety Inspection	7	67	14	81	243

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays / weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
1 Day Communication Skills	1	6	2	8	8
1 Day Shout	1	11	2	13	26
1 Day IBB	1	9	3	12	12
ULR 3 Day	11	81	21	102	306
ULR Follow On	3	22	5	27	81
ULF Courses					
ESOL	N/A	N/A	N/A	509	
Numeracy/Literacy	N/A	N/A	N/A	272	
Basic IT Skills	N/A	N/A	N/A	567	

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Not applicable					

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

It is acknowledged across GMB London Region that the understanding of, and dealing with, health, safety and welfare issues in the workplace aids recruitment, organisation and retention and helps raise the profile of the GMB. Health and safety issues have been proven to be extremely useful in campaigning for full organisation and recognition.

The information and skills contained within the Region's courses, particularly the emphasis on safety representative's rights, safety committees and practical involvement within Risk Assessment process, gives the safety representatives confidence to engage with the employer. Therefore the Region will continue to ensure that safety representatives are trained in practical skills and up to date information with a view to enhancing recruitment and organisation across all workplaces. This training is constantly evaluated to take into account any changes in health and safety legislation or union campaigns.

Our health and safety bulletins are produced, and regularly updated, on GMB orange bordered posters, which are useful for notice boards and as an aid for recruitment purposes. They cover such diverse subjects as blood borne diseases; lone working and working in cold temperatures. They are also available on CD and can be downloaded from our website.

Health, safety and welfare concerns continue to be prevalent across the Region's employers. For some in Public Services or large well organised companies, managers have the knowledge, training and experience of best practice, but sometimes lack the resources (finance and time) to implement negotiated policies fully. In the Private Sector, particularly smaller companies, the level of health, safety and welfare knowledge can be frighteningly low with little or no attempt at adherence to legislation. Indeed well trained GMB representatives will often be better informed and more aware of potential problems than many of their managers.

The Region took the decision to aggressively lobby all MPs within the London Region regarding the Government's decision to impose a 5% budgetary cut in funding on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) until 2011. The response from the 98 MPs was underwhelming. This exercise resulted in 5 Labour MPs responding and only 2 Labour MPs, formally offering to help.

In conclusion the last year has seen an expansion in the health, safety and welfare services available to officers, reps, activists and GMB members. This has included bespoke health and safety in-house training on specific issues, such as cold and frozen food processing. The daily battle for our members' safety at work continues, with our Safety Reps leading the charge, armed with experience, knowledge and regional support.

MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	53,515
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	15,993
MANUFACTURING SECTION	15,208
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	22,314
Grade 1 members	37,013
Grade 2 members	10,127
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	6,375
Male Membership	32,412
Female Membership	21,103
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	7,698
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	+895
Membership on Check-off	31,788
Membership on Direct Debit	15,252

RESPONSE TO ORGANISING AGENDA

The Midland and East Coast Region continues to support the National Organising Agenda. The Regional Organising Team of 3 Organising Officers has been strengthened by the appointment of a Membership Development Officer who is under the direct control of a designated Senior Organiser. The Regional Organising Team will be supported by a full time co-ordinator/administrator. Membership growth is measured and monitored with an emphasis on GMB@Work and ensuring that not only is membership increasing but that a structure is put in place for Representatives and Contacts to enable us to build in the future.

The main priority remains organising within the national areas of schools, Southern Cross and ASDA, and membership is steadily increasing in all areas.

The GMB@Work agenda continues to drive and influence decisions in the Region with all the Officers having attended the weekend course designed to enable them to deliver this directly to new Representatives at the mandatory two-day induction. We will start rolling this out in the Spring term.

The Region's areas have also been subjected to a restructure with the addition of three more Servicing Organisers. We believe this now gives the Organisers the opportunity to implement GMB@Work in all areas, with membership growth the measurement we will all be judged by.

RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS

The Midland and East Coast Region continues to support the National Organising Team projects and has been proactive in being one of the pilot Regions working closely with the NOT in the NHS and Further Education. The Regional and National targets, along with the success rate, continues to be displayed on organising boards in offices across the Region, and the Region's rolling recruitment weeks are all planned for 2008.

As well as national targets, regional targets include Servisair at East Midlands Airport, L'Oreal, and Nottingham Trent University, and new leads and development targets are constantly being looked at. We continue recruiting, servicing and organising all of our GMB members with the goal in the Midland and East Coast Region of fully integrating all communities with a view to using the Organising at Work agenda to encourage, train and give them their own confidence and independence.

Recruiting and Organising in the migrant worker community remains a priority for Midland and East Coast Region, and work will continue in this area over the coming year.

OVERVIEW OF REGION'S ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The East Midlands is the third largest region in England covering 15,607 sq km and it is the third most rural region in England (29.5% of the total population live in rural areas). Total population is 4.4 million.

The East Midlands faces particular challenges of its own:

- The effects of globalisation on an area with a strong manufacturing tradition
- Demographic changes, including an aging population and migration
- Lower than average skills

On some levels the Regional economy is doing well with high employment and relatively high economic growth. But our success is not reflected across all parts of the Region.

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.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	14
Organising Officers	3
No. of Branches	95
New Branches	0
Branch Equality Officers	47
Branch Youth Officers	30

The Regional Secretary continues to lead the Region's management team, supported by 3 Senior Organisers who each have individual geographical areas, which have now been realigned to improve the services we deliver to the members.

The Servicing Organisers have now been increased to 15 supported by the MDO and 3 Organising Officers with the Regional Organising Team who then have responsibility for working in the whole of the Region with the Servicing Organisers and Activists. The 3 Senior Organisers each have responsibility for one of the Sections in the GMB, along with other responsibilities, as delegated by the Regional Secretary.

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	-
Total Disablement	-
Working Accident	£4,306.10
Occupational Fatal Accident	-
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	£2,750.00
Funeral	£17,043.50

4. JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

We continue to explore different ways in communicating with our members and we are using the texting services to great effect for our members employed in Local Authorities, Asda, and in co-ordinating the Branch Forums.

The Region has reviewed its publicity material and now has available car stickers, coasters, umbrellas, rulers and other promotional merchandise to advertise the GMB.

Industry specific journals and publications are widely circulated to branches, workplaces and members. The National Schools Support Staff binder is proving an invaluable tool for recruitment and communication in schools across the region. In 2007 we launched our new regional website, our new Member Get Member campaign, and we continue to distribute valuable Public Services Equal Pay information to our members.

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 in 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 has reviewed its publicity material e.g. car stickers, leaflets to include the new regional website and 'join online' facility.

The Region continues to sponsor the highly successful GMB Panthers based in the impressive Ice Arena in Nottingham. Branches are encouraged to use the corporate box with many branches using this as a recruitment tool. We continue to benefit from increased media coverage of this popular family sport.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
925	704

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
918	298	1	619 £5,421,388.12	0 -	£5,421,388.12
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			1,373		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	266
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
125	7	-	107 £8,218.38	11 -	£8,218.38
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			434		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
13	16	-	13

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
-	-	-

Again this year Equal Pay has dominated our time and efforts. We have been inundated with new claims and queries, and have been able to recruit local authority members on the back of it. Road shows have taken place throughout the region at the majority of our City and County Councils. We advised members not to accept settlements but unfortunately the majority did. We are continuing to advertise and encourage those to claim who have not already done so.

The last of our Unilever part-time pension claims will hopefully soon be concluded. Unilever have systematically been working their way through the claims with the last batch left to conclude. Our members have been happy with the results as many received a lump sum to compensate for not being allowed to join the fund, plus interest, plus the extra pension since retirement that they would have received. Some even had their pension trebled.

DSS appeals have continued to come in at a steady rate over the year and we expect to see an increase in Incapacity Benefit appeals after next October when the legislation changes.

This year we have set up a new system for members who have been exposed to asbestos. The member completes a form and the details are registered on Thompsons' solicitors database so that the information is stored for future reference, if and when the member pursues a personal injury claim.

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

REGIONAL EQUAL RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Region's RERAC has met the usual 4 times but unfortunately due to diary dates, RERAC and the RRAC have not had their joint meeting this past year.

We will be holding the Midland & East Coast Regional Equal Rights Conference at the Nottingham Office on 6 March 2008. The theme of the Conference will be Dignity Period where we will be launching the ACTSA Dignity Period Campaign. Delegates will then be able to cascade the campaign out into their Branches and workplaces.

RERAC have been active at events throughout the year and have received assistance from Bob Grimley and his family via manning stalls and recruiting with other activists.

RERAC are looking to put together a newsletter covering equality issues which would be put on the Region's website.

Out of 93 Branches only 58 have Equality Officers and RERAC are looking to increase this over the next year.

To conclude this report the Midland & East Coast Region would like to put on record their thanks to Rehana Azam for the sterling work she did when she had responsibility for Equal Rights at National level, and wish her well for the future.

Ethnic breakdown of the Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committee:

	White	Black	Asian	Other
Male	2	-	-	-
Female	5	2	1	-

REGIONAL RACE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Since the last report to Congress the Regional Race Advisory Committee has met three times and continued to debate the issues of migrant worker impact, and the BNP focus in the region their strategy to infiltrate schools and also alarmingly, trade unions.

The contributions from our young members on the Race Committee significantly assisted us in terms of getting a better understanding of the issues that face young people and also what they think our Union might be able to do to help them. Sam Bull compiled a document about young people in Universities and Further Education, which the Race Committee submitted to Regional Committee for endorsement.

The Race Committee is currently working on an Action Plan that will include some focus on migrant workers and will also examine the potential for the GMB to become involved with student organisations via link work that we are organising.

The region in conjunction with the Trades Council successfully helped organise and contribute to stopping the BNP holding its annual national rally in Kimberley. Even more satisfying is, as a result of the lobbying and campaigning, that the BNP locally have collapsed. We will also be supporting the 'Hope Not Hate' events throughout the region in 2008.

The Regional Race Advisory Committee has attracted two new members to its Committee, one male and one female but both of Asian descent. This will again ensure that we maintain diversity in the Committee and also continue to have debates that are fuelled and enriched by different perspectives which then help to contribute to our regional policies and perspective.

Ethnic Breakdown of the Regional Race Advisory Committee:

	White	Black	Asian	Other
Male	7	2	1	-
Female	1	3	1	-

7. YOUTH

The young members of the Midland and East Coast Region in 2007 have attempted to build on the progress made during the previous year. This continues the shift of trying to bring young members into the fold of the GMB organising agenda from the areas of single issue politics such as poverty and racism.

Once again this region provided a large delegation to the GMB Young Members' Conference scheduled for the end of 2007. It is a great pity that this event did not take place and was certainly no reflection on the young members who had put their names forward to attend. The wider movement needs to consider the negative impact that such a cancellation has on the young members themselves. The GMB constantly bemoans the lack of activity among young members but when events that are planned do not take place it makes it much harder to provide delegates in the future. The region accepts that the cancellation of the young members' conference could not be avoided, however, it does not remove the concern that young members do not have a high priority within the organisation.

On a brighter note this region has once again provided a significant delegation to the National TUC Conference.

One branch in our region has made significant strides in attempting to integrate its young members into the GMB mainstream. Scunthorpe Tec branch has gone a step further than simply appointing a solitary branch young members officer. They have, with the help of young members themselves, set up a youth committee within the branch to promote not just young members issues but the branch itself in the wider community. Significant amounts of money have been raised through, among other things, a sponsored parachute jump undertaken by three young members from the branch. This region commends the commitment and, it has to be said, bravery of the three young members Rob Jollands, Matthew Greener and Scott Wilson, who made the jump. They are a credit to the GMB. Our thanks to the Branch Secretary, Ken Moody, who has given full support to his young members and the branch's young members section. It is prudent to remind all branches in the union that the appointment of a young member's officer is a Rulebook requirement, and careful thought should be given to make sure this instruction is not only complied with but actually made to be a positive contribution to young members and the branch.

Finally, and we make no apologies for including this fact once again, despite the introduction of age discrimination legislation, young members are still discriminated against in the provision of lower rates in the Minimum Wage. The GMB still needs to campaign against this blatant injustice.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	11	90	50	140	280
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	9	76	36	112	560
Branch Officers (please specify subject)	-	-	-	-	-

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Educare, Joint Training	1	7	9	16	16

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
General	3	25	7	32	139

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Plum Conference (One Day)	1	16	8	24	24
Union Learner Reps meeting (One Day)	2	8	21	29	29
Accompanying Reps (evening)	1	16	7	23	23

Southern Cross Refresher (Two Days)	1	4	4	8	16
Refresher Course, Grimsby (Three Days)	2	9	11	11	33
Refresher Course, Hull (Three Days)	1	10	11	11	33
Northern College Courses	6	5	1	6	30

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
		72	18	90	

9. HEALTH & SAFETY SERVICE

WORKPLACE ORGANISATION AND VISITS

In the period since taking up the post, the RHSO has been involved in a number of visits to workplaces:

- Oakdale Learning Centre in Mansfield – Issues over general housekeeping, lighting and risk assessments
- Kings Mill Hospital – Lack of consultation over move of premises. Concerns over lack of natural light, space and stress
- Hull GMB Office – Fire Risk Assessment completed
- Humprenco, Scarborough – Meeting with Director to forge working relationship on health and safety issues

The service continues to be explained to all new representatives attending the training course.

ENQUIRIES

Regional office continues to handle health and safety enquiries. In the period since the last report to Congress the following subject areas were raised:

- Working Time Regulations - (Waivers/time periods)
- Whole Body Vibration - (Survey undertaken and results being analysed)
- Rights of Safety Reps - (Time off undertaking duties/training)
- Asbestos - (Enquiries about our questionnaire scheme)
- Manual Handling - (Weight limits/training)
- Risk Assessment concerns - (Employer duties/control measures/training)

TRAINING

A new format for Reps training is to be introduced in January 2008. The new Workplace Organising Reps Induction course now lasts a total of 10 days. It includes two days devoted to Workplace Mapping, 5 days on Workplace Organising and 3 days on Health & Safety. The RHSO is currently working on a redraft of the Workplace Safety Reps Advanced and Workplace Organising Reps Advanced.

In addition to these courses the department has been involved with delivering joint training between managers and safety reps in Educare. It is hoped that training of this nature will develop further.

INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION

During 2007 the following Health and Safety Matters have been distributed to Safety Reps and Branches:

- January 2007 - Guidance on Shift Work
- Feb 2007 - Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations (2006)
- March 2007 - Worker Involvement – Are They Bothered?
- April 2007 - Construction (Design and Management) Regulations
- May 2007 - Occupational Cancer

- June 2007 - The Use Of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) In The Workplace
- July 2007 - The Truth About Health and Safety Myths
- August 2007 - Smoking in Enclosed Places
- September 2007 - Proposal to Merge HSC and HSE
- October 2007 - HSE Funding – The Inspectorate Faces A Crises.
- November 2007 - Health & Safety At Work – National Statistics
- December 2007 - Tackling HIV Discrimination at Work

The Regional Office continues to offer an e-mailing service to distribute electronic versions of documents dealing with health and safety on request from representatives. The Region's revamped website holds a great deal of Health and Safety information and additional resources are to be added including the new Safety reps toolkit.

A revision and update of the health and safety pages on the regional website is continuing. The Department will always be proactive in responding to any changes in the needs of our safety representatives.

NORTHERN REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	73,495
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	21,759
MANUFACTURING SECTION	25,887
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	25,849
Grade 1 members	46,233
Grade 2 members	10,493
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	16,769
Male Membership	46,567
Female Membership	26,928
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	7,760
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	328
Membership on Check-off	41,215
Membership on Direct Debit	13,735

RESPONSE TO THE ORGANISING AGENDA

Our mission is clear and unambiguous. Growth is our target year on year through the provision of first class services to our members, expanding GMB spheres of influence, and extending our territorial boundaries recognising that strong organisation in the workplace is the key to any future success.

We have, therefore, dedicated consolidation days in each week in those companies wherein we have recognition agreements with the aim of increasing the density of members. This system is across the board with all officers with duty sheets participating.

The new organising toolkit and initial support training followed by the two day GMB@Work training course delivered by organisers is proving extremely useful and popular in equipping our workplace representatives with the skills to recruit and represent in the workplace.

To date, 109 new shop stewards have been trained under the new regime in accordance with the organising agenda.

We have also set up the Regional Organising Team headed by the National Organising Team regional representative, to plan, co-ordinate and deliver the National and Regional target objectives.

The spin-off from these initiatives is reflected in the improved performance in new membership income and growth.

RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS

Since all regions have committed to recruit an additional 200 members, steady progress towards that goal within Northern Region having improved recruitment performance from an average of 577 new enrolments per month in 2006 to 647 new enrolments per month in 2007, an increase of 70, so there is some way to go. We have also introduced a retention initiative in an effort to stem the flow of leavers based on direct face-to-face where practicable contact with potential or actual leavers.

Whilst targeting our resources, in the main, at workplace consolidation and retention, we have not neglected exploring the potential of non-union unorganised workplaces and have been particularly successful in securing new recognition agreements through an aggressive approach using the recognition regulations to force employers to concede collective bargaining rights to our organisation.

We continue to work with the National Organising Team on National projects i.e. Southern Cross, School Support Staff, ASDA, G4S Security with good results. Sharing information and developing best practice is producing the goods.

OVERVIEW OF REGION'S ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The Manufacturing sector remains fragile with further closures and redundancies, however this is more than offset by the increase in jobs in the Public and Service Sector.

The main problem is the lack of skills to match the available jobs, there is also in the Service Sector a disproportionate number of jobs that are in the main low paid or minimum wage. This is attracting a high level of immigrant labour from Europe in a volatile job market making it more difficult to recruit and organise.

The challenge therefore going forward is to improve our communicating skills and recruitment techniques in order to engage with immigrant labour and attracting them to the GMB union.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	5
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	15
Organising Officers	4
No. of Branches	132
New Branches	-
Branch Equality Officers	0
Branch Youth Officers	0

Members of staff have been trained and qualified to recruit new members on direct debit over the telephone and to re-enlist lapsed members through the same procedure

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	1678.40
Total Disablement	NIL
Working Accident	2515.65
Occupational Fatal Accident	7816.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	970.00
Funeral	41,951.50

4. JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The media presence of the GMB Northern continues very high. A number of stories that were high profile last year continue to be this year.

Equal Pay continues to be a very important issue gaining significant publicity. The winning of the EAT in the Allen case as well as being an excellent decision for the GMB and our members, created considerable media interest.

The continuing problems within the manufacturing sector have proved to be newsworthy.

The issues on the river Tyne still go on with many stories appearing regarding the use of land on the river Tyne – it is imperative to us that the riverside is retained for industrial use.

The Northern Star magazine went out to all of our members in the region. It was a packed issue featuring articles on Maternity Rights, a visit to Regional Council by Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, Remploy, Young Members amongst many other things.

As well as visiting Regional Council Hazel Blears visited two very successful companies working in the sub sea sector.

DUCO and Wellstream, both of whom employ many hundreds of GMB members.

The Reps Report continues to be circulated to our reps around the region – around 1,700 people.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
924	924

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
1172	390	11	£7,877,421.06		£7,877,421.06
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			3010		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	336
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
309	61	5	£402,229.86		£402,229.86
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			371		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
NIL	NIL	£NIL	NIL

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
144	54	66

GMB Northern Legal Services – 2007

Protecting members at work and ensuring their employment rights, health, safety and dignity at work has always been a fundamental principle of GMB. Our legal service continues to play an important role in supporting our aims through campaigning, lobbying and fighting claims to secure the best possible terms and working conditions for GMB members.

Throughout 2007, GMB Northern have continued to campaign for fair terms and conditions of employment for all members. We continue to back our campaigns by taking legal action in the best interests of our members as evidenced by the equal pay Employment Appeal Tribunal decision in *Joss* and the test case brought against Northumbrian Water in relation to compensation due on the change of working practices. Throughout 2007, GMB Officers have advised and supported thousands of members on the issue of equal pay and GMB will continue to be at the forefront of the legal and political campaign.

Working with our lawyers, GMB Northern Legal services secured more than £7.5m in compensation for injured members and their families in 2007. In order to raise awareness of the union's legal service, its considerable successes and the perils of using heavily advertised "No win- no fee" lawyers, members receive regular communication on legal issues and many GMB Northern cases have been highlighted in the national and regional media. We have introduced regular legal advice surgeries for members at locations across the region and have distributed thousands of Legal Services cards and workplace posters featuring our Legal Service freephone number. Every branch in the Northern Region now has a dedicated lawyer assigned to it in order to ensure maximum support and the best possible communication.

The dreadful decision of the House of Lords to deny compensation to those who had developed pleural plaques – permanent scarring and damage to the lining of the lung – was an insult to working people and a salutary reminder that the legal establishment has little empathy with working people. It is all too easy for those who never risked their lives in industry to dismiss the suffering and anxiety of so many people who did. The judgment – which is likely to see UK insurers save up to £1.4bn – left thousands of asbestos victims feeling powerless and belittled. There are further legal battles for asbestos victims ahead and GMB will continue to fight for the rights of asbestos victims and their families and will do all it can to lobby, campaign and take legal action on their behalf. In the Northern Region, GMB Officers and activists support, and work closely with, asbestos victim support groups to ensure high quality advice and representation.

To ensure that our full-time and lay Officers have the best possible skills to support our members, regular legal training and updates are provided on employment rights and health & safety issues. GMB are committed to ensuring that our members receive the best possible legal representation and support.

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

The Equal Rights and Race Committees met jointly last year. As previously stated the numbers of people attending the committees continues to decline, so we welcome the proposed changes.

We had a very interesting meeting in the summer where Elizabeth Reay Chief Executive Officer of Equality North East Ltd addressed our meeting and answered questions.

This organisation has been in existence in one form or another since 1984. We discussed ways in which GMB members could engage with activities Equality North East are involved in. This was a very worthwhile meeting and we agreed to work with this organisation.

7. YOUTH

Throughout 2007 we continued to develop our Young Members section through holding regular meetings in all areas of the region, and using a broad range of communication materials.

At our first meeting in 2007 our young members indicated they wanted to be involved in both national and international campaigns. Over the course of a number of meetings, and much debate, a final vote was made. It was agreed our young members section would campaign on Rage Over Age Rates (ROAR) and be involved in a Latin American Campaign.

The ROAR campaigns against discrimination created by the National Minimum Wage (NMW) facing workers under the age of 22 years old. At present the NMW is separate into 4 categories, 22 years+ £5.52ph, 18-21 years old £4.60ph, 16-17 years old £3.40ph and those under 16 years old, who are legally allowed to work part time, no minimum hourly rate is in place. Of course our young members section fully supports a national minimum wage; but we believe the Government are discriminating against young workers by allowing employers to pay them less on the grounds of age, we believe there should be one minimum wage for all workers – the higher one!

By choosing a general Latin America campaign allows our young members to be involved in a variety of organisations rather than just supporting one sole cause.

We had another successful festival season with the Workers Beer Company Initiative, eleven young members volunteered to work at Glastonbury and a further eight at Leeds Music Festival. All had a fantastic time as well as raising funds for our region and are going to promote the initiative to more young members and potential members in 2008.

Our young members are also interested in our political work with the Labour Party, we have been lucky enough to have guest speakers on two occasions.

To ensure our printed communication materials are engaging we surveyed young members in a number of recognised workplaces gaining valuable feedback to ensure our 2008 publications are engaging and informative.

Activities in 2007 have been successful; this is because our young members work in a pro-active manor in line with our organising agenda. They have chosen the ROAR campaign as it is the most collective campaign affecting the majority of our young members no matter where they work. The use of various communication methods has ensured maximum engagement to both members and potential members. Our core young activist continuously approach their colleagues (and friends) to become members if they are not already, and existing members to become active members.

Due to the excellent work in 2006 we anticipate continued growth of our young members section in 2008.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	7	69	15	84	168
GMB 3 Day Introduction (Ceased July)	6	57	19	76	228
GMB 5 Day Follow on Course	10	90	26	116	580

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB 5 DAY H&S County Hall Durham	1	11	3	14	70

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB 5 Day H&S	9	79	24	103	515

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3 Day Grievance & Disciplinary	2	19	4	23	69
3 Day Communication Skills	1	11	2	13	39
2 Day Pensions	2	21	5	26	52
3 Day Inspection Course	1	8	3	11	33

(e) Northern College					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day Employment Law	1	8	0	8	40
3 Day Understanding Pensions	2	7	1	8	24
5 Day Industrial Relations	1	3	2	5	25
5 Day Advanced Health & Safety	1	12	1	13	80
3 Day Workforce Development	1	1	0	1	3
5 Day Focus on Local Authority	1	7	1	8	40
3 Day Refresher for Experienced Reps	1	8	3	11	33

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and safety training has been covered in the Education Report. The main issues of concern in 2007 has been, like 2006, the continuing controversy relating to asbestos. A new Tyne and Wear

Asbestos Support Group was formed in 2005 and the GMB Regional Health and Safety Officer chaired it. This group has already been successful in a very important campaign on the life prolonging drug, alimta, although this was 'short lived' owing to the interference of NICE.

Mesothelioma, probably the worst type of asbestos cancer continues to be at the forefront of action. We are still campaigning to have Alimta made available in all areas as well as fighting to have the disgraceful House of Lords decision on pleural plaques reversed..

We, along with the National Health and Safety Officer and other groups are continuing to campaign for these decisions to be overturned and hopefully by the time Congress takes place we will have been successful.

In 2007 the Tyne & Wear Asbestos Support Group successfully merged with another group, based in Middlesbrough, to establish one North East Asbestos Support Group. This now gives GMB Northern a bigger sphere of influence in this area. The RHSO now chairs the new group.

The RHSO continues to work closely with the ROT Team where issues of health and safety can be beneficial to their recruitment activities and he has been involved in many workplace interventions. The GMB approach to health and safety in the Region continues to be looked up to and followed by the other unions. At the TUC annual Regional Conference in April, the RHSO was elected to chair the Regional TUC Health and Safety Forum

NORTH WEST & IRISH REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	25,072
MANUFACTURING SECTION	26,289
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	37,098
Grade 1 members	60,351
Grade 2 members	16,537
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	10,471
Male Membership	51,531
Female Membership	35,928
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	10,291
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	
Membership on Check-off	56,640
Membership on Direct Debit	17,215

RESPONSE TO THE ORGANISING AGENDA

The North West & Irish Region is fully conversant with the GMB at Work document and has adopted the policies and procedures laid down by Congress and the CEC.

Following decisions reached by Congress 2006, Region has adopted policies that promote lay representative involvement on committees both national and local which has the dual benefit of developing the activist and allowing organisers time to be utilised on recruitment, retention and organising.

Given the high profile nature and the various challenges we as a Union face, Public Services dominates the organising agenda and in particular Single Status and Equal Pay with many Local Authorities with settlements via ACAS and moving towards full implementation of Single Status. The Region has used all methods of communication to ensure its position on Equal Pay is known across the Section.

The Region actively encourages lay representatives to become involved in its Equality Committees and to assist in both recruitment and retention to this end organisers, together with local representatives, have carried out a mapping exercise for each workplace which focuses on recruitment and consolidation. The organising agenda is further strengthened by the role of the organiser in the initial support training, which is crucial in terms of the development of workplace representatives, which should lead to greater opportunities for better workplace organisation, recruitment, retention and consolidation.

In Northern Ireland a series of meetings had been convened throughout the year with full time officers, shop stewards and support staff in order to determine an effective way forward in support of achieving our many objectives in line with the organising agenda.

A further part of our response to the organising agenda has been to secure the full-time release of lay representatives from the many different workplaces which we cover on an ongoing basis. For example, within the five Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland, we have now secured the full-time release of three secondees, all of whom are provided with necessary office facilities and IT backup within the offices of the Boards in question. Already we have carried out initial Induction Training for these representatives, ensuring that they become most productive at the earliest possible opportunity. In all areas where we achieve this full-time release, it is our aim to ensure that these representatives work to consolidate our membership with the respective employer, and that they also provide day to day support to our members, namely in respect of grievance, discipline and straight forward work related issues.

We have now begun to engage more of our lay representatives in helping with workplace mapping, drawing up a clear plan identifying non-members in the workplace and how best we go about maximising our achievements on recruitment amongst that part of the workforce going forward.

In Local Government we continue to use the work that we undertake in relation to equal pay and single status as the main catalyst to support recruitment. In Northern Ireland progress is slow in respect of concluding our negotiations with all of the Local Government Employers. In respect of Education there is no doubt that our role in bringing about an end to a thirteen year dispute effecting classroom assistants in relation to job evaluation has now begun to show real signs of our being able to recruit members in this area in a way in which we have simply not been able to do in the past.

We are very much at the forefront of effectively representing the interests of our members in terms of the ongoing agenda for change here in Northern Ireland, mainly, in respect of the review of Public Administration. On the 1st April 2009 the present five Education and Library Boards will be disbanded in favour of a new single authority which will become known as the Education and Skills Authority responsible for the future administration of education right across the Province. The Education Skills Authority (ESA) brings with it a commitment to review the role of all education staff which will provide us with an ongoing opportunity to pursue our main agenda of continuing to organise and build the GMB in this sector.

In Public Services many changes have already been introduced in reducing the number of Trusts within the NHS which has highlighted some inconsistencies in the matching process. This requires us as a union to become involved at both regional and staff side level in finding a necessary solution to the problems thrown up by change which we often feel has been rushed through at a pace which does not always allow sufficient time for forward planning in order to achieve the right balance for the future.

In Commercial Services we continue to develop our working relationship with G4S in a very positive way. We have now secured details of all current sites where the company are involved and we are putting in place necessary organisation plans in support of our increasing our members in those areas in future. We are also rolling out a very positive recruitment exercise in relation to Federal Security Services where we have recently secured a Recognition Agreement. This has involved our newly appointed Organising Officer visiting many police stations in the Province where Federal Security are responsible for providing necessary security.

In Engineering, it has been a very positive year for Shorts, presently known as Bombardier. We have seen the threat of redundancies dissipate where the company has secured new contracts providing for the longer term job security of our members and the new intake of staff which is presently coming on-line. Our branch officers have played a very key part in ensuring that we have an ongoing effective recruitment plan which has enabled us to consolidate our membership in a way that has not proved possible in the past.

RECRUITMENT TARGETS AND CAMPAIGNS

The Region has adopted a policy to promote recruitment and consolidation in every industry which we currently organise and which we have recognition agreements in place.

In January 2007 the new North West and Irish Region implemented a Recruitment strategy that had been discussed with Officers and agreed and endorsed by the Regional Committee. This strategy involved the setting up of a Regional Organising Team, comprising of four members (with dedicated admin support), who would identify targets and carryout preparation work for their own direct recruitment activity and recruitment activity for teams of Officers who would be allocated "stand down days". The stand down days would be for one day per week using a rota which would be provided in advance.

The approach to recruitment and workplace organisation taken by the Regional Organising Team has been in line with the GMB at Work Policy and followed a similar approach, in terms of assessing targets and allocating resources, as that taken by the National Organising Team.

Initially regional targets were Southern Cross and Security along with other areas of workplace consolidation. These targets were constantly reviewed and changed as and when it was felt appropriate through discussion with the team and in line with national targets. Other targets such as ASDA, schools and Wilkinson's were added.

Schools recruitment is ongoing and the Region has experimented with approaches to school recruitment initially involving the Regional Organising Team and Officers on their stand down days.

The initial results indicated a lower hit rate where Officers were attending schools on their stand down days. For this reason Avril Chambers was invited into the Region and spent two days with Officers discussing all related issues.

In the Autumn Term the Regional Organising Team began to carryout direct schools recruitment themselves and Officer Teams were allocated further consolidation work on their stand down days. This was partly due to absence by a number of Officers and requirement to cover some of that work.

Moving into 2008 there has been a further review of the strategy and the Team has been reduced to 2 people on a temporary basis to cover absences. Public Services (schools and NHS) will be prime targets with the Regional Organising Team working closely with Organiser's on their "stand down days".

The following is a summary of new members from the regional recruitment targets:

Regional Recruitment Targets - January 2007 to February 2008

ASDA	271
G4S	679
Schools	472 (2006/7) 289 (2007/8)
Southern Cross	1325
Wilkinsons	150+

In addition to the work carried out by Organisers, the Region is proud to recognise the recruitment and consolidation that is carried out by its workplace representatives which has brought about increases in many workplaces across the Region.

In Northern Ireland there have been what could best be described as a number of either "Sweetheart Agreements" with employers or Recognition Agreements that if put to the test would not be enforceable in law at this time. As part of our organising agenda it became necessary to review and strengthen many of our old agreements.

We have now achieved a brand new Recognition and Facilities Agreement Four Seasons Care Homes. As a result, the company has provided us with the names of all their 3,850 staff, details of their work locations and the names and telephone numbers of the various Home Managers whom we will contact in order to secure access whilst pursuing our recruitment agenda going forward. Already we have met with the 80 care managers and we have briefed them on the GMB's way of working which has gone down very well with the group in question, and we have already begun to see signs of their supporting our initial recruitment endeavours in this area.

We have also signed a brand new Recognition Agreement with a company called Resource, a company which previously bought out Maben's where we had an old Recognition Agreement. Resource has provided us with the names of 4,700 employees and contact details of their managers at the many different work locations. I am in the process of meeting all their operational and regional managers, and this will further pin our efforts to put in place a successful recruitment campaign.

Our commitment towards achieving consolidation of our membership in the many workplaces we cover continues to be a priority in any agenda we pursue at these work locations. We are finally beginning to see steady and sustainable recruitment across a number of the areas that we cover as a combined team.

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The North West & Irish Region membership is continuing to shift towards the Public Service due to the continuing decline of manufacturing jobs within the Region. Some of the difficulties which we have encountered over the last 12 months include the following places: *RHM Foods* – the company decided to close three sites in the North West – two where we have GMB membership which are Middlewich and Wythenshawe. We expect that we will lose 150 members by December 2008. *Linpac*: the company has decided to close two sites in the Midlands and transfer the machines and work to the site in Winsford. Discussions and consultation are ongoing. *British Airways*: because of the closure of Ground Operations at Manchester 181 members have been effected. *DHL*: we have compulsory and voluntary redundancies at Risleigh, Winsford, Preston and Ashton. 120 members effected. *Peel Airport Group*: because of reorganisation about 50 members have been affected. We always look to retain membership in situations like this and/or redeployment to other companies. Another area affected is *Plan It Welding* where a share buy-out by Senator took place leading to de-recognition of the GMB. Examples of opportunities are flat glass industries where, in the last couple of years, there has been a large eastern European input of employees. The company dropped the Flat Glass agreement to enable them to introduce a two-tier workforce. Despite the differences in terms and conditions we are now beginning to make progress/inroads into the recruitment of the new workforce.

As above other opportunities revolve around regional campaigns and the mapping out of branches to encourage further recruitment and consolidation.

Northern Ireland benefits from very low unemployment. Presently the numbers unemployed stand at 3.8% of the combined workforce across the entire Province. This is arguably one of the lowest figures in Europe. It is also the case in Northern Ireland that the vast majority of workers are directly employed, which of course assists our recruitment objectives going forward.

Over recent months we have begun to see a steady influx of migrant workers to bridge the gap where there are vacancies which are difficult to fill in high areas of employment. Migrant workers naturally form part of any recruitment target in the areas that we cover at any given time.

From discussions with Ministers at Stormont, it is clearly evident that in the coming years we will begin to see more of a shift towards involving input from the private sector. Our union will be particularly well placed to capitalise on any recruitment opportunities which come about in this area.

It is our view that the biggest potential growth area open to us in Northern Ireland is in relation to construction. Presently, there are some 82,500 construction workers employed in Northern Ireland. Evidence shows that at best only 5% to 6% of these workers are in any union. This is despite the fact that we have a right of access under the present legislation to go onto any building site, and despite the fact that most of these workers are actually directly employed. If we are to seriously consider recruitment opportunities in this area, we will need to further invest by way of putting dedicated resources in place, capitalizing on the growth which is achievable in this sector.

Unfortunately we have recently seen 85 job losses in respect of the Glenaden Shirt Factory in Derry. Sadly this has brought about the final end to the textile industry in this part of the world.

The current national unemployment rate is 5.2% and the national claimant rate is 2.5%. Across the Region the unemployment rate is as follows:

North West 6.0% Northern Ireland 3.8%

In addition to these are the potential job losses if the decision to close the Remploy factories within the Region is confirmed. The Region is committed to fighting this decision and will fully support our members within Remploy.

The Region has seventeen areas which have been identified as above the national claimant average:

Blackburn & Darwen	2.6%	Salford	2.6%
Blackpool	3.5%	Sefton	3.0%
Bolton	2.6%	St Helens	2.8%
Halton	3.0%	Wirral	3.2%
Knowsley	4.1%	Belfast	3.4%
Liverpool	5.1%	Derry	3.9%
Manchester	3.3%	Moyle	2.8%
Oldham	2.7%	Strabane	4.1%
Rochdale	2.7%		

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	6
Membership Development Officers	0
Regional Organisers	23
Organising Officers	1
No. of Branches	254
New Branches	3
Branch Equality Officers	29
Branch Youth Officers	8

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	3,920.00
Total Disablement	4,000.00
Working Accident	11,040.40
Occupational Fatal Accident	-
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	-
Funeral	27,890.50

4. JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

At the beginning of the year a four page full colour A4 booklet explaining the changes to regional boundaries and providing contact details for the new Region was mailed directly to all members. Two editions of the new North West and Irish Region magazine Fusion were published in 2007 and mailed directly to all members in May and November. 'Protecting People at Work' was updated and revised. This A5 booklet includes information on benefits and services as well as advantages of union membership and is used in the pack for new members. A range of in-house literature designed for particular workplaces or particular target groups was also produced. This included 'Making Resolutions – a brief guide to policy making in the GMB Trade Union' which was put together following a discussion at the Women's Conference in 2006. 'Your Rights at Work' is a new pocket sized guide to rights at work aimed at workplace reps. The Region also commissioned redesigned certificates of Merit and Service.

The Remploy dispute was by far the biggest press story with widespread coverage when the Campaign for Jobs reached the Region and plenty of good photos on the day. National press releases based on surveys or statistics continue to create interest and the figures on average pay were picked up and used by a Labour Party candidate. In Northern Ireland the campaign against water charges was well covered early in the year. Education provided the other main stories here with GMB leading the way on job evaluation for classroom assistants and in responding to the Bain Report recommendations for a radical review of schools with low pupil numbers. National and regional press coverage has been monitored using individual websites.

The issue of equal pay has again been highlighted in regional magazines and on the regional website where a claim form can be downloaded. A claim form was also printed on the reverse of the carrier sheet for the Summer 2007 edition of the magazine. This produced an excellent response with hundreds of forms being completed and returned.

A new website for the North West & Irish Region went live in June and the national Asda website continues to be maintained by the Region.

The Region has advertised in the Morning Star on a regular basis for conference editions and has also placed adverts in the Big Issue in the North, the NW Labour History Journal, Nerve magazine, the Merseyside Community Youth Games Programme, St Helens Show Programme, Zoe's Place Baby Hospice Fashion Show Programme, Manchester Healthy Schools booklet and a wall planner produced and distributed by the Merseyside Coalition Against Racism and Fascism.

The main charity supported by the Region in 2007 was Derian House Children's Hospice. A cheque for £4,000 presented in September included the proceeds from the Region's traditional charity night at Congress. Also at Congress the Region sponsored a fringe meeting for the charity Karma Nirvana, a charity that helps women and girls who are the victims of forced marriage and honour based violence.

The annual Regional Women's Conference was held in Liverpool in October. The main theme was carers and caring with a workshop that looked at case studies of carers in the workplace. Other topics covered included the role of the community matron, flexible working, campaigning, equal pay and sex workers. The Women's Conference rarely attracts much media attention but this year a press release highlighting representation of sex workers resulted in a Radio Merseyside interview with National President Mary Turner that covered the conference as a whole and was broadcast on the main evening news programme.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
1262	1,262

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
1,239	542	0	697 £4,315,816,17		£4,315,816,17
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			2305		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	198
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
127	22	5	77	23	£786.161
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			214		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
2,510 Equal Pay Claims		£0	2,510

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
29	11	5

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

The Region's Equal Rights Committee has gone from strength to strength in 2007 with good attendance and meeting on a quarterly basis. Action plans again were revised and updated and RERAC continue to actively promote and publicise campaigns and events to Branches throughout the year.

Giving ownership of the regional magazine and the website's equality sections to RERAC has been a priority and members have participated in the production of this giving this a much more vibrant image and publishing RERAC's activities further to members. 2007 also saw the Regions hold various events and campaigns here of which is a brief outline:

Manchester Pride

For the second year running the Region had a highly successful stand at this event in which contacts were made to aid the Region's own Shout Forum, although this is yet to take off, further contact has been made and is being monitored with a view to use in a future launch. This event also resulted in a modest increase in membership.

Women's' Conference 2007

Yet again another highly successful conference in which the Region has led the way for promoting women. The main theme for this event in 2007 was caring and carers.

Equality and Diversity Course

RERAC and RRAC committee members were given priority for this newly designed course, which received positive feedback from those members who attended. This vibrant course covers all strands within equalities and will be a standing item in the Region's education programme for 2008 in which we hope to extend further by giving priority not only to RERAC and RRAC committee members but to Branch Equality and Race Officers.

Refuge Campaign

RERAC continue to promote and support this National Campaign towards victims of domestic violence and are currently looking for more local refuges to focus their attention on 2008.

Strawberry Tea

The Region and RERAC promoted this one day event in aid of Breast Cancer Care raising a sum of £150.00.

Banner Appeal

This appeal has now been brought to a close and has been successful in raising funds towards the commission of a new regional equality banner that covers all strands of equalities and which is hoped to be in place early on in 2008.

The Region has been represented at both the TUC Black Workers' Conference and LGBT Conference.

Our National delegates have also continued to participate throughout the year in meeting of RERAC and NRC and the National Shout Forum.

Finally, the Region's RERAC has had a productive and encouraging year and hopefully this will strengthen further in 2008 with the forthcoming merger of our two RERAC Committees.

Ethnic Breakdown in the North West is as follows:

9 white female	10 white male
1 black female	1 black male

The new North West Regional Race Advisory Committee (RRAC) is the result of the two former RRAC coming together following the regional reorganisation. The new RRAC have met and have agreed that they want the Committee to be strong, dynamic and respected. In order to achieve this, the Committee feel that they should not put all their eggs in one basket but the key is to build a strong and solid foundation.

To make a fresh start as a new Committee and to start the strong and solid foundation, all Branches have been contacted reminding them of the responsibility of electing a Branch Race Officer. The response has been very good but there are quite a number of Branches that don't have Race Officers. It is felt that Race Officers need support and guidance in their role within the Branch/Region and RRAC agreed to open up their meetings to invite Branch Race Officers and any activist of an ethnic

background who has an interest in the race issues. As a result this invitation was publicised in the Regional Magazine and interested activists have come forward.

The RRAC welcomed the diversity training that has been rolled out to all employees of the GMB and believes that some form of diversity training/briefing should be introduced into all Shop Stewards/activists, training courses.

In light of the successful motion passed at 2006 Annual Congress from the former Liverpool, North Wales & Irish Region in respect of forging links with the Teachers' Unions to combat racial discrimination in the classroom, it is our intention to work together with the Teaching Unions.

The Regional Race Officer has been elected as Vice-Chair of the North West TUC Black Members' Network. The GMB delegation has a significant presence at the Network meetings and our encouraging more GMB activists of a black/ethnic background to become involved as observers.

During 2007 we have seen an increase in the membership of migrant workers across all industries and produced membership literature in several different languages which has aid the increase. We will continue to assess whether we are meeting the needs of our migrant membership.

The Regional Race Advisory Committee are very much aware that the issue of race is the responsibility of each and every GMB member, however, for us to represent the particular issues that only affect our black/ethnic minority members it is important that we encourage them to join the GMB and become active within the GMB so that we are able to truly represent and reflect the diversity of our membership.

There have been three meetings of RERAC in Northern Ireland in the past year. At the first meeting it was agreed that committee members should take responsibility for different issues: Migrant Workers, Disability, LBGT and Gender as part of the Region's policy on promoting lay representative involvement across all areas of the GMB. A delegation from the Region attended the joint women's conference held in Liverpool, and there are current arrangements being made for a delegation to attend the NICTU Women's Conference in March.

The RERAC are aware of the current discussions in relation to the way forward regarding the proposed new structure on equality and diversity for the Union.

7. YOUTH

The main focus has been on compiling a new data base of each branch's young members/young activists which befits a modern trade union. To enable us to do this all branches have been written to asking for the name of the Branch Youth Officer.

Branches are encouraged to promote the roll of the Branch Youth Officer as well as making young activists aware of the roll they could play in the Union both regionally and nationally through its various committees. As a result of this we are beginning to see a moderate increase in the number of 'young' activists across the Region.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (10 days)	17	245	37	282	2,820
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	-	-	-	-	-
Branch Officers (please specify subject)	-	-	-	-	-

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Communication (3 days)	1	6	1	7	21
Equality & Diversity (3 days)	1	14	5	19	57
Grievance & Disciplinary (3 days)	2	24	4	26	78
International Women's Day (1 day)	1	-	10	10	10
Organising for Negotiation (3 days)	2	24	5	29	87
Pensions (1 day)	1	19	2	21	21
Tutor Review Day (1 day)	1	6	6	12	12

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
H&S Inspection (2 days)	2	24	4	28	56
H&S – Men (1 day)	1	12	-	12	12
H&S – Women (1 day)	1	12	-	12	12

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Women's Conference	1	5	87	102	204

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Combination of 10 day & short courses	15	86	21	107	

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

Health and safety continues to be a high priority within the Region.

We actively support and participate in Workers Memorial Day with events within the Region and we continue to offer the 2-day Health & Safety Inspection to our representatives.

We raise awareness of health and safety at all events, including the Women's Conference where we ensure this is included.

The 10-day induction programme and advanced specialist courses are continually being reviewed and we look to support our representatives in the workplace

We continually look to see if we can further improve and integrate health and safety skills to enable our representatives to utilise this knowledge in the workplace and thereby aid growth and recruitment.

At this moment of time we are looking to put on a seminar on dealing with behavioural safety that companies seek to introduce.

The underlining aim of all our health and safety education within the Region is that it will enable our representatives to use their skills to support GMB growth/recruitment and retention. The Regional Health and Safety Officers continue to give support as and when required to representatives both on courses and in the workplace.

GMB SCOTLAND

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	13,922
MANUFACTURING SECTION	10,467
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	35,242
Grade 1 members	41,779
Grade 2 members	13,225
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	4,627
Male Membership	32,743
Female Membership	26,888
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	5,716
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	(2,440)
Membership on Check-off	48,744
Membership on Direct Debit	6,469

Response to the organising agenda

GMB Scotland has in response to the new agenda, GMB@Work been driving the agenda in the delivery of our year on year improvement in growth however, following significant successes in our Public Services Campaigns in regard to pensions we have seen a slow decline in recruitment which has been disappointing. Constant reviews have been undertaken throughout 2007 involving staff, officers and raised at Regional Council level.

Reorganisation and restructuring have now been undertaken and this is having a marked difference in the Region's performance by ensuring a successful strategy execution in January and February 2008 with everything we do being integrated into the overarching organising agenda with Regional Campaigning being heightened.

New Stewards Training – workplace organisation combined with officer support.

Working closely with Martin Smith and the National Organisation Team we have, as indicated earlier in this report, been able to drive our growth agenda forward.

Reorganising the Region into an Organising Team Structure will assist in ensuring that we successfully embed GMB@Work linking strategy to our daily operating principles through directing resources to successfully deliver. Planning being aligned with resource capacity will deliver the step change needed within the Region.

Recruitment targets and campaigns

The National Targets overseen by the National Organisation Team continue to be the key sectors within the Region. Southern Cross has been well established within GMB Scotland with growth continuing across existing and new Southern Cross Care Homes.

Key to continuing its growth was the early decision to create a Southern Cross Branch with post holders in place, communications and home visits are key in ensuring our organisation becomes embedded ensuring the longer term sustainability and self sufficiency of the structures we have set up.

Given the geography of Scotland we still have a lot of work to do to ensure we secure a membership base and representatives in every home.

Migrant Workers

Following on from the successes in other Regions in recruiting migrant workers we are focusing on Southern Cross Homes particularly within the Aberdeen area and across the North East within Food Manufacturing.

We have been successfully recruiting small groups of migrant workers however we need to establish larger groups across the Region.

Given the increase of Polish and Lithuanian workers into Scotland over the past few years this poses an area of potential growth which will be built into our plan for 2008.

The Security Industry continues to be targeted at Regional level outwith of the induction meetings held nationally.

Airport Security offers opportunity across Scotlands Airports and is currently being developed.

Also areas of opportunity are now opening up within the HBOS group and Shopping Malls.

Schools within the Public Sector still continue to be one of the mainstays of Recruitment within Public Services where catering and cleaning staff continue to be recruited on an ongoing basis.

However, our attention has now turned to targeting School Support Staff/Classroom Assistants with our campaigning materials "Valuable Assets". This is the report of these posts within the Scottish Schools System which was commissioned through the then EOC and again which GMB played a significant role within the Working Group.

This group of workers are clearly underpaid and undervalued and will form a key platform in GMB Scotland's return to growth.

Following a year of underperformance and with the support of the Senior Management Team GMB Scotland has embarked on transforming our strategy and converting the Regions collective efforts into growing our membership base.

This approach has been supported and assisted by Officers from other Regions being seconded to work within GMB Scotland sharing in their expertise, knowledge and skills in developing our strategy.

This has resulted in the implementation of new structures and systems being applied to achieve growth. Early signs are significantly encouraging with growth figures significantly up on the same period in 2007 and continues to be the case at the time of writing this report. This approach has also seen significant support from the National Organising Team and in particular Martin Smith.

Asda still remains a major National and Regional Target which is clearly a long term project but is one which with determination and commitment we will continue to grow.

The new approach focuses on delivery in full of the GMB@Work Agenda and will also bring about organic growth from within existing industries as we consolidate across the Region.

This combined with Positive Campaigning will increase our workplace profile within a newly restructured way of organising involving clear monitoring measurement and evaluation processes. 2008 within GMB Scotland will be one of continual change and improvement.

The delivery of the new approach to Initial Support Training combined with Workplace Organising Training for New Stewards and the supporting Shop Stewards Toolkit will be fundamental to delivering part of GMB Scotlands Strategy for Growth in 2008 and beyond.

GMB Scotland is well placed to take advantage of Climate Change Opportunities within Scotland where we will be at the forefront of the growth in Renewables and diversification within this sector due to the unique opportunities Scotland provides in terms of wind, wave and tidal power.

The Scottish Government is still opposed to No New Nuclear Sites in Scotland which will drive growth in renewables to replace the loss of Nuclear Power through the decommissioning process.

Overview of Region's economic and employment situation

GMB Scotland continues to set a year on year loss in total financial members. A number of factors impact on these figures significantly as we have continued to ensure our membership figures more accurately reflect our financial membership.

The Region's Asda membership has been significantly adjusted downward, this combined with a loss of seasonal employment within the Scottish Whisky Sector has impacted.

Scotland however has changed as a result of the election of a minority Scottish Nationalist Party whose purpose is to bring about independence from the rest of the UK. This, coupled with a period of difficulty within the Scottish Labour Party has led to a less than effective level of political opposition with the media continually chasing stories on the leadership donations for the Scottish Leadership Election, very similar to the problems experienced in England as a result of the Deputy Leadership Elections.

The Scottish Economy is still performing relatively slower at present with the Public Sector still being a major stimulant to growth in the economy and jobs through procurement.

However the recent Budget Settlement between Government and the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities is causing ourselves some concerns as to how local authorities will respond in terms of possible job cuts.

The new SNP Government has of course moved speedily to supporting business through the Small Business Rule Cuts and was a concession to the Scottish Tories and key to having them vote with the SNP in getting their budget through the Scottish Parliament.

The setting up of a Scottish Constitutional Commission looks certain as the parties move to reviewing Devolved Government and what if any additional powers could be devolved to Scotland.

If Scottish Labour doesn't break out of their current situation they will commit mass political suicide and allow Scotland to sleep walk into independence.

Scotland's manufacturing industry still accounts for 15.1% of Gross Value Add, 10% of total Scottish employment and around 70% of total exports. Globalisation has been significant in a declining manufacturing base but signs are starting to show a fight back within Manufacturing. Scotland still faces a productivity challenge and significant Skills Shortages – Public Procurement in Scotland amounts for some £8 billion of spending. This, GMB says, must play a pivotal role in securing the future of Scottish Manufacturing and for procurement to be used to drive up standards in the industry in better employment standards, training provision and health and safety and play a major role in safeguarding jobs in Remploy.

British Airways - Last year the company announced that it was to pull all its ground handling requirements out of the Regions, ie, Inverness, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester and Birmingham. This amounted to a loss of over 1000 jobs across the 6 stations. As this decision affected the three regions within GMB Scotland suffering the highest amount of casualties, it was decided that Ian King, Senior Organiser, would lead the negotiations on behalf of our members with BA. Eddie Parker, North West & Irish Region and Bert Hill, Birmingham Region were part of the negotiating team along with our stewards from all the 6 bases. Whilst we campaigned hard to overturn BA's decision to pull out of the Regions and we believe we had a justifiable case, the company still went ahead and contracted its ground handling requirement out to Aviance. When the negotiating team realised that it was a fruitless exercise in continuing trying to save the 6 bases it was decided that we would have to go for the best possible deal for our members affected by the closures. The negotiations were quite protracted and took nearly 6 months to conclude. It was a very satisfactory outcome in respect of the base closure package which I believe will be a template that will be used should British Airways further try to reduce its workforce. It was down to the hard work and dedication of the officers and stewards that we achieved such a remarkable settlement.

Aviance – As a result of BA's decision to pull out of Scotland and hand the ground handling requirement to Aviance, we have been making quite serious efforts to recruit in the Airports that Aviance

have a presence. We still have Aviance members who serve other contracts but it is of the belief that there is a huge potential due to the recruitment of new employees to service the BA contract.

Servisair – Servisair have had their ups and downs winning contracts and losing contracts and as a result we have seen some job losses across the region. The Company have been quite helpful when it has had to shed jobs by letting its temporary workforce go first. There are still possibilities for recruitment within Servisair in Scotland.

Security Industry – The Security Industry remains reasonably stable although there have been some consolidation exercises between various companies across the UK. Scotland has been well represented at any TUPE transfers that may have taken place which have affected our members. We hope to see growth within the Security Industry in particular, G4S. Securitas is another area where we believe there could be sustainable growth as a result of the company's decision to ask individuals to pay for their own licences. This could be a good recruitment tool for us to get into various sites and recruit nons.

Asda Distribution – The Company and the GMB went to Arbitration last year to determine what this year's wage award was going to be. The GMB put forward a case for a 4% pay increase to the Arbiter and believed that we had made a significant impact on the Arbiters decision. The company were looking to pay 2.8% over a one year deal. The Arbiters decision found in part the GMB's case and awarded 3.2% over a 12 month periods.

Asda Retail - Retail continues to be a huge target for GMB and recruitment drives will be inevitable over the next 12 months. Given the fact that we have now got access to new stores and have made presentations to employees, we have to keep the momentum up and continue to visit stores and show a presence as much as we possibly can. It is going to be a very difficult task as Asda will put hurdles in our way in order to stop us recruiting heavily within the Stores.

Leisure – There still is a huge potential within the Leisure Industry with new leisure and fitness centres springing up all over the place. It would be appropriate for us to look at a possible plan of action to try and determine a way of targeting leisure centres and fitness centres where we could possibly recruit new members.

Whisky - The Whisky Industry is quite settled at the moment with no immediate major hick ups or no particular problems on the horizon. The Industry is doing reasonably well and hopefully they will continue to expand by taking on core workers as opposed to temporary and agency.

British Energy - GMB Scotland with over 60,000 members and one of the largest unions in nuclear, gas, oil and renewables slammed the dismissive approach taken by the Scottish Government over nuclear re-build. "We do not have a clear strategy which is based on confidence of stability and security of supply for our energy needs for our economy and public trust." There are a number of important factors to be considered that will influence the decisions that will shape the emerging energy policy. Arguably, however, two of these factors – climate change and security of supply – are the predominant considerations, and between them they place an unprecedented pressure on Government to make important decisions now that will have a far-reaching impact upon UK energy policy. It is crucial to keep every available option open that could contribute towards the goal of maintaining an economic energy supply that doesn't exacerbate the threat posed by climate change. Expressing positive support for nuclear new build would be incomplete if reference was not made to the benefits for employment and the economy that would result from approving a construction programme of new nuclear power stations. The potential for creating employment, both directly in their construction and throughout the supply chain, is obvious. The employment position of the employees at Torness and Hunterston Power Stations are being completely overlooked and undermined and these workers in the nuclear industry will bear the brunt of the plant closures due to take place when the lifecycle of the Power Stations ends.

Scottish & Southern Energy, Pay 2008 – JNC Agreement. The proposed settlement will guarantee an above inflation (as measured by the RPI) pay rise for the next three years and there is a guaranteed minimum increase in years 2 and 3 should the RPI fall dramatically. In the first year there is also a one-off lump sum payment of £500 for all staff, payable in March.

Additionally the proposed deal includes improvements to the standby and other pay related allowances. There is a one off payment designed to reduce accrued TOIL balances under the "preferred working option" and there will be further talks at the JNCC on this issue. The JNCC will also have further talks on the company's "family friendly" provisions. Finally we have secured an improved wording to the temporary increase in responsibilities clause (D9) which we hope will resolve long standing dissatisfaction with this provision. Inevitably we did not achieve everything we sought in our claim: the company rejected outright our claims on annual; leave and the working week. We were disappointed by the company's rejection of our proposal for a company wide bonus scheme to replace the piecemeal provision that currently exists in some business areas. However we also successfully resisted proposals by the employers which would have been detrimental to your interests.

Centrica – The Company has announced proposals to change the pension scheme. Members of the Centrica Retirement Income Section (CRIS) which is available to those in the service and trading section could see some substantial changes. The CRIS is a career average pension scheme. This is a defined benefit scheme which means the pension is based on years of service, an accrual rate and the salary earned throughout a member's career. Each year a member's salary is recorded and then averaged throughout the course of the individual's working life at Centrica. The company have proposed to close the CRIS scheme and future employees will be given an alternative pension scheme. This means that current members will continue to build up their pension benefits in CRIS. In addition, current employees who have chosen not to join the pension scheme will be given an opportunity to join CRIS before it closes. GMB is totally opposed to the proposal to close the pension scheme. We do not accept Centrica's justifications for the closure. One of management's key claims is that current employees are failing to join the pension scheme. Centrica is claiming that the complex nature of the pension scheme and the work patterns of the workforce discourage individuals from signing up. GMB disagrees as we believe that if auto-enrolment is implemented the problem would be solved. Employees would be automatically placed in the pension scheme unless they opted out and this would mean that the take up of the pension scheme would radically improve. In addition, the costs of a closed pension scheme are higher. This is because as individuals get older and draw their benefits, there are no younger members subsidising the scheme. In the experience of the GMB's pension department, the closure of a pension scheme often leads to benefit reductions at a later date.

Scottish Power - A meeting of the Core Negotiating Committee took place to continue discussions on the 2008 Pay and Conditions proposals. Following detailed and protracted negotiations agreement was reached to ballot members covered by collective bargaining arrangements on a non-recommended settlement. The key elements of the proposals for both civil employees and employees who TUPE transferred from PowerSystems and are covered by collective bargaining arrangements are detailed below.

Employees who TUPE transferred from PowerSystems in February 2002 only: 1 year settlement from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2008 and 4% increase to schedule salaries and flow throughs with effect from 1 January 2008. Civil Employees only: 2 year settlement from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009; An agreed grading framework for all civil roles; Pay ranges for 2008 for each grade; Increase to annual leave entitlement to 25 days plus 8 statutory days with effect from 1 January 2008. Any employees who currently have an entitlement of less than 25 days will be increased to 25 days with effect from 1 January 2008.

Salary increases, with effect from 1 January 2008, which include an appropriate increase for increases to working hours (details below), ranging from 21.5% to 16.75%. The exact value of an employees salary increase 1 January 2008 will be determined by position of their current salary against the new pay ranges. Increase in working week from 40 to 45 hours / week from 1 January 2008. Employees 2008 salary increase includes an appropriate increase to reflect the increase in working hours.

In addition it is proposed to make improvements to maternity, adoption and paternity provisions for all employees covered by collective bargaining arrangements with effect from 1 January 2008. There will be two ballot processes, one for civil trade union members and one for members who TUPE transferred from PowerSystems in February 2002. The business will also hold briefing sessions for all civil employees to explain the proposals and next steps.

Gas Distribution Price Control Review 2008-2013 - Ofgem, the regulator for the gas and electricity industries, is currently finalising the Gas Distribution Price Control Review 2008-13. In December 2007, Ofgem's final proposals will be published, which will set out the allowances for operating expenditure that the Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs), the companies that are responsible for maintaining the supply of gas throughout the UK, will need to adhere to for the next five years. GMB has very serious concerns, which are shared by the Networks and other trade unions with members employed in the industry, about the long-term implications of Ofgem's proposals for the way that the GDNs will operate. These proposals are deeply flawed and will threaten security of supply and public safety. A flexible, skilled and motivated workforce with the ability to react to unexpected events quickly and effectively e.g. the recent floods, where the GDNs' workforce went well beyond the 'call of duty' and the responsibilities of their licences to assist people in difficulty. Allocating resource to tackling fuel poverty and extending the networks to those areas without gas and typically in fuel poverty. Playing a full role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions from their networks.

Renewable energy sources / nuclear new build - In relation to the first report on renewables, the political exchange may be significant, but what seems to have brought the debate to the fore is the apparent leaked reports which seem to suggest that the Government does recognise that there are significant problems with renewables, not least on cost. GMB has consistently supported a balanced energy policy including renewables. In our submission to Government on nuclear new build we re-emphasised this point. Nevertheless, the arguments in favour of renewables are sometimes oversimplified. There are practical and economic constraints that need to be considered carefully when considering the nation's future energy needs. If reports on the leaked documents are correct it would seem to reinforce the argument for nuclear new build being part of a balanced energy policy.

British Energy - The Company and Trades Unions concluded the 2007 pay talks at a meeting of the Negotiating Team held on 9 July 2007. The proposals were as follows; 12 months duration covering the period 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008; No strings; 5.2% pay rise on basic salaries and flowthroughs, backdated to 1 July 2007. The joint Trade Unions are unanimously recommending acceptance of these proposals. GMB will ballot its members with a closing date of the 3rd August 2007. The result of the GMB ballot was as follows: to accept 235 votes, to reject 43 votes. The Joint Trade Union Side has now been advised of the GMB's results and as soon as we have the joint position this will be communicated to all colleagues.

Scottish Power - As part of the Integrated Approach to Pay Negotiations (2005), it was agreed to develop the new Energy Retail Single Agreement, explaining the Terms & Conditions of employment for all of our collectively bargained employees. This document has now been agreed. Another significant development arising from the integrated Approach to Pay Negotiations was the agreement to create a new Energy Retail Consultation & Negotiation Framework. This new Framework will establish a number of new Forums to cover all parts of the Energy Retail business, and which will replace all of the previous Energy Retail Business Councils. The new arrangements have also been extended to include consultation for employees on personal contracts. They include the appointment of Employee Representatives who will work alongside Management and Trade Union Representatives to represent those employees who are not members of a Trade Union.

Bi Fab, Burntisland - Agreement was reached for recognition with GMB and UNITE. Sign up meeting to be held shortly and a meeting with the members will be held thereafter.

Walker Timber , Bo'ness - Pay and Conditions Package. The membership accepted a 3.2% increase from April 2007 to January 2008 where they will then come under the English Sawmills Association with representation on the Negotiating Committee covered by Phil Davies.

Faslane/Coulport – Following detailed negotiations the CSEU has now been given Collective Bargaining rights within the respective MOD Bases. This is a fundamental change from the previous arrangements where each prospective Union dealt with their own business. With the growing work programme at the sites and the employment prospects this should give an opportunity of consolidation and recruitment aims.

BAE Systems – CVF Carrier Announcement Clinches Future for the Next Decade and Beyond -The announcement by the Government to place the multi billion pound order for 2 Aircraft Carriers finally ended speculation and rumour about delays. The announcement was excellent news for Scotland's Manufacturing Industry as Clydeside and Rosyth Dockyard will have major parts to play in the Contract. This news finally supports the financial investment that BAE Systems have placed in the Skills and Training at the Clydeside Yard with Apprenticeships and Design Staff. Over the last 5 years approximately 500 young individuals have been recruited into Apprenticeships and Technical Staff areas. This creates the foundation for Shipbuilding for future years. The workforce on the Clydeside should be congratulated for adapting to the changing face of Shipbuilding within the UK. Their commitment over the last 10 years in which the future of shipbuilding was in doubt should not be forgotten. This news will not only stabilise thousands of jobs on Clydeside, but will also create in time many opportunities for hundreds more. The supply chain involving contractors will also benefit and help protect jobs. Investment in skills being complimented by the capital investment in the infrastructure by the Company is the final link in the long term future of any Business Organisation. The Government are now obliged to ensure that the timing of the Programme is adhered to and we do not have any delays which could adversely affect the very positive situation which is present on Clydeside.

Henry Technology - After lengthy negotiations and a strong industrial ballot in favour of industrial action the Company returned to the negotiating table with an improved Offer. This was accepted by our members. 3% increase in salary (and all allowances holiday pay and shift payments). An agreed Bonus Scheme which guarantees 1.5% payment every week. This payment was based on the average weekly production output over the 3 months prior to the agreement. Since the agreement the weekly payment has been in the region of 2.5% and 3% weekly. This payment is also included for the calculation of all allowances and pension.

Clyde Naval Base – Babcock - A gap in demand for submarine maintenance work at HM Naval Base, Clyde will result in the loss of some 225 jobs over the next 18 months. The workforce reduction is a consequence of a work-flow dip between the decommissioning of Swiftsure Class nuclear submarines and the start of major activity on the new Astute Class submarines. Babcock Naval Services, which manages the Clyde Naval Base, through a long term partnering agreement with the Ministry of Defence (MoD), said that it hoped the reduction could be achieved by not filling vacant posts, natural circumstances and through voluntary redundancy. It has been known about the shortfall in workload for some time, but despite considerable efforts, the Employer has been unable to find sufficient appropriate work to cover the period until they undertake mainstream work on the new Astute Class submarines. The Company have been reluctant to reduce their workforce, because they understand the impact on individuals and their families and on the local communities in general. The Company hope that compulsory redundancies will not be necessary and they have advised that they will continue to work closely with Trade Unions to protect key skills and to redeploy people wherever possible. They have also intimated that they will help employees to find alternative work, if they wish that. The Company, Trade Unions and the MoD have been trying to fill the workload gap for some two years and our joint efforts resulted in the award of a major maintenance package for HMS Torbay, a nuclear-powered hunter/killer submarine based at Devonport. The company also secured a contract to service small vessels for the MoD. These contracts had some positive effect in reducing the total number of job losses. The award of HMS Torbay's major maintenance package was a welcome addition to the workload and delayed the need to reduce the workforce to match the level of work we can anticipate over the next five years or so. The Company will discuss and agree the process and timetable for the reductions with the Trade Unions. Over 1700 people are employed, directly and indirectly, at Faslane and Coulport, on submarine and surface ship maintenance as well as in logistics planning and facilities management.

Longannet Project Joint Council – Longannet Power Station - Members took Unofficial Industrial Action over the second tier payments in the form of stoppages and strike action. Unions were requested to repudiate the action under the NAECI procedures. Eventually a deal was struck which was agreed by members.

Reids Furniture - Wage Claim - There has been a pay freeze implemented by the Company since January 2007 due to lack of orders. This was reviewed in June 2007 and the Company indicated that they had no financial means of putting an Offer on the table to the employees. The Company have

stated that they will not be in a position to discuss wages until January 2008; however, they do expect full cooperation due to an upturn in the order book through October to December 2007. They have been requested to put an incentive on the table of a lump sum payment which would allow the employees to continue their cooperation. The Company are reflecting their position.

Clydeview Prevision Engineering - Parity with the Engineers. The Engineers are paid approximately £1.50 more per hour than the Boilermakers on Site. It has been made abundantly clear to management that this issue is creating an environment of hostility and that they have to address the imbalance between the different Trade Groups.

Public Services - The last 12 months have been a busy time for the Public Services Section in Scotland. We have dealt with some major issues that affect our members pay and terms and conditions of employment.

Our work on Equal pay continues in the year and as a result of our original grievances, the only ones lodged by a Trade Union in the majority of Scotland's Councils has resulted in thousands of women receiving tens of thousands of pounds in settlement for past pay inequality.

Not content with that, GMB Scotland have lodged second equal pay grievances in those councils who have allowed a gap in time to develop between the payment of settlement figure until the introduction of non-discriminatory pay systems.

GMB Scotland also extended it's equal pay campaign to our members employed in NHS Scotland and have progressed many hundreds of equal pay claims to Employment Tribunals.

Negotiations on Single Status have been at the heart of our work since the last Congress report. New pay structures have been developed and imposed in many councils. Similarly many councils have reviewed their terms and conditions packages under single status and similarly many of these packages have been implemented with our agreement or imposed by those less enlightened councils. The work on the full introduction of the single status agreement should be completed by the end of 2008.

GMB Scotland was also heavily involved in the development of new pension schemes for both NHS Scotland and for Scottish Local Government. The Pension Scheme in the health service reflected the scheme in other parts of the UK and will have been implemented in April 2008. At the time of writing this report two issues remain to be resolved; ill-health retirement and the timescale for opting to move from the existing scheme to the new scheme that was developed primarily for new employees.

The Local Government Scheme is a more independent scheme than the other parts of the UK and GMB Scotland believes is a good outcome for Local Government employees in Scotland.

The different treatment of Rule of 85, Ill-health provisions and cost sharing makes the scheme a distinctively Scottish Scheme.

Public sector pay in Scotland was also treated differently than other parts of the UK with NHS workers receiving the full 2.5% increase from April 2007 as opposed to the staged offer in other parts of the country. Similarly in Local Government we saw a slightly better increase at 2.5% than our colleagues in England and Wales. Although this was an improvement for GMB members in Scotland it should be set in the context of the RPI running at 4% resulting for the first time in many years a settlement that was below the level of inflation and we need to come out of this cycle as quickly as we can and return to wage increases moving ahead of inflation.

The Public Services Section continues to concentrate on organisation and recruitment and we have been successful in seeing a growth in our membership levels through the year. We will continue working to achieve growth in the section using our good work in national and local issues as the catalyst for growth.

This is achieved by the commitment of our Organisers, Branch Secretaries, Conveners, Shop Stewards and Health & Safety representatives and with their continued commitment and teamwork further growth will be achievable in the years ahead.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	-
Regional Organisers	19
Organising Officers	1
No. of Branches	174
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	28
Branch Youth Officers	0

We are currently embarking on a review of Branches across Scotland as an integral part of GMB@Work in ensuring that they have developed recruitment/organising plans developing representation skills to assist in providing an additional resource supporting our members in grievances and disciplinaries and freeing up the officers to concentrate on organising, recruitment, servicing and retention all key issues in delivering growth.

We are currently in the process of recruiting two new Organisation Officers which will continue to embed the changes.

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	0
Total Disablement	0
Working Accident	5,132
Occupational Fatal Accident	7,933
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	0
Funeral	22,818

4. JOURNAL AND PUBLICITY

2007 saw the re-launch of GMB Scotland's Insight Magazine which was mailed directly to all members.

The message was clear to all member "That growing our membership base is about ensuring that we can campaign more, speak on behalf of more people and that we can together change the working lives for and on behalf of our members on a range of issues from Equal Pay to Health and Safety".

Special Asda mailings have taken place across the Region on a number of key issues such as the imposition of Top Rate – Asda Law Club – Personal Injury Successes and General Information.

Mailings across our Public Service membership on Pensions – Equal Pay Updates has been significant in our Communications programme.

Light weight pull-up displays are used during our campaigns highlighting our three Sections and GMB@Work.

GMB Scotland advertises in the Morning Star which will be seeing its re-launch in 2008 for same day delivery in Scotland.

We hold the Chairmanship of the Scottish Modern Apprenticeship Awards and sit on the National Training Awards Panel (Scotland) both providing publicity.

The Region continues to sponsor Local and National Charities and through our fundraising efforts we have been able to make a difference.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
478	478

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
579	164	3	408 £3,576,383	4 £56,161	£3,632,544
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			976		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	1,873
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
179	82	6	77 £379,776	13 £253,406.45	£633,182.45
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007					

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
1**	1	N/A	

**This was the joint GMB/UNISON Judicial Review Petition in Court of Session against Falkirk Council which was unsuccessful.

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
17	5	8

Throughout 2007 Equal Pay has been the dominant issue for the Region's Legal Service. The Regional Legal Department, Regional Solicitors and Organisers have continued to actively promote the Equal Pay Campaign both in terms of mass litigation and recruitment.

Indeed GMB Scotland is in the forefront of litigating Equal Pay claims in Scotland.

At December 2007 GMB Scotland had 1,783 Equal Pay claims registered with the Employment Tribunal Service against 24 local authorities and related respondents against 8 NHS Boards, GMB Scotland have registered 672 claims. These are first wave Equal pay claims.

Using the latest computer technology, the Regional Solicitors Digby Brown have devised an innovative program for processing claims and relevant data. This program allowed for the efficient processing of such a large volume of claims.

To date offers of settlement in litigated first wave claims have been made by Glasgow City Council the biggest Local Authority in Scotland and it is hoped that other Local Authorities will follow with offers in 2008.

In addition to first wave claims, GMB Scotland has also lodged Residual claims for Equal Pay against 7 respondents. These Residual claims are for the period from the date of signature of a Cot 3/Compromise Agreement up until the date of Single Status implementation.

GMB Scotland is the only Union in Scotland that has lodged Residual claims for Equal Pay.

Furthermore, with the assistance of Regional Solicitors we have also designed an advert and survey form promoting Residual Equal Pay claims.

The advert will be placed in the GMB Scotland magazine to be distributed to members in early 2008.

Members with potential claims will be advised to complete an online survey form which they can access on the GMB Website. Completed survey forms will then be exported to Digby Brown for investigation and processing if applicable. This is a new approach to identifying potential Residual claims for Equal Pay and is in keeping with our desire to use the latest technology in the provision of GMB Scotland Legal Services.

Other provisions of the Region's Legal Service continued to be actively promoted in 2007.

In 2008 we will be reviewing new ways of promoting and improving the scope of GMB Scotland's Legal Services, to encourage greater take up by existing and new members.

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

The Regional Equal Rights Committee continued to meet during 2007/08 however the members attending were steadily falling.

Branches have been written to seeking a much wider engagement in the process as has the Race LGBT.

The STUC Black Workers Committee is chaired by our GMB member giving a high profile to the GMB.

Tackling the growing inequality and diversity across the Region has been one of the key issues.

Meetings of the Committee have discussed and debated the proposals being discussed at National level involving all of the bodies involved in the equality agenda and were supportive of moving to a Single Body Structure with key skilled lay activists to create a National Equalities Forum of skilled knowledgeable and expert individuals driving the Equalities and Inclusion Agenda.

These Regional discussions created a lively and robust debate with the view emerging that it was time for change engaging our members on the whole concept of embracing diversity.

Cathy Murphy, member and Chair of NERAC has played a key role in assisting these debates as she has been involved in the National Working Group debating the transition from current structures to a new Single Body.

Our NERAC and RERAC members continue to play a key role in promoting Equality and Inclusion within the workplace and the GMB.

The Region has been advising in two areas we know to have high levels of Polish Migrant Workers. We have sponsored activities in the Aberdeen area jointly with Frank Doran, MEP, involving our local official and senior stewards.

Meetings with the Regional Secretary and Senior Lay Activists have focused on recruiting migrant workers into employment to ensure their rights are represented within the workplace and the community.

A similar event was supported within Falkirk where again we have a significant group of migrant workers which is not surprising given that there is a vibrant polish community who settled there following the second World War.

7. YOUTH

For GMB Scotland this has been an area where more work needs to be done to ensure the engagement and participation of our young members in the mainstream activity of the Region.

We do however have active young members limited though they are who play a full role within the STUC Youth Committee making a significant contribution.

One of our most active youth representatives works in the Scottish Parliament for one of our GMB sponsored MSPs and is both vocal and active ensuring the GMB's voice of youth is heard.

2008 needs to see the Region extending out to more of our young members improving our communications and networking.

Age discrimination in respect of the level of discrimination and abuse against young workers and the levels of payment for young workers has been high on their agenda.

Training for young workers again has been a key agenda issue along with pay and the issue of binge drinking which is not just a Scottish phenomenon. These are all areas we need to be involved in and we are currently involved with the Sports Industry in Scotland reviewing what can be done to encourage responsible drinking again not just within Scotland's youth but across all ages within Scottish Civic Society.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	9	63	27	90	180
GMB Induction (5 days)	5	48	20	68	340
GMB Induction (Risk assessment) (3 days)	4	32	15	47	141

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Basic Pension Training	1	13	-	13	26

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects) TUC					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Health & Safety Stage 1 (10 days)	12	33	6	39	390
Next Steps for Safety Reps H & S Stage 2 (10 days)	9	24	5	29	290
TUC Certificate in Occupational Health & Safety (36 days)	2	1	1	2	72
Risk Assessment (3 days)	1	2	0	2	6
COSHH (3 days)	1	1	0	1	3

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Union Reps Stage 1 (10 days)	1	2	0	2	20
Stepping Up: Advanced Course For Union reps (10 days)	3	4	0	4	40
Union Learning Reps (5 days)	1	1	1	2	10
Employment Law Update (3 days)	2	1	1	2	6
Handling Stress at Work (5 days)	1	0	1	1	5
Digital Photography (10 days)	1	1	0	1	10

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

Regrettably our Regional Health & Safety Officer, Robert McGregor, tragically lost his battle for life against cancer just after the New Year.

In real terms Health & Safety within the Region during 2007 has not had the programme it should have due to Robert's long term absence.

This has meant that we have not been as pro-active in this front on an ongoing daily basis as would have been possible.

Mesothelioma and Pleural Plaque however has been a significant agenda item within Scotland with the GMB playing a positive role through Tommy Gorman and other key activists playing a leading role at Regional level both industrially and politically in highlighting our ongoing campaign and maintaining a high media profile for GMB Scotland.

We continue to play a significant role as one of the major affiliates to the STUC in the delivery of Health & Safety in its wider context and integrating our approach to the delivery of the Organising Agenda through our Workplace Safety Representatives and through our Training Delivery.

SOUTHERN REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	76,118
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	23,345
MANUFACTURING SECTION	9,315
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	43,458
Grade 1 members	47,696
Grade 2 members	22,355
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	6,067
Male Membership	37,752
Female Membership	38,366
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	12,088
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	2,897 Increase
Membership on Check-off	49,281
Membership on Direct Debit	19,829

Response to Organising Agenda

Having established a Regional Organising Team, headed by a Senior Organiser and two Membership Development Officers in 2006, 2007 was the first full year that the Team had operated. Towards the end of 2006 the Team set a target of 12,000 members recruited in a calendar year; a figure never achieved previously by the Southern Region. This figure was reached by the middle of December. The Region also met the General Secretary's target in terms of an increase of 200 in the average monthly figure since the base figure was set in September 2005.

The Region also set a target of growing to 75,000 members by May 2007. This figure was achieved and in November 2007 the Region's membership stood at 76,000.

Following on a 3-day seminar that had taken place in 2006, there was a follow-on meeting in 2007 which looked at the progress of the Organising Agenda. A decision was taken to increase the size of the Regional Organising Team and steps were taken in early 2008 to achieve this aim.

In response to the Green Agenda, the Region has been looking at how it can maximise recycling. There was though only limited recycling in 2007 but it is anticipated that this will increase in 2008.

The Region has looked at its purchasing policy in regard to promotional materials that are given to members and branches as part of the Organising Agenda. It is the Region's policy to purchase fair trade materials.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

In 2006 and 2007 the Region reported that it had faced considerable problems by attacks from disgruntled former officials. Having seen off those earlier attacks in DHL and NCP the Region faced a further attack in Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospital. A rapid response team was organised to move into the Hospital as a result of which this challenge was seen off very quickly and in fact the membership grew.

Once again, the majority of recruitment has been in the public sector although there has also been considerable growth in the private sector in organising migrant workers. The Region now has over 2000 migrant workers in membership and the Southampton Migrant Workers' Branch now stands at over 500 members.

In 2007 the campaign against Private Equity which had been initiated in the Region continued to gather steam. The General Secretary attended the Select Committee in the House of Commons and put forward very forcefully the Union's view in regard to Private Equity. Paul Maloney, Senior Organiser,

who has led the campaign within the Region made numerous television and radio appearances and also attended a number of conferences. As a result of the campaign, the Government did finally agree to amend the Tax Rules.

On the International front the Region has supported the Justice for Columbia Campaign. Richard Ascough the Regional Secretary, visited Columbia in August/September 2007 as a part of a delegation including senior Trade Unionists, MPs, members of the Labour Party National Executive and one MEP. The Region is co-financing a project in Columbia to support families who have been affected by injustice.

Overview of Region's Economic and Employment Situation

Although towards the end of the year there were clear signs of an economic downturn, this had not yet produced any dramatic increase in redundancies.

The Region continues to see an increase in public service membership with the declining engineering and manufacturing jobs levelling out.

It is clear that many small enterprises with poor employment practices and low pay there is a great dependence on migrant labour. Although this is a feature of the whole Region there are a number of areas with high levels of migrant labour; hence the reason for the Region targeting organising this labour.

As reported in previous years, the Region is dominated by small enterprises, the definition of which is a company that employs 250 or less. These account for over 80% of employment in the Region.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	5
Membership Development Officers	2
Regional Organisers	18
Organising Officers	6
No. of Branches	108
New Branches	3
Branch Equality Officers	23
Branch Youth Officers	12

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	NIL
Total Disablement	NIL
Working Accident	2,714.50
Occupational Fatal Accident	4,000.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	NIL
Funeral	14,770.00

4. JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

As indicated above, the Region has played a leading part in the publicity around Private Equity.

The Region's magazine which had been re-launched in 2006 under the title of 'Vision', appeared four times in 2007.

The Region also re-launched its website which has been well received.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
564	532

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
559	214	4	339 £ 6,853,210	1 £1818	£6,855,028
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			723		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	261
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
69	32	-	30 £490,470	7 £128,309	£618,779
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			92		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
111	6	£725,079	35

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
4	1	-

Innovations and Changes to GMB Southern Region Legal Services between 01.01.2007 and 31.12.07

Having previously established CCFA's for personal injury claims, the Region also introduced a CCFA for Clinical Negligence Claims. There has been an increase in the use of Criminal legal assistance as a result of claims by patients in the Care and NHS sectors.

During the course of 2007 the Region concluded a case against Cleanaway who had the Parks contract in Lambeth which achieved £1.3 million for our members. Included in this was the highest ever level award for a Disability Discrimination claim where our member achieved more than £½ million.

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

Once again the Southern Region has had a successful year in terms of Equal Rights.

The Southern Region Equal Rights Committee met 5 times over the last twelve months, discussing issues on Disability, Women's Rights and Equal Pay in particular. The Committee took on one major project last year which was the 200th anniversary of abolishment of slavery, with a Rally in Brixton, and

also organised a stall at both the Brighton Pride and London Pride events. Kelly Horsburgh and the Committee for L.G.B.T. designed new membership forms for these events, which turned out to be extremely successful at both venues.

There is still a lot of work to be done with regard to Branches in the Region, in order to encourage more Branch Equality Officers to be nominated. The Region has only 23 Branch Equality Officers out of a total of 108 Branches, which is around 20%. We hope to address this situation by writing to all Branches in order to outline what this position entails, and to generally encourage more people to take up the role of Branch Equality Officer.

With the new National Equality & Diversity Officer now in post we can look forward to stability and progression.

As both the Senior Management Team and the Central Executive Council have approved and endorsed, the way forward is that we would want the GMB to be recognised as the Lead Trade Union in driving home the importance of Equality at Work and also in our Society, whilst reflecting the make up of our members and potential members at all levels of the GMB and unleashing their potential. All this goes towards making the Diversity and Equality Agenda an exciting venture, both for the activists to be a part of and for the benefit of our members and society as a whole.

Committee Membership

The Regional Race Committee consists of 12 members, and is chaired by Dotun Alade Odumosu supported by Lorraine Parker as Vice Chair.

The Committee met bi monthly throughout the year although meetings were occasionally inquorate.

Regional Race Conference

The Regional Race Conference took place on 11 May 2007 and was the best attended conference for some years with new delegates from a number of branches.

The conference discussed the teaching of black children, proposed activities around Black History Month, Festivals and Rallies and considered motions on Regional education, improved communications and the absence of sufficient non white members on the Regional Council.

Political Activities

Members from the Region participated in the London Mayor's RISE Festival in London, which unfortunately was held on the same date as the Tolpuddle Martyrs Rally in Dorset. The Committee seek to recruit new members to GMB at events such as Rise, regardless of where the prospective members work. In the absence of support from the London Region in terms of participants or material, Southern Region activists recruited members on behalf of London Region as well as Southern Region.

Future Plans

The Committee had hoped to organise an event in the GMB Southampton Learning and Organising Centre but this proved impossible this year. Committee members will instead be attending an event organised by the Birmingham and West Midlands Region. The Committee hopes to plan an event for 2008.

National Representation

The Southern Region is represented on the National Race Committee by Dotun Alade Odumosu.

Organising

The need to organise new workers has always been seen as important by the Race Committee. Members have offered to assist officers in recruitment campaigns where non white members were likely to be involved, and recruitment is the prime activity at events such as RISE.

Migrant Workers

The Race Committee has built links with GMB Migrant Workers branches during 2007. A member of the Race Committee is invited to attend meetings of the Southern Region Migrant Strategy Committee, and a member of the Southampton based Migrant workers branch has been elected to the Race Committee.

Over 560 members have been enrolled in the Migrant Workers Branch since its inception, including numbers at World Flowers Ltd and Nicholas and Harris Ltd in Salisbury, both of which are the subject of recognition campaigns. Other migrant worker initiatives have seen a growth in migrant worker membership in West Wiltshire (250 enrolled, with recognition planned at two local companies), Southern Cross Healthcare, together with projects underway or planned in South London, Bournemouth, Plymouth, Brighton and the Thames Valley. There is also a good sized membership in the security industry and among NHS contractors.

Exact figures of migrant worker membership are difficult to establish but there are around 2000 migrant worker members in GMB Southern Region.

BME participation in GMB

There are no non white Officers in the Southern Region. There are no non white members of the Regional Committee, and there are no non white members of the Regional Council, apart from the 2 who occupy the race reserved seats (1 of whom has never attended a meeting). There are very few non white branch secretaries.

7. YOUTH

GMB, Labour Party and TUC Young Members Conferences

The second annual GMB conference was scheduled to take place in November. However, due to limited responses from some regions there weren't the numbers to go ahead. I am hoping that it will go ahead next year. With regards to TUC and Labour Party conferences once again a full delegation of southern region young members were sent to both.

GMB Congress

Congress was addressed by a young member representing the young members section for the first time. As a shop steward and ULR from Asda she was able to give a good insight in to what life is like as a representative and young person working with a sometimes difficult employer. It was also very refreshing to have someone highlighting issues relevant to young people who was actually under 27! The member herself actually became involved through the 2006 National Young Members' Conference – proof that such events are worthwhile.

Cuba Solidarity Campaign

Through discussions held at Congress in Brighton I learnt about CSC's intention to send a delegation of young trade unionists to Cuba to take part in their May Day celebrations. A spokesperson from CSC then attended a couple of young members meetings highlighting the work that they do, the reality for Cuban people and Cuban Trade unionists. This provided a real insight and gave an interesting perspective on the kinds of workplaces we organise. The response from members led me to approach Richard Ascough, other young members, officers, and branches, for funding and delegates to attend. This received a good response and we are now finalising details for a trip in 2008.

Website

The Southern Region's website has been revamped and the young members pages were included in this. They are now part of the main site, there is a much simpler layout including a 'News' section which is regularly updated.

Workers Beer Company

Once again we managed to send young members to work at various events throughout the summer, including Glastonbury and Reading festivals. Despite the heavy rain and muddy conditions a good time

was had by all. We managed to raise lots of money to help the section support other events. This money was also used to make a donation to a Baby care unit, set up at the Royal Sussex Hospital in Brighton, in honour of one of our youngest members who tragically died at the beginning of 2007. There is now a regular commitment from young members at the hospital to carry on this work to help continue funding the unit.

Young Members Project

The Somerset S33 branch has decided to implement the young members' rate. In doing so they have decided to implement a young member's project to attempt to improve levels of young membership and to encourage participation and activity within the branch amongst young people. The project is very much in its infancy but collaboration is already being sought from young people to assist in a new website, designing new young member specific joining information and events and activities supporting families and young people. The branch will also send a delegate to Cuba.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Activists Basic Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
2-Day GMB@Work	5	57	12	69	138
5-Day Induction Part 1	10	86	45	131	655
5-Day Induction Part 2	7	66	28	94	470
3-Day Induction AA Section	1	6	-	6	18
5-Day Induction NHS Section	1	7	6	13	65
TOTAL	24	222	91	313	1,346

(b) GMB Activists Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Union Learning Reps	2	19	9	28	140
5-Day Accompanying Reps	2	10	3	13	65
3&5-Day Introduction to Employment Law	(3d) 1	19	4	23	69
	(5d) 3	20	8	28	140
5-Day Advanced Employment Law	1	7	3	10	50
5-Day Negotiating Skills	1	5	8	13	65
3-Day Stress at Work	1	6	8	14	42
2-Day Pensions for Activists	1	6	2	8	16
5-Day Advanced Pensions (National)	1	1	-	1	5
3-Day Migrant Workers & the GMB	1	8	5	13	39
TOTAL	14	101	50	151	631

(c) GMB Activists Health & Safety Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Health & Safety Part 1	2	15	4	19	95
5-Day Health & Safety Part 2	1	7	1	8	40
TOTAL	3	22	5	27	135

(d) Other GMB Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3&5-Day Access Trade Unions & Politics	(3d) 1 (5d) 1	9 8	3 4	12 12	36 60
TOTAL	2	17	7	24	96

(e) TUC Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
2-Day ULR Follow-on Working with Providers	1	3	-	3	6
7 x 1-Day/Week Certificate in Occupational H&S	1	-	1	1	7
5 x 1-Day/Week Disability Champions At Work	1	1	-	1	5
TOTAL	3	4	1	5	18

(f) GMB Officers Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
2-Day Organising Migrant Workers	1	11	5	16	32
2-Day Advanced Employment Law	1	5	2	7	14
2&3-Day Training the Trainers	(2d) 2 (3d) 1	16 8	6 3	22 11	44 33
TOTAL	5	40	16	56	123

GRAND TOTAL	51	406	170	576	2,349
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9. HEALTH & SAFETY

Introduction

The Region continues to engage more productively with our members' and activists in terms of raising the profile of health and safety, as well as providing an enhanced support service which is linked to the organising agenda.

As a result the Region has seen an improvement and better health, safety and welfare standards in some workplaces, visible development and, more importantly, greater GMB worker involvement in organising for health and safety.

How are we doing this?

- Providing comprehensive and up to date information.
- Offering bespoke training and education tailored to our members' needs, delivered in a way that best suits them.
- Engaging with employers' ie. 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.

As a Region we facilitated 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 with an organising agenda and building self sufficient Health & Safety Reps and Activists in the workplace.

One clear example of using health and safety in the workplace to develop an organising and recruitment agenda has been our campaign to get the GMB recognised with World Flowers. The health and safety agenda raised by both workers and the GMB has been critical in us moving towards the Recognition Agreement.

Trade Union Education is an important integral part of many Health and Safety Reps lives. The Southern Region therefore continues to run a series of bespoke health and safety courses, linked to particular sectors and workplaces on issues such as risk assessment courses. We will continue to develop and consolidate our health and safety training programme, as it is clear that this process reinforces and builds the confidence of our Safety Reps, in order for them to represent members effectively in the workplace.

SOUTH WESTERN REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	11,401
MANUFACTURING SECTION	11,234
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	25,377
Grade 1 members	32,432
Grade 2 members	11,611
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	4,354
Male Membership	25,906
Female Membership	22,106
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	7,684
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	2,626
Membership on Check-off	33,583
Membership on Direct Debit	8,846

Due to everyone's efforts over the last twelve months, the Union has made a difference to many people and the Union has maintained a high public campaigning profile which has resulted in a national increase in membership. This, of course, is very good news and just as important the GMB South Western Region, your Region, continues to make a significant contribution to this success.

Colleagues will recall the Central Executive Council brought about the newly re-organised South Western Region by boundary changes in January 2007 and since then the membership in the Region has increased by over 8,000, which is approaching a twenty percent increase.

This success of the Union is down to everyone's passion and desire to have a campaigning organisation that is dedicated to tackling issues of social injustice and of responding to its members' needs.

The GMB@Work organisation strategy remains central to the Union's membership growth. The Union's purpose is to get a better deal at work by building the Union in numbers and in power in every workplace where we have members.

As always the South Western Region continues to fully appreciate the hard work and endeavours of Branch Officials, Staff Representatives, Activists, Full Time Officials and Regional Staff, thanks to the efforts of all.

The protection of our member's health in the workplace, the fight for better pay, decent pensions and challenging unfair practices which some employers continue to attempt to impose, must be a constant priority for the GMB. The Region will continue to offer support and assistance in the challenges ahead.

Campaigning

The GMB South Western Region continues to be at the forefront regionally on the campaign for equal pay for the Unions female membership in Local Government and the NHS. The Region's Officers have successfully continued with the policy of registering both individual and collective grievances on behalf of members who have potential equal pay claims in law.

Where grievances are rejected and negotiations do not lead to adequate deals the GMB has a clear and robust policy of taking legal action. Although the majority of employers remain reluctant to address historic inequalities in their pay systems, the GMB has succeeded in obtaining settlement offers from the Bath and North Somerset, Neath & Port Talbot and Torfaen Local Authorities. The offers were put to members and resulted in overwhelming levels of acceptance.

Members of the Region can be assured that the achievement of equal pay will remain a prime aim of the GMB. The Region will continue with our strategy of combining Collective Bargaining and Selective Litigation through the medium of the Employment Tribunal.

The GMB remains determined to resolve the current impasse in the Public Sector and to ensure that all those who are owed back pay are properly compensated for the years of pay inequality. The GMB has played a leading role in the fight for equality on behalf of the disadvantaged and we will continue to do so.

Many other campaigns have been successful in the Public Sector in the Region and our members will continue to receive full support.

Manufacturing industry continues to migrate abroad and in July of 2007 the workforce of Staedtler, Pontyclun, South Wales was informed production would cease in June 2008. Senior Management of the Company have failed to give the Union precise proposals regarding closure and despite requests from Kim Howells Member of Parliament and Jane Davidson Welsh Assembly Member, Mr. Axel Marx, the Chief Executive of Staedtler based in Germany has refused to meet with the GMB.

A demonstration and rally was held recently by the workforce in Talbot Green and Llantrisant, attend by Officers from the Region. The workers on the march were joined by supporters from the Remploy factories and local authority branches, in addition to shop stewards from Manufacturing and Energy and Utilities Sections of the Union. It was great to see so many people fight for the cause of saving Staedtler workers' jobs and the message from the members of the Union to Mr. Marx was "we will see you in Germany"! True enough, in January 2008, a deputation of shop stewards and workers were in Germany confronting Mr. Marx.

The GMB's fight to save the Remploy Factory Network continues. The GMB and its members in Remploy have now asked local MP's, local councils, schools and other public providers to move their contracts to Remploy and keep the factories open. The fact is it will cost only five pence in every one hundred pounds of current public procurement spending to save Remploy Jobs.

This is not new money that would have to be found. It is money that is already being spent from the public purse on goods and services that help schools, universities, colleges, hospitals and local authorities do their job. National and Local Government currently spend £136 billion each year on public services and goods. A study by the Remploy Consortium of Trade Unions shows that orders from National and Local Government placed directly with Remploy have an annual value of £32 million. This means that Remploy's share is a miniscule 0.024 per cent as the total annual spend of £136 billion.

The GMB calls on the decision makers to move orders worth five pence in every one hundred pounds that they spend on public procurement to Remploy factories to save disabled workers' jobs. Changes in European legislation, brought about following pressure from the GMB mean public authorities can now award orders to supported workshops without going through the competitive tendering process.

The GMB campaign has brought about the reprieve for the Aberdare, Abertillery, Bridgend and Wrexham factories and they have now been taken off the closure list. However welcome this news is, the Remploy Unions will continue to campaign for the existing factory network and for the management changes required to deliver for Remploy's disabled employees.

The announcement by Peter Hain on 29th November 2007 that he plans to go ahead to close 28 Remploy factories out of the total UK network of 83, angered Remploy workers and their supporters. This Government controlled operation has failed its people, its principles and its purpose. The message to the Labour Government is clear; you must not allow the Remploy Management to get away with the closure of any Remploy factory, or destruction of jobs for people with disabilities. Unless the Government put a stop to the present madness of the Remploy Board, it is the Government who will suffer the consequences.

It is sad to report on the tragic and preventable closure of the Dolgarrog Aluminium plant in North Wales. Ieuan Wyn Jones, Plaid Cymru Assembly Member and Deputy First Minister of the Welsh Assembly Government was requested and pressed by the GMB to support a management buy out bid which would have saved the 170 skilled jobs. The GMB made it clear to Ieuan Wyn Jones, the closure of the Dolgarrog Plant would be disastrous for both the workers involved and the local economy. The full responsibility for this appalling waste of skills and jobs in Dolgarrog lies firmly with Ieuan Wyn Jones.

The GMB South Western Region will continue to demand Government action to protect and maintain manufacturing industry in the UK.

The Region continues on the campaign trail with regard to the GMB@Work strategy. It is recognised that the development of a more effective organising culture must become a top priority and that membership growth has to become the measure of every aspect of work.

Building blocks are in place to allow us to rebuild the link between recruitment, representing and retaining members and will be focused upon the objective of creating effective, active and strong levels of organisation in every work place where the GMB has a presence. This is reflected in the substantial increases in membership as outlined at the beginning of this report.

It is great news that the Region and the Union, has reversed the membership decline of the past into membership growth for the future. Every part of the new South Western Region has played its part in this success.

The Region will ensure the focus will continue to be upon improving communication, campaigning, influencing and research skills, thereby ensuring Officials and Activists have the wherewithal to create an effective, sustainable recruitment and organising culture at the workplace.

Trade Unionism is an integral part of life and remains today one of the central pillars of a caring society. These are challenging but exciting times, as we set about maintaining the membership growth achieved over the past twelve months. The Region will continue to ensure the GMB is seen as a positive, active and vibrant union which takes its future in its own hands.

As Regional Secretary of the South Western Region I promise you this; the GMB will go where the people work, we will organise and we will fight for better pay, conditions, justice, equality and respect.

That's our business and we will continue to keep the GMB flag flying!

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	2
Membership Development Officers	2
Regional Organisers	13
Organising Officers	0
No. of Branches	197
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	0
Branch Youth Officers	0

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	
Total Disablement	4,000.00
Working Accident	1,739.50
Occupational Fatal Accident	3,870.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	1,100.00
Funeral	10,596.00

4. JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The Region has maintained established contacts with all areas of the media through press releases, interviews, newspaper articles and appearances on television and radio. This has worked particularly well in the campaigning issues against the closures of the Burberry, Remploy and Staedtler factories and the attempted closure of Elderly Persons Homes by Bristol City Council.

Advertising in respect of the Equal Pay Campaign has also proved to be a very successful recruitment and publicity tool.

The Region since last Congress has been at the forefront of the issue of the decline in manufacturing within Wales and the South West and has sustained this focus through the National Assembly for Wales, the Wales TUC, South West TUC, Wales Labour Party and South West Labour Party.

The Region endeavours to ensure that public services and all other regional issues that affect GMB members are given full exposure via the media wherever possible. The Region has been actively involved in the affairs and business of the Wales TUC and the Wales Labour Party, equally, the Region has maintained its activity in the business of the South West TUC and South West Labour Party.

The Region has continued to produce its biannual Regional Magazine NEXUS, which provides its members with a balanced view covering all topics of interest to our members, on issues such as equal rights, legal and health and safety issues along with news from the Branches. This magazine is a useful recruitment tool and is well received by the membership. The Region now looks forward to the new collaboration on the combined National and Regional magazine.

Sponsorship

The Region continues its policy of using determining factors with regard to sponsorship being granted, the main factor for sponsorship requests are publicity for the Union and the promotion of Union membership. The Region has maintained its strategy of a reduced and careful budget for sponsorship and advertising.

5. LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
593	569

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
461	193	0	276 £2,233,032.84	0	£2,233,032.84
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			985		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	104
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
90	55	2	33 £78,889.97	25 £51,420.43	£78,889.97
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2007			290		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
-	-	-	-

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
11	0	5

6. EQUAL RIGHTS

Since the South Western Region's report to Congress 2007, the Region has continued with the holding of joint meetings of the Equal Rights and Race Advisory Committees, this has proven to be both beneficial and the best way to progress all equality issues within the Region.

The Region continues to encourage Equal Rights and Race Branch Officers, in conjunction with Committee members, to take part in the wider aspect of equalities by participating in local and regional projects.

The Region has maintained its membership and activity on the various Equality and Race Committees on the Wales TUC, South West TUC, Labour Party South West and the Wales Labour Party. The Region has also retained its Black and Ethnic Minorities seat on the Wales TUC General Council which is held by Vaughan Gething GMB Member of the Cardiff and District Branch. We are delighted to report that Vaughan, who was our first Black and Minorities Ethnic Member to sit on the Wales TUC Executive Committee, was elected at the Wales TUC National Conference in May 2007 to hold the position of Vice Chair of the Wales TUC. Vaughan is not only the youngest person to hold this position; he is the first BME member to take on the role as Vice Chair of the Wales TUC.

In line with the GMB@Work initiative, new shop stewards are encouraged to attend and take an active role in regional conferences, speaking to motions on all aspects of race and equality in the workplace.

We have also encouraged new women shop stewards to take up the opportunity to attend the Wales TUC Training Courses that have taken place in 2007 and the feed back received from delegates has been very positive.

Race Committee Members continue to participate in regional events and the Region recently sent a small delegation to the Wales TUC Challenging Racism Conference held in Cardiff at the end of 2007.

This year the South Western Region was approached to participate in the Diversity Awards Wales 2007. The Region was pleased to be able to sponsor the Community Group Award which was run by the Riverside Community Market Association set up in 1998. This Association provides local residents, often those on low incomes, with good quality affordable food in their locality. The award ceremony took place in the Welsh Assembly Senedd and the GMB Award was presented by Vaughan Gething. GMB was the only Trade Union in Wales to be approached to sponsor an award.

The South Western Region continues to participate in the LGBT Section. A regional delegate attended the 2007 TUC LGBT Conference and we continue to have members sitting on the Wales TUC LGBT Committee. The Region once again had a stand at the Cardiff Mardi Gras held at the beginning of September, this is an event that attracts over 30,000 people and it has always been a good arena to keep up the GMB profile.

Regional Equal Rights Committee has 11 members: 8 Female and 3 Male

Regional Race Advisory Committee has 14 members : 8 male – 2 of ethnic minority
6 female – 1 of ethnic minority

7. YOUTH

There is a requirement for a positive relationship between young people and the GMB. Our young members are the Union's future and need to be nurtured.

Union structures need to provide a more defined role for young people. How best this can be achieved is a matter for continuing debate, but will only be achieved when young people are integrated in the process.

There is little doubt issues exist that young people would wish to be connected with, for example, inequality in wage rates, discrimination on grounds of race, gender or sexual orientation, victimisation or bullying are all issues that young people care passionately about, and are issues that effect young people on a daily basis.

There is also the wider issues that young people feel a connection with, climate change, world poverty and the environment, all issues that the GMB campaign for, but we need to get our young members involved in these issues in order to hold on to their enthusiasm and work with us to make a difference for their future.

The Union has to find a way of reaching out and involving young people in truly progressive policies.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days) GMB@WORK	4	39	12	65	130
GMB/TUC Induction (10 days)	2	16	7	23	230

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Representing Members Local Authorities	2	19	7	26	78

(c) Health & Safety (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3 Day Health & Safety	2	18	6	24	72

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day Employment Law	1	15	2	17	85
3 Day Representing Members	3	18	12	30	90

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
TUC Various	11			65	650

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

The South Western Region proudly continues to provide a valued Health and Safety service to our representatives and members.

Working closely with our Regions' Education providers we have ensured a network of fully trained and committed workplace safety representatives. The Region successfully continues to encourage Health and Safety Representatives to train to a very high standard by promoting and supporting representatives on IOSH and NEBOSH courses.

Workplace activity promoting Health and Safety issues and prioritising workplace inspections has played an important part in the recruitment of new members which are reflected in the positive 2007 Regions' recruitment figures. The Regional Health and Safety Officer is also a member of the Regional Organising Team.

2008 will be a continuation of our commitment to serving our team of Health and Safety members and Regional Officers.

YORKSHIRE AND NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	14,892
MANUFACTURING SECTION	13,421
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	27,328
Grade 1 members	33,433
Grade 2 members	14,548
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	7,660
Male Membership	29,118
Female Membership	26,523
Total number recruited 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	6,175
Decrease 1.1.2007 – 31.12.2007	3,653
Membership on Check-off	6,881
Membership on Direct Debit	11,222

THE REGION

It is fair to say that 2007 was a difficult year for the region and not a particularly proud one. However, we all got through it and our negative experiences have allowed us to totally focus on a positive agenda with accountability openness, transparency and of course GMB@Work at its heart.

We now have a Regional Management Team in place who rather than carrying a servicing worksheet, focus entirely on managing teams of officers, staff, branches and activists to ensure first class delivery and support for our members.

A Regional Organising Team based in our regional office in Wakefield has been in operation since September and already we are seeing the positive effects with the growth in the average recruited members per month.

Servicing officers have been trained on the role of the branch and working with the branch officers and activists, and for the first time in many years they have each been given responsibility for a group of branches. This has been communicated out with the clear intention to ensure the effective and democratic operation of branches across the region that supports entirely the GMB@Work agenda. Tangible results in recruitment terms will take time to filter through, but at least we are now “work in progress!”

Clear, concise and effective communications are crucial to buy people into our agenda, and to this end we launched our new look magazine called “The Pulse”, launched our own regional website and have started to collate up to date mailing lists for representatives and members by both email and mobile phone for text messaging. This now enables us to communicate quicker, cleaner and cheaper than ever before and our lists are growing at an encouraging rate. You will never replace the most effective communication of all which is face to face with members, which will always be best delivered by competent and committed activists in the workplace, supported by organisers on the occasion that they request it.

We are encouraging the production of workplace and branch newsletters and have offered to assist in their production at any office in the region. They are then distributed from our post and print room that is now fully functional and has assisted immeasurably with our communications agenda. Likewise, is our new low cost central call number for all members so that when they ring 0845 they go straight through to our regional switchboard and signposted from there.

Our training programme has radically changed and now insists on effective and comprehensive support for new representatives from day 1 and has the clear focus of GMB@Work as its start point, not to mention running throughout its heart.

Some of these changes have been missed by our existing army of trained representatives and we are finalising a programme to take this training to them. We are now able to provide merchandise and freebies to our members whether it is pens, and keyrings or GMB regional holdalls as an aide and a thank you to our activists and, in line with Congress policy they are supplied wherever possible from fair trade and sustainable sources.

Our internal training agenda has already covered GMB@Work, branches and handling the media for officers in addition to bullying and harassment and the use of new technology for all. We now have a staff best practice document that all are bought into that sets expectations and minimum standards on secretarial and admin. duties, diary management, computer usage and assisting members with their enquiries.

We are even attempting to do our bit on the green agenda and are keen to reduce our carbon footprint across the region with such simple initiatives as switching off lights where they are on unnecessarily, car sharing and of course recycling.

Our regional agenda has been set and it is here to stay. We will not entertain comments or “another GMB flash in the pan” and will not be blown off course, whatever confronts us. We held 3 activists’ open evenings which took place across the region before Christmas, at which we received numerous positive comments on how things have improved. This will not make us complacent but instead simply reinforces that our regional agenda is right and that our statement to manage with “clarity consistency and compassion” is our only way forward.

ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

Business faces a difficult year in 2008 which is little changed from the period 1st January to 31st December 2007. The outlook was and remains uncertain following the twin shocks of rising commodity prices and the credit crunch.

The structure of the global economy faces another bumpy ride with the economic balance continuing to shift to China and India although there were a few signs that some of the call centre work might transfer back to the UK following customer complaints. Business leaders forecast that despite the challenges ahead, for most people there should be a soft landing due to the equity locked away in their homes and because of, “... a reasonably fair jobs outlook.” (CBI) The third reason being that the Bank of England was thought to be doing a reasonable job in managing inflation although that view would not find favour in many sectors of the economy where the government are intent on keeping the lid firmly on pay rises, with the notable exception of their own naturally. However, with increasing agitation amongst the workforce affected and the rapid acceleration in the costs of energy, food and other commodities, there remain fears of rising inflation.

Settlements

Settlement levels in the electricity, gas and water sector seem to have outstripped the wider economy with the median award being 4.1% up from 3% in 2006, one reason being the high number of longer term settlements.

Within the food, drink and tobacco sectors however, the median award is 3%, the same as the previous year. Finance, retail and wholesale were slightly higher than 2006 with a median of 3.6% and 3% respectively.

Voluntary sector workers also received a slightly higher median award of 3% from the previous year.

Employers

The majority of employers managed to keep their workforce numbers consistent throughout the year with a few notable exceptions such as Cadbury Trebor Basset in Sheffield and Wilkinson Stores.

Although CTB suffered a large number of redundancies they ironically later benefited from increased investment and insurance payouts resulting from the devastating floods in late June 2007 which helped bring about some welcome stability. Wilkinson Stores on the other hand go from strength to strength and are at the time of writing looking at 'community stores' with a pilot scheme in operation.

If this is successful, over the next few years there could be another 1000 stores nationally along with the present 286.

Coal appears to be enjoying something of a revival within the region, Hatfield colliery was mothballed in 2004 but is set to reopen with plans by R J Budge to construct a power station alongside. Our members at Monckton Coke enjoyed some long awaited stability after being taken over by Hargreaves who also bought Maltby pit thus ensuring security of coal supply. UK Coal on the other hand continued to sell off their property portfolio to maintain profits which are forecast to increase four fold in 2008.

The majority of the membership within security work for G4S, GSL, Securitas, Loomis and Security+ Ltd, who are covered by National Agreements. The industry has seen a number of changes over 2007, significantly the acquisition of Brinks by Loomis and GSL UK Ltd (Court Services) by G4S.

G4S

Membership growth within G4S Guarding continues and remains a key priority, nationally, within Security Services. Inductions sessions are covered at the training centre in Warrington.

National Officer, Jude Brimble has submitted proposals regarding regional/strategic bargaining structures which will be discussed with the company in January 2008.

Securitas

Meetings have taken place at national level regarding the recognition agreement and bargaining structure.

All induction sessions continue to be covered by the region in Wakefield.

Securitas employ some 3,500 people within Security Services which potentially could be a key target for recruitment given current membership levels.

GSL UK (Court Services)

On 18th December 2007, G4S announced the acquisition of GSL. The acquisition is subject to approval by the European Commission and South African Competition Authorities. Recruitment is carried out at induction training courses held in Wakefield.

Brinks/Loomis

The acquisition of Brinks by Loomis took place on 6th August 2007. The acquisition had resulted in a restructuring of Loomis and ex-Brinks branches, this has resulted in GMB & T&G Agreements divided which will now have to be reviewed and amended to reflect the changes.

Robin Hood Doncaster Sheffield Airport

A formal recognition agreement was signed to cover all airport workers on 9th October 2007. The airport continues to grow at a steady pace. We are currently in the process of electing shop stewards and safety reps to lay the strong foundation to becoming fully organised.

Penauille Servisair

We have recently elected the first shop steward at Doncaster Airport for Servisair, concluded the wage negotiations achieving 4.2%, additionally we are now 100% organised and have now organised regular monthly meetings between management and the GMB.

G4S Aviation, Doncaster Airport

The annual wage negotiations resulted in a 4% increase on all earnings. Work continues on behalf of our members striving to achieve better terms and conditions as G4S at Doncaster are currently the lowest paid security workers in the aviation division. We have recently elected a further shop steward to ensure that all members have adequate access to a representative on site.

Thompson's Solicitors

A 5% pay increase was agreed.

Whittles Solicitors

A 4% pay increase was agreed.

ASDA Distribution

Since May 2007 ASDA ADC GMB representatives have been negotiating with the company concerning the annual wage negotiations. We have been involved in many meetings with the company who have tried in every way to get members to agree to a low level increase.

Two offers were put to members for ballot and were unanimously rejected. ACAS has been involved in the conciliation process which did not result in an agreement. Members voted to take their case to binding arbitration because we believed we had a very strong case. Full details were collected by the shop stewards and organiser then written submissions were put to the arbitrator. This included the fact that ASDA is the seconded largest supermarket in the UK with pre-tax profit of £388 million in the UK. GMB members at the distribution centres had made this possible and through their efforts the company had increased profit levels.

ASDA put forward their written submission which was full of inaccurate information and misinformation which did not address the terms of reference of the arbitration. The arbitrators took all the information into consideration and awarded an increased offer on a two years deal. The offer put forward by the arbitrator was the same one that the GMB had said they were prepared to recommend to members for acceptance before going binding arbitration.

3663 Swithenbank, Bradford

The Swithenbank site at Bradford has only been fully recognised by the GMB over the last two years. Membership has been built up over this period and is still on the increase at this time.

The 2 new elected shop stewards have worked hard to achieve this level of membership. In 2006 a grievance was submitted by the workforce to bring the Swithenbank site into line with other 3663 depots who enjoy 5 days more holiday and full pay when sick.

After many hours of negotiations with the company they agreed to pay full sick pay and increase holiday entitlement by 5 days. Over the next few weeks the full details of the deal will be put to members who will then be balloted on the offer.

ASDA Stores

As part of the campaign against ASDA top rate proposals a large number of grievances were put forward by members. Having been denied access in stores to meet with members, the GMB was forced to arrange off site meetings in Halifax, York, Pudsey and Glasshoughton. All these meetings were well attended, many colleagues joined the Union for the first time and the GMB has two new shop stewards in stores, flying the flag for GMB in Asda.

The result has been movement from the company on their original proposals by making bank holiday working voluntary and clarifying the supplements to members who transferred to top rate.

The GMB nationally have also raised a national collective grievance with ASDA and are waiting for the outcome of the appeal. The number of shop stewards regionally has been increased as a result of having more engagement with members. The amount of information sent to shop stewards has

increased and there is currently a GMB equal pay and bullying questionnaire going to all members employed both in the stores and the distribution centres.

A leaflet has also been circulated titled 'GMB wins £1.8 million personal injury compensation for ASDA workers' which ASDA are objecting to and trying to stop the circulation to employees. Further campaigns are being organised for 2008.

Nestle York

The York factory has seen significant investment following the announcement in September 2005 of 645 job losses. The job losses to date only stand at 200 due to intensive negotiations to retain products and re negotiate staffing levels which had been cut to a minimum as part of the announcement together with introducing more flexible shift rota's and staffing levels. The Victorian part of the site is to be sold off for commercial and private use with the proceeds of the sale being used to invest in new plant and machinery. The new plants which are now under commission are the Aero and Kit Kat plants operating modern high efficiency and output.

The factory in 2005 was running at a loss, this has now been turned around, through partnership working, into a profit. The factory is now a modern operation which will sustain and maintain manufacturing on the York site for years to come.

British Sugar

Following the announcement at the end of 2005 the British Sugar factories at Alscott and York have closed. The Alscott site closed in September 2006 and the York site has closed for production purposes with the loss of 105 jobs.

A small number of people remain on site to deal with finished products and the decommissioning of the site which is likely to last some considerable time. As part of the redundancy package the GMB was able to negotiate unabated pensions for all employees over the age of 50. Whilst this does not replace valuable manufacturing jobs it does provide a security of income.

CE Electric

Second part of their 2 year pay award provided RPI plus 0.75%. Other key developments within the Company concerned "Out of Hour Arrangements" where a Modernisation Joint Working Group consisting of TU & Management have had ongoing meetings.

We are now expecting final proposals from this group which will hopefully meet the approval of membership, putting this long standing problem on a more satisfactory footing for the future.

United Utilities (Northern Gas Network)

The 2nd part of their two year pay award resulted in RPI plus 0.2% in July 2007. There are also ongoing working groups attempting to address long standing dissatisfaction with "Stand By" working arrangements.

Drax Power Station

Members received a ground breaking pay award of 15%.

British Gas

The GMB have successfully arranged to be included in the company induction sessions at their call centres within Leeds. This aligned with the recruitment of new shop stewards will hopefully let our membership in this area go from strength to strength.

Arla Foods

Production workers settled for 3.7% in May 2007 backdated to 1 April. A review of the annual hour's system was also agreed as part of this settlement and the working party is continuing to meet. It is hoped that this system will be amended to ensure that holiday booking becomes easier – colleagues are expected to swap shifts at this moment in time - and that sickness triggers are calculated differently, our members believe the current calculations are unfair.

Arla Foods Transport

Extensive work is being undertaken by a committee of senior stewards and HR with respect to reviewing all terms and conditions given that in recent years Arla merged with Express Dairies and there is inconsistency in pay, holidays, sickness entitlements etc. across the sites. Finally, Arla Amba, the Danish arm of the company, bought up the 49% shares held by Arla UK PLC and subsequently now control all Arla operations in this country.

Membership and Recruitment

Membership within the Section as at January 2008 has increased over the last twelve months.

900 of these members work within the security industry where the companies with recognition agreements are covered by one lead organiser and the smaller unorganised workplaces are covered by the area teams in Wakefield, Sheffield and Brighouse to spread the load.

Our activists and teams of full time organisers across the region continued throughout the year to recruit, represent and retain our membership following the guidelines encompassed within the GMB@Work agenda enthusiastically embraced towards the end of the year. One week per quarter is put aside exclusively for recruitment and organisation purposes with a further one day per fortnight put aside for Organisers responsible primarily for servicing to concentrate on organising the workplaces identified within their areas as fruitful targets to their team leaders who monitor activities and progress monthly on a one to one basis. For activists, the region now puts on a two day course for new representatives and has invited existing reps to attend.

As ever, the security industry continues to grow and with it, membership. Every induction session amongst the major players is visited by GMB recruiters who enjoy a high percentage of successful new recruits also with an eye on potential new activists for the future. The region has completed pro-forma in order to identify key activist and shop stewards by work place to improve levels of communications.

MANUFACTURING

It's been another bad year for manufacturing in the region, there has been a number of redundancies in Distribution.

At Burtons in Leeds there have been significant cut backs in the workforce, the agency staff have been laid off.

The other areas where there has been concern are at Kalon Paints, Birstall where there has been severe disruption due to shift changes where the shift patterns have been altered to a point where the majority of the workforce have now got to work a shift system. This has caused redundancies with people being unable to deal with the shift patterns. However we have not lost membership in this area, in fact we have increased it slightly. Kalon itself is going through a difficult period as it has just been sold to two other American adventure capitalists companies and with the possibility of a recession coming their tonnage of paint has been forecasted to be down this year.

The main point with manufacturing this year has been the dispute with the Government and Remploy. I would like to express a vote of gratitude to James Stribley and all the guys in the region that have fought so hard for the jobs of Remploy in the region. It has been decided that the Pontefract factory is going to remain open for the time being however York is under severe threat and at the moment they are balloting for Industrial Action to try and keep the business open. Members at Remploy have worked tirelessly, the turn out for the Labour Party Conference from the region and nationally was fantastic, it's been a really hard fought campaign. Let's hope we can carry on the fight and save as many jobs in Remploy as we can.

As far as the future of manufacturing in the region is concerned it is a very bleak forecast for 2008. The Clothing and Textile section itself is virtually down to one manufacturing unit, Burberry in Castleford. The rest of the Clothing and Textile companies in the region are purely importers now with the biggest being Arcadia Group formally Burtons in Leeds.

Politically many politicians seem to express support for manufacturing but when it actually comes down to Government policy there is very little help in the short term, and I believe in the long term there is a bleak future for manufacturing in our region.

Remploy

Last year the Board of Remploy announced the closure of 43 factories. This includes the York, Bradford and Pontefract factories in our region.

The Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region have been at the forefront of the Campaign with the Regional Executive donating £10,000 to a "Fighting Fund" against the closures.

The campaign has included lobbying at the Labour Party Deputy Leadership Hustings and demonstrations outside the Department of Work & Pensions in Sheffield, a march and lobby of City Hall in Bradford, the lobbying of Councillors and street campaigns in York and Pontefract, the lobbying of MP's throughout the region and a social event in Bradford.

The region also sent representatives to lobby both the Houses of Parliament and the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth.

In December 2007 a revised plan was proposed by the Remploy Board which still included the closure and merger of 28 factories.

This means that the GMB Pontefract Factory will now remain open and members employed at the Bradford factory will have the opportunity to be transferred to the Leeds factory.

The York Factory is currently being balloted for Industrial action to fight against the proposed closure of their Factory.

We are also due to meet with reps from York CC and BMDC to see if they can assist in the ongoing campaigns to keep both sites open.

Dorlux 2005

The Company went into Administration in June 2007, resulting in over 20 employees being dismissed on the grounds of redundancy.

The regional legal team has lodged a claim for a protective award. The company is now out of administration and trading under Dorlux Beds UK Ltd.

Denso Marston

Recruitment and consolidation continues.

Symphony

Recruitment and consolidation continues at both Leeds and Rotherham sites.

Competition within the Industry continues to put pressure on the job security of our members. It appears that the use of agency and fixed term contract workers is on the increase which can potentially weaken our collective strength.

Robert McBrides

There was an increase on hourly rates of 3.5% with effect from 2nd July 2007. "One off" one day/shift off. Blow moulding sick pay entitlement will be aligned with other hourly paid employees with immediate effect. A new productivity bonus scheme was introduced with effect from 1st September 2007. Recruitment will be a priority in 2008.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The regional membership in the Public Services stands at 28961.

Local Government

Once again the past 12 months have been dominated by the campaign to see the introduction of single status through the pursuit of a new pay and grading system based on job evaluation and the pursuit of equal pay.

Within the Yorkshire region local Councils engaged with GMB negotiators in a variety of ways to 'address' these issues. In the majority of local Councils GMB members have been offered a compensation package designed to deal with the historical unequal pay suffered by women workers. By and large the GMB has advised members to reject these offers as they have been much less than members deserve and the Union has felt more was achievable through legal action.

Only two local councils in the region have completed the pay and grading process and introduced a new pay structure – Rotherham and Chesterfield. In both areas GMB negotiators have criticised the Councils proposals and consulted members on the package put forward.

In every other local authority negotiations continue at varying rates of progress and with varying degrees of success.

It has been another difficult and frustrating year for GMB negotiators; councils have approached harmonisation and the introduction of equal pay in the predictable way. That is the wrong way by trying to level the pay of men down instead of levelling the pay of women up.

This has created dispute situations particularly in Rotherham MBC, Sheffield CC and Leeds CC.

In all areas GMB members have been kept fully informed of progress or lack of it. In all areas GMB members have been advised of their legal rights and encouraged to exercise them through equal pay claims.

Equal Pay Campaigns

Every GMB member in Local Government and the NHS has received at least one direct mailed equal pay questionnaire alongside appropriate guidance. Our twin track approach to deliver equal pay – negotiation alongside litigation has seen claims lodged in ET's across the region in the following

Local Authorities:

Barnsley	Doncaster	Rotherham
Bradford	Kirklees/Jarvis	Sheffield
Calderdale	Leeds	York

Court proceedings are ongoing in Sheffield CC. Settlements have been reached via litigation in Leeds CC and Kirklees MDC.

In every workplace we have sought to organise and recruit on the back of our Equal Pay campaign.

Equal Pay Strategy Meetings

Throughout the year we have held regular equal pay strategy meetings involving officers and activists. These have been designed to share experiences, discuss negotiations and legal problems and to provide guidance to negotiators on these complex issues.

Particular thanks must go to our regional lawyers Whittles who have attended each meeting and to Mick Hubbard of National Office Productivity Services/Research Department who has attended every meeting and provided invaluable advice and guidance on job evaluation and the complexities of pay and grading systems.

Local Government Core Group

The region's Core Group of local government convenors and senior representatives has continued to meet to plan GMB activities across Councils in Yorkshire and North Derbyshire. This forum provides an invaluable opportunity for representatives to discuss issues, share problems and solutions and promote successes.

Our representatives have, through this forum, arranged exchange visits with Local Authorities and across regions to see first hand how different GMB teams are handling issues in their local authority.

Local Government Pay Campaign

GMB members in Yorkshire and North Derbyshire were rightly offended by the paltry 2007 pay offer from the Government. Campaign meetings/consultation meetings were held in every local Council within the region.

NHS

I have to report that industrial relations in the NHS have been problematic - at Barnsley Hospital, senior nursing and recovery nurses were offered the opportunity to take a reduction in pay in the form of down grading, which would mean a loss of approximately £2000 per annum.

Following a ballot for industrial action, which resulted in an overwhelming vote in favour, a one day of strike action, including a demonstration outside of the hospital gates, which was supported by a continuous work to contract (work to rule) was implemented.

The day of action was very successful. Members of staff who were on duty came out to the gate to offer support during their lunch breaks. The media coverage ensured that the GMB profile across South Yorkshire remained prominent as we were the only NHS union to ballot members. There were other successes. Firstly was the fact that following long discussion, management conceded and our members have since been returned to their original pay band with any monies lost reinstated. Our profile within the trust has been raised to the point where most people employed at Barnsley Hospital know that GMB is the best union for them; this is clearly evidenced by the sustained and continued increase in members. The hard work and commitment of the branch officers is commendable. Their dedication to the GMB and our members is unquestionable and is also very much appreciated.

At York Hospital we have also balloted for industrial action. Following the implementation of Agenda for Change (job evaluation) scheme, the Medical Secretaries submitted their information for evaluation. However, it was returned to them with sections 'factored out' which were described as factual changes. In other words, to ensure that they remain at a pay band below their required band, the sections were removed. Grievances were submitted on behalf of GMB members, which the trust decided would not be heard. Once again we were left with no alternative other than to ballot our members. The returned papers were 96% in favour of industrial action including strike & 82% in favour of action short of strike. Once again the media coverage was excellent and all of the medical secretaries are now GMB members. The grievance was eventually heard in December. It was agreed that jobs would once again be evaluated – without any changes and a guaranteed band 4 would be given.

However, simultaneously, we received notification that the trust had decided that following discussion with staff side reps (Unison) they would de-recognise GMB. Our organiser has had discussions with full time officers from other NHS trade unions and it is hoped that this will be resolved soon, although we believe this will be resisted.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service

Prior to Christmas 2006 the Yorkshire Ambulance Service, without any consultation with the recognised Trade Unions, announced potential redundancies of hundreds of staff. Our GMB senior representative over the next few weeks campaigned against these redundancies.

At one meeting in order to discuss the potential job losses it was alleged that a senior representative made some disparaging comments about the chief executive of the service, as a consequence our senior representative was suspended and the Yorkshire Ambulance Service suspended recognition of the GMB with effect from February 2007. Since then the GMB has been working to restore Trade Union

rights and to defend the interests of GMB members and the position of our senior representative John Durkin.

Equal Pay

Every NHS member has received an equal pay questionnaire and appropriate guidance. Equal pay claims have been lodged by our regional solicitors against a number of trusts. Legal proceedings are ongoing.

2. GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	0
Regional Organisers	16
Organising Officers	2
No. of Branches	122
New Branches	0
Branch Equality Officers	23
Branch Youth Officers	4

3. BENEFITS

Dispute	421.93
Total Disablement	0.00
Working Accident	4,969.80
Occupational Fatal Accident	8,000.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	0.00
Funeral	20,942.00

4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The GMB nationally will be producing journals three times per year which will include national and regional news and articles. The region continued to sponsor many charities and organisations during 2007 and these were:

- Children's Heart Federation
- South Yorkshire Festival
- Children with Leukaemia
- Aire Valley District Scouts
- Bosom Friends & Bradford Cancer Support Fashion Show
- Wakefield Pride NOT Prejudice
- The World at your Doorstep
- Action for Sick Children
- Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice
- 3 Peaks Challenge
- Castleford High School
- Circus Starr – Sue Ryder Care
- Genesis Appeal
- The Rotherham Hospice
- World Rugby
- Castleford Tigers
- Sheffield & Rotherham Asbestos Group
- Light up a Life – St Gemma's Hospice
- Remploy Fighting Fund
- East Leeds ARLFC

5. LEGAL SERVICES

(a) OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS AND DISEASES (including criminal injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
916	916

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
877	342	4	526 £1,461,420.67	5 £2,521,179.90	£3,982,600.57
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007			2731		

(b) INDUSTRIAL TRIBUNALS (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	154
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Rejected	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
180	36	28	5	100 £258,112.12	11 £197,884.33	£455,996.45
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007			132			

(c) OTHER EMPLOYMENT LAW CASES

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2006
-	-	-	-

(d) SOCIAL SECURITY CASES

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2007
40	8	48

The regional legal department is responsible for overseeing the legal services provided through the region's solicitors, Whittles. Although the biggest requirement for legal assistance continues to be in the area of personal injury and disease members can access an initial free legal consultation on most legal issues. A criminal law advice line is included in the service.

Most of the region's employment law work is conducted by the legal department with referrals to the region's solicitors as required, for example public sector equal pay cases. A professional and efficient system of employment tribunal casework management is in place which provides a first class successful service to members. 'In-house' knowledge and practical experience of handling employment tribunal cases is utilised to provide regular employment law training courses as an integral part of the region's training agenda. Organisers are also kept abreast of new developments in employment law through the use of regular bulletins and e-mailed briefings. The department runs a monthly introduction to GMB legal services and a basic employment rights course as part of the induction of new workplace representatives.

Training is also provided to the region's workplace representatives in, for example, the statutory disputes procedures and age discrimination legislation

The legal department provides an employment advice and consultancy service and is extensively used as an immediate source of employment rights information and advice by officers, activists and members.

The regional legal department provides assistance to members in need of welfare benefits advice. Every year hundreds of GMB members are offered advice and assistance, for example with help filling in DLA application forms. The legal department provides representation at appeal tribunals.

6. REGIONAL EQUALITY & RACE REPORT

At the time of writing no advisory committee meetings have taken place. In the first instance, where meetings have been arranged we have had little or no attendance, therefore there has been no opportunity to discuss the CEC special report or formulate a plan of work.

A report with findings and recommendations has been submitted to the regional secretary, which will be discussed in two weeks time.

At the time of writing the Champions Diversity and Equality training has just been completed and I will be having a meeting with the Regional Secretary and also with the new Head of Equality & Diversity in the near future.

7. YOUNG MEMBERS' REPORT

In February 2007, a meeting of young members took place; the first in a very long time. Despite broad publicity for this event, only five attended, but this included two new activists who had responded to the invite that featured in the regional magazine. Lively discussion ensued with respect to developing recruitment materials targeting young workers and students, recruitment activity around careers fairs and campaigning in the local elections against BNP candidates.

In terms of delivery, a number of our young members participated extensively in the Hope Not Hate Campaign in the run up to the election and some work commenced on the creation of recruitment materials.

In June 2007 Lucinda Yeadon of Leeds General branch was presented with the GMB Youth Award at Congress. This was highly deserved recognition of Lucinda's commitment to GMB and the important work she undertakes on a daily basis.

Over the summer a number of young activists volunteered their time and energy to work behind Workers' Beer Company bars at both the Glastonbury and Leeds Festival. As a result of such dedication we were able to raise in excess of £3,500 for future events, campaigns and materials.

In October the Regional Young Members Advisory Committee was re launched. Following a communication to branches and again extensive publicity in the regional magazine, a number of young members came forward and consequently our database has grown considerably.

The first new look RYMAC was well attended with only one member, Lucinda, having been involved in the past. At the meeting a new secretary and chair were elected, Daniel Randall of Club Stewards and Bar Staff branch and David Grant of Sheffield Municipal and Light respectively. In just a short period of time, under Daniel and David's drive and leadership, the committee has gone from strength to strength. Initially meetings have been scheduled on a six weekly basis, until action plans are well under way. Valuable work is also being undertaken in between meetings via frequent email circulation among the group, to ensure that sufficient preparation is undertaken prior to the committee convening.

The impact of this new grouping in such a tight time frame is evident in that we were in a position to field six delegates to the National Young Members' Conference which was scheduled for November 2007.

Whilst the conference unfortunately was cancelled, the pre organisation undertaken has given us a tremendous foundation on which to build further.

Already recruitment materials have been devised by the group, led and motivated by both Daniel and David. The young members' page for our regional website is not far off completion and concrete steps with respect to adopting, interacting and leading a number of campaigns have been taken. The 'Supersize My Pay' campaign is one that the committee has endorsed along with all anti racist activity.

In addition, GMB is actively participating in and steering the Regional TUC Young Members' Forum. Whilst Lucinda has played an active role within Youth TUC on the National Stage, both Daniel and Lydia Wilkinson of Leeds General branch have been involved regionally since late 2007. RYMAC has meetings scheduled for January and February and are in the process of organising a meeting on the Supersize My Pay Campaign, addressed by Mike Treen from the New Zealand Union, Unite, as part of the third annual week of action organised by the anti-exploitation campaign No Sweat.

Not for what seems like an age has Yorkshire and North Derbyshire been in such a position of strength in terms of the ideas, dynamism and commitment of our young activists. Special thanks to all those involved in RYMAC and to both Leeds General branch and Sheffield Municipal and Light branch for their tremendous support and encouragement. These are exciting times of which I am confident, will bear considerable fruit in 2008.

8. TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)inc on site 2 day	11	81	23	104	208
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	6	n/a	n/a	64	320
Branch Officers (please specify subject)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Disability Awareness	2	13	2	15	30
Risk Assessment	4	28	3	31	124
TUPE	2	13	2	15	30
Age Discrimination	2	16	2	18	36
ULR	1	7	1	8	8
Grievance	4	32	7	39	156
Disciplinary	4	21	11	32	128
Statutory Disputes	3	14	2	16	48
H&S Inspection	4	25	4	29	116
Dealing With Life Changes	1	13		13	13
Staff Training Best Practise	1		20	20	20

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
H&S 3day	7	n/a	n/a	69	483
H&S Welfare at Work	1	8	7	15	15

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
GFTU weekends	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Dealing with Bullying (3 days)	1	4		4	12
Stress (3 days)	1	1		1	3
(3 days) Workplace Conflict	1	1		1	3
(3 days) Deaf Awareness	1	1	1	2	6
Trade Union & the Environments (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Intro to Web Design(3 days	1	1		1	3
Basic Health & Safety (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Project Management (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Assertiveness for Women Trade Unionist (3 days)	1		1	1	3
Public Speaking (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Intro to Microsoft PowerPoint (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Risk Assessment (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Leadership Skills (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Preparing for Retirement (3 days)	1		1	1	3
Trade Union Democracy (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Dealing With Bullying & Harassment (3 days)	1	4	1	5	15
Recruitment Procedures (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Redundancy (3 days)	1	2		2	3
Advocacy (3 days)	1	2		2	6
Diversity Awareness (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Tackling Workplace Issues (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Advanced Course Senior Reps (3 days)	1	3		3	9
Organisational Behaviour (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Northern College					
Advanced Health & Safety (4 day)	1 (4days)	3		3	12
Negotiating for Training	1(4 days)	5		5	20
Industrial Relations	1(5days)	1		1	1
Understanding Pensions	1(3day)	1		1	3
Understanding DDA	1(3days)	4		4	12
Employment Law	1(4 days)	4	1	5	20
Focus On Local Authority	1 (4 days)	2		2	8
Industrial Relations	1(4 days)	1		1	4
Advanced Health & Safety	1 (4days)	2	1	3	12

Regional ULF Project					
NVQ Level 1					70
NVQ Level 2					167
NVQ Level 3					8

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Union Reps Stage 1	2(12 days)	4		4	48
Union Rep Stage 2	2(12 days)	1		1	24
Learner Rep	1	1		1	1
Occupational Health & safety Certificate	1(36 days)	2		2	72
Next steps for Safety Reps	1(10 days)	3		3	30
Disability Champions	1(5days)	3		3	15
Certificate of Employment Law	1(36 days)	3	2	1	108
H&S Stage 2	1(10 days)	1		1	10
H&S Stage1	1(12 days)	2		2	24

The education department in 2007 had a very successful period; we have increased our programme and learning pathway to benefit both our existing and new activists.

The Disability Route which involves activists following our progress ional path directs them to the Disability Champion status. As a region we currently have a number of individuals who have completed this pathway.

We have worked closely with the Conversion to Learning project that has provided a continuity and link with colleges and providers for the sport section. Also through the ULRs network within the region we intend to expand this link into all GMB recognised workplaces.

The department has worked hard to maintain the quality of the courses as well as increasing the courses we provide as a region. The information we receive from the evaluation sheets has been implemented into the curriculum to improve the knowledge and skills of our activists.

The GMB@Work 2 day course is co-tutored with officers who are often at the frontline of disputes, therefore they bring to the course knowledge of past and on going situations that are beneficial in supporting new activists.

The above tables are a guidance of what we have achieved as a department and a region in 2007.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY

The exercise of raising the profile of the health and safety resource in the region continues. Efforts are currently being made to increase the number of health and safety contacts on the regional health and safety database so that information can be sent out directly to as many of the activists as possible.

Support and guidance is provided to activists and organisers in addition to responding to health and safety related telephone enquiries received on a daily basis. Attendance at workplaces to conduct inspections, sit in on health and safety committee meetings, and provide further support in an advisory capacity is now a regular occurrence for the health and safety officer, proving an effective means of highlighting and gaining recognition of workplace health and safety issues.

Throughout 2007, the regional health and safety officer delivered two, one day, bi-monthly courses aimed at bolstering the core knowledge and supporting the activities of the region's health and safety

representatives; these are 'Workplace Inspections' and 'Understanding Risk Assessment and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations'. Additionally from May 2008, there will be a one day course on COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health). The department also provides tailor-made training in specific areas, or on specific topics upon request, which has been effectively used in securing recognition deals and will be offered to activists to aid them in campaigning for their members' safety and welfare at work more effectively.

Given that workplace health and safety remains one of the foremost concerns amongst members, and is given as one of the main considerations by those who join, or remain members of a trade union, an ongoing commitment is made to be actively involved in organising campaigns and promoting the GMB. Assisted by the use of GMB published information tailored to the workplace, and working with the region's teams, the health and safety officer will support our organisers and workplace representatives in the consolidation and retention of existing members, and recruitment of new members and in securing recognition at target companies.

10. POLITICAL

The political situation in the region is mixed the 2007 local elections were generally poor in South Yorkshire and in the far West of Yorkshire; Halifax, Kirklees and Calderdale with a few Labour Councillors being re-elected. The situation in Leeds however was slightly more optimistic. The GMB backed candidate Mark Dobson, he has achieved the second best local result in the country by overturning a Tory majority of 1,700 and giving Labour a lead of 300. This was great for all the people involved and the GMB worked really hard in this war. In the rest of Leeds where the GMB influential opposition Tory and Liberal majorities were cut back and we are probably in a position to win the Council back this year, 2008.

The GMB were involved with the Hope not Hate campaign, the bus arrived in several areas in our region Sheffield, Leeds and in the Calderdale where they had significant BNP presence. This was a very successful campaign and we feel that we've got the BNP on the back foot in this part of the region but we are not complacent and we need to be vigilant in the future to make sure that this threat is constantly looked at and wherever we can defeat the BNP we will be there doing our best to do so.

The significant changes on the Parliamentary scene are that following the Boundary Commission the Normanton CLP seat has now been put into Castleford and Pontefract and the new constituency involving Rothwell and Outwood has informed Colin Challen the former GMB backed MP has decided to call it a day and the Government Minister, Ed Balls has taken his place who will be a candidate in the next election.

This situation regarding the phoney election has done quite a lot of damage. As far as we were concerned we had got everything ready for the election coming just before the Labour Party Conference. I think that it was a wrong decision not to go forward for a General Election and since then Gordon Brown has lost a great deal of credibility. However the alternative, Dave Cameron is just too scary to worry about. In our region we have recovered somewhat from that and the complaints that people made about Gordon dithering have generally now gone away and we are looking forward to showing up the leadership and making sure that we move forward and we have a realistic chance of winning the next General Election.

I would like to express thanks to the MP's who supported us in the Remploy campaign; Colin Burgon, Jon Trickett need a mention and quite a few other people across the region. The campaign has been partially successful however we feel that the Government could have done more to support Remploy and that's left a nasty taste in the mouth of many members in our region.

Finally, I would like to welcome Steve Kemp to the region. Steve is from National Office and is going to be involved in trying to reinvigorate politics in the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region. I will look forward to working with Steve and let's hope that we can change things round and get the GMB presence back where it should be across the region.