

GMB ANNUAL CONGRESS

held on:

SUNDAY 6TH JUNE – WEDNESDAY 9TH JUNE 2010

at

SOUTHPORT FLORAL HALL, SOUTHPORT

.....
SIS. MARY TURNER MBE
(President of the GMB Union)
(In the Chair)
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P R O C E E D I N G S

D A Y T H R E E

(Wednesday, 9th June 2010)

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**THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY, 9TH JUNE 2010
MORNING SESSION**

Congress assembled at 9.30 a.m.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, Congress. Will Congress come to order, please. I know you all had a great night last night. I have some announcements to make. The London Region collection for STEPS – Specialist Toys and Switches – raised £635. Well done. (*Applause*) London Region is going to double that amount. (*Cheers*) I think we are going to double it after they've doubled it. Remember that at lunch-time there is one fringe meeting. You have been asked to attend.

While we are all collected together, I want to say a special thank you to our sponsors, who are Liverpool Victoria, EAD Solicitors, Pellacraft Limited, Future Plus, Simpsons Solicitors, Thompsons Solicitors and Digby Brown Solicitors. I hope you have all visited the stalls and to thank them for the effort that they have made this week. (*Applause*)

Let me say that myself and Paul McCarthy visited Edna Greenwood last night. She sends you all her best wishes. She was so proud to have received that award. She is not looking to bad.

I ask all delegates and visitors to check that you have switched off your mobile phones or make sure that they are on silent, because Mary's bucket is next to me.

The winner of Simpson Millar Solicitor's prize draw for a Blue Ray DVD player is John Powell of Weymouth, W27 Branch, in the Southern Region.

This is a final reminder for delegates to pick up their Congress gift, a T-shirt from Ethical Threads' stand in the exhibition. I picked mine up and I've got it on. (*Applause*)

I remind you that a delegate questionnaire is available from the information desk/tea and coffee area, and at the Ethical Threads' stand. Please complete and put in the box. There is a free prize draw for those who complete it to win GMB whisky and glasses.

I welcome delegates from the section conferences where, I am sure, you have had lively debates and interesting speakers. Yes, we did.

The next order of business is for Helen Johnson to present Standing Orders Committee Report No. 5.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 5

SIS. HELEN JOHNSON (Chair, Standing Orders Committee): President and Congress, I move SOC Report No.5. Congress, on the subject of withdrawn motions, we have one

further withdrawn motion, which is no. 143 on Internet Piracy. That motion has now been withdrawn.

On the subject of times for speakers, you will be aware that, in accordance with paragraph 9 of the Guidelines for Congress Business, the SOC recommends the times for speakers taking account of business on the agenda. You will also be aware that in accordance with paragraph 9 of the Guidelines it may be necessary, in order that the business of Congress is properly conducted, for speaking times to be curtailed. On Monday, on SOC Report No. 4, the SOC advised that we were considering whether it would be necessary to do so. President and Congress, in view of the business that remains on the agenda, the SOC is recommending that speaking times should be revised as follows. Movers of general motions should have their speaking time reduced from four minutes to three minutes, and that movers of Special Reports and CEC Statements should have their speaking time reduced from six minutes to five minutes. I move SOC Report No. 5.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Are there any questions on the report? *(No response)*
Does Congress agree to accept?

SOC Report No. 5 was adopted.

ADDRESS BY SIS. MONICA SMITH, NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS' ASSOCIATION

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, it gives me great pleasure to call Monica Smith, the National Secretary of the Retired Members' Association.

SIS. M. SMITH (National Secretary, Retired Members' Association): Once again, colleagues, I am proud and honoured to be addressing Congress on behalf of the GMB Retired Members' Association. The RMA wishes to thank Tommy Nimmo and Roger Bolstone for selling raffle tickets on the stall and for all the prizes and donations given by you lovely people and not forgetting the plug given by the worthy President of the Northern Region, Billy Hughes.

The retired members have worked hard this year both at regional levels and at national meetings. Most regions hold regular meetings and the National Committee meets at least four times a year. We all know we have a new government, but what they intend to do to get the finances in order will, without a doubt, fall on the working class and the elderly with cuts to public services, etc. If funds are to be withdrawn from anywhere it is always the elderly who are least able to fight back. The level of care within hospital beggars belief at times, with the elderly the least able to help themselves, left hungry for want of a kindly hand to steady their spoon or cup to their lips. How is it that there is no one around when they need the toilet? Colleagues, there is nothing to old age unless you have your health. Can any government not realise that they will be our age and will even want the same things that we do?

We don't want much. We would like sufficient money to live on and not to have to choose between heating or eating. We don't want millions, just what we have put into the system over the years. Remember, some of us have worked for 50 plus years and paid into the system for those years, not like some today who don't start work until they are well into their 20s. Why don't governments have respect for the elderly and the vulnerable? It is an achievement to grow old and share knowledge. Why is it continually seen as a penalty?

To move on to brighter topics, the GMB Retired Members' Association now has a new constitution, instigated mainly by the National Co-ordinator, Jerry Nelson. As in all things new, there were some minor setbacks, but the constitution has now been ratified by the CEC.

At the National Committee's AGM five officers were elected to hold office for four years. 'Ee by gum', I will have to keep taking the pills. (*Laughter*) Jerry Nelson was elected to sit on the Executive Committee of the National Pensioners' Convention, with Derek Baker MBE, as his deputy. You might think, colleagues, "Why bother with meetings when you're retired? Just sit back and enjoy life." Colleagues, the secret is that we very much enjoy being active members of the GMB. When speaking with a colleague of mine, we discussed getting a buzz by being part of this great Union and the comradeship which becomes an extension of your life. On a recent visit to London, travelling solo, for the rally on 10th April, and arriving rather early and feeling slightly lonely, I spotted a man with *GMB@Work* on his jacket. I thought, "A kindred spirit". I forget his name but I know he was an officer from the London Region. We chatted for quite some time until he was called away to assist with the rally. That, to me, is the *GMB@Work*.

Let me conclude by saying that although we are past the first flush of youth, the RMA members are flourishing and we hope that we have proved that there is plenty of life, energy and, most of all, comradeship and commitment to our great Union, the GMB. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Monica. The RMA Conference is tomorrow, which I will be chairing. So if any people are left around tomorrow, it is in this hall starting at 9.30.

I call Motion 17 and Motion 22. I remind colleagues that Motion 24 has been withdrawn as was stated in the first SOC Report.

GMB CONTRIBUTIONS

MOTION 17

17. GMB CONTRIBUTIONS

This Conference calls upon the Central Executive Committee to investigate the prospect of varying GMB contribution levels in relation to the earnings of members.

The CEC to present its findings and recommendations to the next Congress.

DURHAM GENERAL BRANCH
Northern Region

(Withdrawn)

BRO. A. KIGHTLY (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 17 on contribution rates. Membership of the GMB is not cheap. Over the years our rates have progressively increased to the extent that we all have real problems in recruiting new members. How many times, colleagues, have you been to a school or factory, you have handed out the forms, you tell the workers about our services and about the support they will receive? You realise that the workers want to join, but when you tell them the rates you can see their faces change. “How much?” It suddenly becomes, “Umm, I’ll take the form. I’ll think about it.” “I’ll tell you what, I’ll put the form in the post.” The truth, colleagues, is that for many of the workers who need our support the most, it is the cost that puts them off. Yet we have members earning £30,000, £50,000, £100,000 and, like Paul Kenny, £150,000 a year. *(Gasps from the delegates)* Sorry, Paul. Those members pay exactly the same rate of membership as our lowest paid members.

Congress, let’s face it. Our General Secretary pays the same contribution rate as a local authority cleaner. He probably earns considerably more. President, a member on £5,000 a year should not be paying the same as someone on £50,000, £100,000 or £150,000 a year. Let’s end this injustice. I urge you to, please, end this injustice.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there a seconder?

SIS. L. AVERILL (Northern): President, I second Motion 17 on contribution rates. Congress, about 15 years ago the GMB Northern Region conducted a detailed survey of our members and recommended a contribution structure to Congress that would have introduced fair contribution rates. The research clearly set out the numbers of members who we had in different income bands and set out new contribution rates that would provide fairness but, at the same time, secure our income.

Colleagues, the mover of this motion has clearly set out the difficulties faced by our recruiters. How can we reasonably expect someone on £5,000 a year to pay the same as somebody on £150,000 a year? Come on, Congress. The GMB is about fairness and justice. Let’s sort out this problem. We want fair contribution rates now. Support the motion.

UNION ORGANISATION – FINANCE & CONTRIBUTIONS
RETIRED MEMBERS
MOTION 22

22. RETIRED MEMBERS

This Conference is called upon to re-evaluate the way retired members contributions are collected. With the one off £25 per life payment branches no longer have any real contact with this group of members. Quite often when members die their families do not realise they have this membership

and it is becoming increasingly noticed as in the case of this branch where we send a diary and Christmas card to all our retired members, we are informed five or six years down the line by the new occupiers that the member passed away several years ago. Whereas in the past when they had to actually pay their subs you knew they were alive and well.

BRAINTREE & BOCKING BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

BRO. D. RIGBY (London): Congress, I move Motion 22 – Retired Members’ one off payments. My branch calls upon the Conference to re-evaluate the way retired members’ contributions are collected. With a one-off £25 life membership branches no longer have any real contact with this group of members. Quite often when a member dies their families do not realise that they have GMB life membership. It is becoming increasingly noticeable, as in the case of my branch. When we send out a diary and Christmas card to our retired members we are informed, five or six years down the line, by the new occupiers that the member passed away several years ago. When in the past they had to pay their subs we knew they were alive and well. Conference, we must think of a new way not to lose contact with these retired members. Thank you.

SIS. J. SMITH (London): President, I second Motion 17. I am endorsing what Doug has already said. We do lose contact with our life members and when we had them on cash payment or whatever we had virtually a day-to-day contact with them and we knew where they were. We, equally, send out diaries and Christmas cards to our members. I can give you a story like Doug has said. In 2008 we sent the usual Christmas cards. That particular year a card came back “Address unknown”. So that set out a lot of enquiries as to where this member had gone. It took me nearly nine months to find out about that member. The reason how I found him was by reading his obituary in the local paper. We should not have to scan, as I do every day, the local papers to keep in touch and to try to find if anything has happened to our lifelong members. Please support this motion and we look forward to the investigation.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)*
Northern Region, we are seeking withdrawal in favour of the CEC recommendations on contributions in the Finance Report. Do you accept that? I understand that Paul is going to speak on it. London Region, are you prepared to refer? *(Agreed)*

Motion 22 was referred.

THE PRESIDENT: Before we move to the Finance debate, I would like you to welcome Nigel Gooch and Phil Clarke from the external auditors. Nigel has been associated with the GMB throughout his career and retires at the end of the month. Would Congress wish him a long and happy retirement and keep in good health. Nigel, where are you. He is at the back of the hall. *(Applause)*

**GENERAL SECRETARY’S REPORT
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS & AUDITOR’S REPORT
THE CEC FINANCE REPORT – STABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.**

THE PRESIDENT: I call the General Secretary’s Report, Annual Accounts & Auditors’ Report and the CEC Finance Report – Stability and Accountability. After Paul has moved his report, I will then call the regions into debate.

GENERAL SECRETARY’S REPORT

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>Two members of GMB National Equality Forum (NEF) were lay representatives specialising in young member issues. They were able to raise concerns regarding young members and potential members. The two young member representatives organised fringe meetings at Congress 09 and the TUC.</i></p> <p><i>We continued to send a full delegation of GMB Young Members to the TUC Young members Conference in Birmingham and proposed topics for discussion ‘free school meals’ and ‘fighting the BNP’. Discussion continued with young members on improving engagement in GMB.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to this a negotiators guide for Officers on young members was drafted</i></p>
4	<i>Implemented</i>
5	<i>Implemented</i>
6	<i>Implemented</i>
7	<i>Implemented</i>
8	<i>Implemented</i>
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>Following discussion by the Organisation Committee and the Senior Management Team this review is currently on hold.</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>Further work required.</i></p>
13	<i>Implemented</i>
14	<i>Implemented</i>
15	<i>Implemented</i>
16	<i>Implemented</i>
17	<i>Implemented</i>
18	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Financial processes are being kept under review.</i></p>
19	<p>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.</p> <p><i>GMB's national procurement programme is still generating substantial savings. For example telephone land line annual credits generate close to £100k per annum savings compared with 2007. Energy savings generate around £127k per annum which will be greatly improved by the energy audit proposed by the Green Working Party and agreed by CEC. Savings can be diverted to our front line services fulfilling our commitment to recruitment and organisation through GMB@WORK.</i></p>

20	<i>Implemented</i>
21	<i>Implemented</i>
22	<i>Implemented</i>
23	<i>Implemented</i>

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

PRESS

The pace of industrial news in which GMB has an interest increased markedly over the period. Each morning all GMB staff and officers receive an electronic copy of press coverage in which there is a reference to GMB for the previous day. This helps all parts of the union to be aware of what is happening to members across the union. Since the Communication Department's report to GMB Congress 2009 it has issued 527 press releases (at the time of writing) on news events related to the work of the union on a range of issues. All GMB press releases are available at www.gmb.org.uk where members can register to receive releases directly to their email address. 8,000 people are registered and receive all GMB press releases.

Pay – There were releases on the major equal pay dispute at Leeds City Council involving 600 GMB members on strike that faced pay cuts of £6,000. There were similar levelling down equal pay disputes at Brighton and Hove, East Lindsay and Sheffield which also gained press coverage. Press releases were also issued on the pay freeze in Local Government. GMB also called for action against the use of agency workers in the Royal Mail dispute. There were a number of press releases on the growing dispute at British Gas which is on going as we write. There were releases on pay disputes and their resolution in Trinity School Newham, in the Scottish public services, local government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, in east Kent hospitals, prisons and FE & HE, at Superdrug, Enterprise Liverpool City Council, Nottingham Trams and Portsmouth shipyard. There were press releases for the GMB's growing membership in private hire drivers were issued as the recruitment progressed from council area to council area. A new area where we have just started press releases relate to the pay dispute at Southern Cross and the fact that the rents on the care home owned by the Qatari Investment Authority are too high.

Job Losses - 2009 was dominated by job losses and terms and conditions reversals resulting from the economic downturn and GMB's press coverage has reflected this. There were releases on household names such as JCB, M&S, Wincanton, Corus, National Grid, Thames Water, Legal Aid Service, Land Rover, Sea Dragon Offshore, BAE, LDV, AVX Devon, Wigan Leisure, Hain Celestial Luton, Diageo, Dorlux, Birmingham City Council, Glasgow City Council, MoD bases, NHS Berkshire, Immigration Advisory Service, British Gas, water industry, John Lennon Airport, Severfield Reeve in North Yorkshire, ShopDirect at Sunderland, Swissport at Stansted, Pinguin Foods, Nottingham CC, MacBrides, Thyssenkrupp Bourn and BAE Systems in Barrow. GMB expressed concern over jobs in the shipyards as the aircraft carrier programme and the submarines are slowed down. GMB has express concern at the prospect for growing job losses in the public services. Some of these are still on-going as we write. There is continuing coverage on the financial crisis at British Airways.

Economy & Industrial News - Reacting to naturally occurring news stories with particular regard to the political agenda allows GMB to promote its policy and position on many issues. GMB reacted to the crisis in the financial sector and the government's response to it, as well as the monthly unemployment figures. Paul

Kenny described the return of the bonus culture in the City as 'The Greed Shoots of Recovery'. During this period we commented on the bonus payment to Fred the Shred at RBS, Bob Diamond at Barclays, government bail out of PFI deals, and we responded to the budget. Developments in the energy industry including nuclear power gave rise to a steady stream of press releases; in particular issues relating to Ofgem generate coverage. GMB also commented about clean coal. GMB reacted to the news that Peter Mandelson had said that a lack of UK ownership of industry put the UK at a disadvantage.

Posted Workers Directive – Overall this has been the biggest story of the year for GMB. Once the unofficial strike off engineering construction workers at the Lindsey Oil Refinery reached a settlement the department moved the story on to the GMB engineering construction disputes at the Isle of Grain and Staythorpe construction sites affected by the botched implementation of this law and recent EU Court judgements. We have also put out press release during this period on the dispute in Engineering Construction which resulted in a settlement that provides for pre-award auditing. There were further releases on underpayments at Staythorpe and the national protest action that GMB organised in London on 3rd February. Overall this has been the biggest story of the year for GMB. As we write a new story has opened up regarding fair access and fair pay for 2,000 jobs at the Pembroke power station construction site.

The above story is tied in with the revelations regarding the blacklisting of construction trade union activists. GMB also released that the Union is taking a discrimination case on behalf of an Irish member who was refused a job because he could not speak Portuguese to work for a Portuguese contractor undertaking overhead electricity line maintenance in the south of Ireland and who employed 140 Portuguese out of a workforce of 160.

Legislation & Political Issues – Since the last Congress report releases have been issued on the Queen's speech, the Equality Bill, the National Equality Commission and on council housing. GMB continues to comment on the lack of a coherent energy policy and during this period Ofgem has concluded that the free-market model that the UK has followed will not keep the lights on. As well as issuing releases on the general issue we issued releases on Smart meters, the nuclear industry and Sellafield. GMB is in the forefront of replying to attacks on public sector pension provision and we issue regular press releases on this issue. The public services section issued a major report on PFI debts. During the period we also issued comments on the changing relationship between race discrimination and poverty, and on school packed lunches. GMB also commented on the Prime Ministers speech at TUC and Labour Party conferences.

We have also covered progress on ending the UK opt-out of the Working Time Directive from the European Parliament. We have also responded to increase in the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and the new code of practise that tips no longer count toward the NMW. We have made comments on the new rights to flexible working. We were also extensively quoted on MPs' expenses and on the outcome of the European elections. Other areas covered in the past period have been two releases for the Sex Workers Branch on the policing and crime Bill which set out the views of our members in the lap dancing clubs for new licensing arrangements and the views of the sex workers to criminalising aspects of the sex industry. The department was tasked with compiling research that could be used to demonstrate the track record of Tory candidates and councils in the run up to the general election. To date the department has put out a total of 57 releases which looked at the occupations of Tory PPCs in each country in the UK. The research demonstrated that 63 Tory candidates come from the banking and financial sector and that all but 1% of them came from the higher occupational groups.

Good news – We continued to welcome action by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to stop the exploitation of workers by Gangmasters in Scotland the south of England and London. We regularly do releases for GMB members who secure proper PI compensation for injuries sustained at work.

Profile for GMB The department also placed stories with the media to raise the profile, policy and views of GMB on many issues with GMB members and would be members as part of increasing the profile of the Union. The department takes students from the University of Roehampton School of Journalism and train them in writing press releases on a variety of topics. Since the last report we published very detailed reports for each area of the UK on the extent to which almost five million working families benefit from £15 billion of Child and Working Tax Credit to the tune of an average of £70 per week, every year. To coincide with GMB Diversity and Inclusion national conference we published the lists of councils in terms of the proportion of their top 5% earners who come from ethnic minority communities. We also did the percentage of residents in care homes supported by public funds, the average price of a pint of lager and the take up of free school meals and unpaid council and business taxes. These stories gave the figures for all parts of the UK.

Other Issues

During the period we issued press releases on Union Learn in Leeds, care home privatisation in Swansea, temperatures of workplaces in the cold weather, compensation for Morrison HGV drivers in Southern Region and a number of press releases on pleural plaques. We also issued press releases on swine flu, ISS at Kingston Hospital and on Nestle in India. For GMB Scotland we issued a press release on the living wage campaign in North Lanarkshire.

GMB CAMPAIGNS

As well as the up and running campaigns the department has been asked to run additional campaigns. Here is an update of where we are on all GMB campaigns.

British Gas

The campaign aims to discredit the bullying management regime of newly appointed Managing Director Phil Bentley which is all about cutting service and jobs. There is a campaign website (www.gas-leak.co.uk) with information and a forum for British Gas engineers and employees, and customers to leave their experiences of the bullying management regime. Several newsletters and letters to members have been done and delivered to keep everyone involved up to date on developments. See also Campaign websites below.

National Greed

This GMB campaign failed to stop the closure of the Newcastle office and loss of the jobs. See also Campaign websites below.

Pubcos

This is a relatively new campaign relating to the economic wellbeing of 25,000 pub tenants of seven large pubco chains. In a nutshell the tenants are being charged up to 80 pence a pint more for the wholesale of drink than they could buy it in the open market due to a tie to the property company that owns the pub building. The House of Commons business and innovation select Committee revealed that two thirds of the tenants earn less than £16k a year. The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) washed their hands of the issue and said that the issue was a matter for negotiation between the Pubcos and their tenants. The tenants are desperate and are looking to GMB membership to put an end to the tie. As we write the OFT have reopened the investigation and the Select Committee has issued a new report in early March. As we write there is a lobby of Parliament on the 16th March 2010 and a series of meetings in marginal Seats is also planned. A new Pub Revolution Branch has been set up in Southern Region and the Region is promoting a series of GMB road shows to build support for a ballot for action to secure a £12,000 cut in wholesale prices paid by the tenants. See also Campaign websites below.

SafeGuard

The department is preparing materials and a website for the 1st march 2010 launch of this campaign which is designed to address the many attacks of GMB members who work as static security guards and have no protection, sick pay, injury on duty compensation etc. See also Campaign websites below.

Remploy: The contemporary motion at LP conference in 2007 came back in 2009 and James Sibley Remploy worker moved the reference back. We got coverage for the fact that he was threatened by Remploy for attending the conference. The campaign has moved to a new phase of securing public procurement work for the fifty three factories that remain open and there is litigation over the 2,000 job loses. There is also a campaign to re-open the York factory where a survey has shown that less than half of those made redundant has found jobs. We focused attention on the bonuses paid to the directors and the staging of an expensive black tie staff event in Leeds.

Co-op: The April 2008 CEC gave the go ahead for a public campaign to secure re-recognition in Co-op Funeralcare. A campaign under the theme of "The Co-op; Lions led by donkeys" was launched. At the Manchester demonstration the Co-op manager, David Hendry, who de-recognised GMB came out to get his photograph taken with the live donkey. This has been turned into a poster with the slogan "which one is the donkey?" A GMB motion asking the trade union movement to shun the Co-op was carried at the TUC conference with Usdaw seconding it. Talks regarding the future of the Bank are underway. The campaign is seeking a new impetus and suggestions from the committee would be most welcome. This campaign fits in with Paul Kenny's maxim to leave the machine gun running and they will come round again.

AA/Saga: GMB retains its belief that the company must be a candidate to implode as a result of its massive debt burden of £4.9 billion. GMB repeated its call for Bob Diamond, who organised this loan from Barclays Bank to be sacked since his role in the financial sector's downfall became clear. This campaign also fits in with Paul Kenny's maxim to leave the machine gun running and they will come round again.

M&S: Since the last report the Employment Tribunal for Tony Goode has taken place but we are awaiting the outcome. We continue to highlight the poor treatment of M&S staff since GMB member Tony Goode was summarily dismissed by M&S in early September for leaking details of cuts in redundancy pay to the press.

CVIT: We continue to give publicity to the campaign to secure a safer working environment for our members subject to violent attacks in the transport of cash and valuables.

Four Seasons

GMB North West & Irish Region has asked the Department to do the business in public with Four Season which is about to de-recognise GMB.

Terminate The Rate

GMB is involved in the above campaign.

ORGANISATION DEPARTMENT TRAINING/REGIONAL TARGETS MATERIAL

The Department continues to produce dedicated news letters and mailings for national and regional organisation targets.

The department helped to prepare a DVD for GMB Congress 2009 and for distribution to GMB Branches which shows the success and impact of the GMB@Work training programme. The DVD was well received and will be with Branches in the near future.

GMB REGIONAL/NATIONAL MAGAZINES

The 3 editions of the GMB regional magazines since GMB Congress 2009 (July09, November09 and March10) have reached members' homes in increasing numbers. The central 12 national pages focused increasingly on the threat of the return of the Tories to power and raising awareness of exactly what that would mean for GMB members through major articles by Mirror columnist Paul Routledge. GMB campaigns too benefited from his high profile articles. In the final editions (March 2010) before the general election the national pages and many of the regional pages again focus on the threat of the return of the Tories to power and raise members' awareness of exactly what that would mean for them. There was also a major interview

with Mary Turner by the Mirror's Kevin McGuire about her lifetime's work for the trade union and Labour movements.

The new GMB national website will also be launched in the March 2010 editions.

The look of the magazines has also been completely revamped in line with feedback from the GMB Members Readership Survey.

Costs and Savings in Production

The economic downturn had a detrimental effect on our advertisers budgets but this income picked up again at the end of 2009. The impact of the loss of advertising income was mainly borne by the magazines producers rather than GMB as our contract with them provides a guaranteed minimum advertising income to GMB.

The July edition included the information regarding the increase in GMB subs and the associated letters to members who pay via Direct Debit thus saving around £25,000 in separate postage charges. During the year the magazines were also used for CEC by-elections and regional mailings, giving further postage savings.

Simply by folding the magazines for mailing saved another £13,000 per edition.

GMB CONGRESS 2009

The department was asked by the Congress Working Party to look into reducing the cost of all elements of the staging of Congress including the cost of lighting and audio visual. The new style provided a saving of around £40,000 in 2009. The 2009 stage set will be reused in Southport 2010 and the strict cost controls will be maintained.

GMB Congress TV 2009 was again webcast live to www.gmb.org.uk and the main speeches, including the Prime Ministers speech and Q&A session, are available to download. All members with email addresses were notified of Congress TV and the various messages we received in response were sent to Regions to action.

GMB NATIONAL WEBSITE www.gmb.org.uk

The new national website was launched on Monday 8th March 2010. The new Members Area and the ability for members to up date their own GMB Profile has added value to their GMB membership. The latest technologies have been used to make the information on the site easily accessible to members and GMB post holders, while driving non-members to the on-line joining if they want to see GMB content.

The site is an essential part of our drive to obtain members' email addresses and mobile phone numbers to improve communications and GMB organising strength.

On-line joining continues to grow apace. In 2009 an average of 1,318 new members joined on-line each month making a total of 15,809 for the whole of 2009 new members joined through the website.

GMB campaign websites

www.nationalgreed.co.uk

www.gas-leak.co.uk

www.GMB-security.org.uk

<http://www.pubrevolution.co.uk/pub-rev-gmb>

GMB PUBLICATIONS

Southern Cross

Meal Breaks Leaflet
Request to leave leaflet

Workplace Organisers Tool Kit

Equality Section
GMB@WORK Section 2.1 boards
GMB@WORK Flags
Engineering Construction Backpacks

Congress 2010

Covers
Programme

Health & Safety

Toxic Shock
Stress

Pubcos

Letter
Posters

DHL

Calling Card

Picket line Paraphernalia

Armbands
Posters
Placards

Public Services

GMB Scotland Mailing

Newsletters

ASDA Tell Andy
Tell Andy letter
Southern Region Professional Drivers
Wilkinsons x 3
Southern Cross
Pubco
Engineering Construction
ASDA
Eurest
British Gas

Re-prints

H&S Handbook
Care homes
Feeling the Heat
Workplace Organisers Took kits
H&S Work related Stress
H&S Handbook

Safety Reps Toolkits
Noticeboard Toolkits

Leaflets/Booklets/Letters

Security recruitment leaflet
School Support Staff Negotiating Booklet
Public Sector Pensions Booklet
ASDA Retention Mailings
Aggregate Industry Letter
Securitas Letter
Southern Cross Ballot
GMB@SCHOOL Autumn 2009 – Welsh Translation
GMB One British Gas Survey
ASDA Letter
Unofficial Accident Report Book
ASDA Postcards & Stickers
GMB@WORK Workplace Organisers Training Toolkit
GMB Your Rights Leaflets translations 11 Languages
CDNA Mailing
Nestles Pension Attack

MERCHANDISE

Car tax disc holders.
GMB@WORK flags

EXECUTIVE POLICY

THE EXECUTIVE POLICY SECTION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT:

1. Supports 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, CEC and National Officials at Congress and CEC meetings, TUC and Labour Party Conferences.
2. The Executive Policy Officers support the Central Executive Council and provide the secretariat to the SMT and the CEC Organisation Sub-Committee. They are responsible for ensuring that Actions and Decisions of Congress are carried forward for action by the relevant Departments and Sections at National Office.
3. Develop union policy, raise the GMB profile and strengthen 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.

GOVERNANCE OF THE UNION

Dolores O'Donoghue and Ida Clemo, the Executive Policy Officers work closely with colleagues at National Office, the European office and regional level. They are members of the Congress Working Party and are heavily involved in the planning stages for Congress which commence in July each year.

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. They also manage the Congress timetable.

At the time of writing this Report they are in the early stages of the preparations for Congress 2010, and processing the 220 Congress motions submitted by regions.

Review of Congress 2009

In summary, there were 3 CEC Special Reports: Congress Future Arrangements, Equal Pay and Raising the Kids: Stop in-work Poverty plus a CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy.

Dolores worked with colleagues at National Office to draft the CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy, and Tom Hazeldine, Research and Policy Officer in the Public Services Section produced the final document, which was well received at Congress.

Dolores and Ida are involved in ensuring that the other events at Congress are planned, organised and included in the daily President's Running Order, in 2009 this included:

- Regional winners of Regional Outstanding Achievement Award
- Daniel Dennis Health & Safety Rep of the Year: Winner & Runner up
- Schools Healthy Eating Competition Prize Awards
- GMB@ Work: the Movie DVD
- 6 Guest Speakers including Gordon Brown, Prime Minister
- CEC Speakers
- 12 Fringe Events
- Accrington Polish Children's Choir

At Congress 2009 Dolores was also heavily involved in the Children's Event and worked closely with colleagues at North West and Irish Region to organise the schools Healthy Eating competition. This involved organising the judging and contact with winning schools, the children and families visit to Congress, award of prizes and party treats for 129 children, as well as the arrangements for the President's visit for the special commendation award of bicycles and fruit trees to the Acorns Special School in Preston.

Dolores worked with the Child Poverty Action Group on the theme and preparations for the joint report "Raising the Kids" and was involved in the arrangements for the regional visits for Kate Green to carry the work forward in the run up to TUC Congress 2009.

The section dealt with the programming of the Final Agenda which consisted of 17 CEC Rule Amendments, 5 Rule Amendments, 138 motions and 22 Composite Motions of which 115 were carried and 12 referred. There were 7 Emergency motions of which 6 were carried and 1 Referred. In addition there were 20 existing policy motions which were not debated. Executive Policy supported 44 CEC speakers with speech drafts and policy advice, and programmed the attendance of Guest speakers.

The section has developed a number of documents which assisted the smooth running of Congress.

- A summary programme for delegates
- "Congress Explained" which was developed together with Steve Short. This document, which has been revised for 2010, sets out information and advice on the processes and procedures of Congress in a user-friendly format. It is primarily aimed at new delegates and also gives hints and tips on writing motions and making speeches. It was circulated to Regions in advance of the Regional delegation meetings in April 2009 and an updated version will be provided for Congress 2010.
- Delegate Questionnaire
- Combined Preliminary Agenda document produced for the CEC for their March Meeting where stances on 226 motions and 31 Rule Amendments were discussed.

During Congress, the Executive Policy Officers support the President, Vice President, and General Secretary to manage the Congress timetable. They also supervise the recording of decisions. Dolores and Ida wish to express their thanks to their colleague Charlie King who has patiently and ably undertaken this task for some years, and retired at the end of 2009.

Congress 2009 Delegates

The following numbers of delegates spoke (not including CEC, Guest speakers or SOC)

Number of Delegates who spoke	Male	Female
Sunday	28	12
Monday	62	29
Tuesday	62	22
Wednesday	42	27
TOTAL	194	90

Action on Referred and Carried Motions

Following Congress 2009, the Executive Policy Officers implemented changes to the way Actions on Decisions of Congress are followed through. Following the September CEC meeting, motions are now referred in the first instance to the October meeting of the appropriate CEC Sub Committee, SMT member or Section National Secretary. The movers or Branches of Referred motions may now also be invited to participate in the evaluation process prior to final recommendations. The report on referred motions is set out in A. below.

In January each year Executive Policy ask colleagues at National Office to include progress on all motions carried at the previous Congress in their section of the General Secretary's Report which are set out in B. below.

A. ACTION ON MOTIONS REFERRED BY THE 2009 CONGRESS

14.	Review of Selection Process to National Equalities Forum	A discussion paper setting out proposals will be taken to the March CEC meeting.
26.	New Youth Membership Rate and Promotion	The motion called for a new youth rate and improved youth recruitment. Congress had taken reference on the basis that there was no need for new rates as the CEC already had the power to implement special promotional rates in addition to the grade 2 rate which applied to all members under 18. However, the CEC undertook to consider recruitment initiatives aimed at young people. The Finance Committee agreed that the motion should be drawn to Regions' attention with the request that they consider their youth recruitment policies.

27. GMB Family Membership	<p>This called for the introduction of family membership. The CEC had asked for reference to look at the possibility and suggested a pilot scheme.</p> <p>The Finance Committee of the CEC agreed that family membership was unlikely to add to total membership numbers, and would be more likely to reduce income by discounting existing members' contributions. It would be complex to administer and deciding on the level of service appropriate to family members would be fraught with difficulty. The Committee agreed not to proceed with the matter.</p>
70. Campaign for Statutory Volunteer's Rights	<p>The GS Department is in discussion with the proposing Branch to investigate ways of taking this forward. TUC have produced a Volunteers Charter which will provide the basis of this work.</p>
71. Tax Allowances for Voluntary Work	<p>The GS department is investigating ways to take this forward. It is a difficult area, and the most likely route to progress is whether this could be integrated into the Tax Credit system.</p>
73. Protection of Children Act (POCA) and Protection of Vulnerable ADULTS (POVA) Investigations	<p>The motion called for GMB to campaign to ensure that POCA and POVA investigations are subject to a fair, transparent process in line with the ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinaries. The motion was referred because a new system for protecting children and vulnerable adults is established, and the transition was not complete. This remains the case. The POCA and POVA lists began to be phased out last October, and replacements brought in. The new system will require all people working closely with children or vulnerable adults on a frequent or intensive basis to register with the ISA to gain clearance. ISA registration for employees moving into a new role opens in July 2010, with other employees to follow. It is still too early to tell how well investigations under the new system will work. The situation will have to be further monitored.</p>
90. PACE Interviews	<p>This motion was referred because of the need to investigate the background and gather information on local authority procedures for investigating complaints made against Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers, before determining the steps necessary for GMB to provide support to members who might be affected. The Commercial Services Section liaised with the branch in the North West and Irish region which submitted the motion, and also consulted the Professional Drivers branch and appropriate branches in other GMB regions to gather evidence of local authority's interviewing procedures. Legal advice was sought to determine the legal status of the procedures in use and their relationship with Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) procedures. As a result, advice is being prepared for members who drive Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles to advise them of their legal rights in the event of a complaint against them.</p>

<p>160. Mandatory Voting at Elections</p> <p>161. Compulsory Participation in Elections</p>	<p>These motions were referred for further consideration. Falling election turnouts reflect disillusionment with politicians and the political process and this must be reversed. However, there are concerns and inherent danger in forcing people to vote. It also raises concerns over an individual's democratic right to withdraw from the political process. There are also compulsion issues with regards to what the sanctions would be. On further analysis, we therefore would advise that if this motion is placed before congress again that the recommendation would be to oppose it.</p>
<p>170. UK Membership of the Euro</p>	<p>As the exchange rate has remained high since Congress 2009 (87-94p/€), examination of the case for membership of the Euro is not realistic at this time. This, combined with continuing economic and financial instability, and the fact that many EU members of the Eurozone are currently running deficits way above the Growth and Stability pact levels of 3% GDP, makes it very difficult to assess the impact on our members across all sections with any certainty or confidence. We continue to monitor the situation closely.</p>
<p>198. Government Funding for the Treatment of Lower Back Pain</p>	<p>The motion called for Government to allocate funding so that those suffering chronic lower back pain could choose to access alternative therapy outside the NHS. The motion was referred because GMB policy is as a rule opposed to public funding being used for treatment outside the NHS, and the issue needed to be looked at in that policy context. Alternative therapy was endorsed by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) last May. NHS trusts have been expected to implement the NICE recommendations over the past year. Pending that, the impact has not yet been robustly evaluated. In addition, the NICE initiative on alternative therapy has been overtaken by Government's attempt to move towards personalisation of patient care, inviting further inroads by private healthcare providers. GMB opposes this continued drift towards the private provision of NHS services. For these reasons it has not been possible to reconcile the laudable sentiment to help those suffering chronic lower back pain with a specific proposal to do so via non-NHS provision that remains contradictory to wider GMB policy.</p>
<p>EM 4 Unjustified Expenses</p>	<p>The Labour Party set up a star chamber to deal with this very issue. GMB were involved and supported its implementation. In any decision either regionally or nationally to support constituency campaigns in the run up to the next election this issue has featured in the decisions made. GMB has not and is not in the position where it can organise de-selection campaigns within a CLP as it is their own decision. We have advised members who attend CLPs of our concerns and position on this matter. The General Secretary has also made a number of public statements condemning those MPs who have abused the expenses system.</p>

B. REPORT OF DECISIONS MADE BY CONGRESS ON RULE AMENDMENTS, MOTIONS, REPORTS AND STATEMENTS

The CEC Action on Decisions document below sets out the responsibility for the actions on all motions carried and referred by Congress 2009. It is also available on the GMB National Website www.gmb.org.uk/congress

CONGRESS REPORTS	
General Secretary's Report	GS
Annual Accounts and Auditors Report	GS, Finance Director
CEC SPECIAL REPORTS	
Congress Future Arrangements	GS, SMT, Executive Officer
Equal Pay	CEC Organisation Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
Raising the Kids: Stop in-work Poverty	GS, SMT, CEC
CEC STATEMENT	
CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Organisation Committee CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
CEC RULE AMENDMENTS	
CECRA1 Rule 5.5 Membership	RULE CHANGE
CECRA2 Rule 5.7 Membership	RULE CHANGE
CECRA3 Rule 19.13 Regions and how they are Managed	RULE CHANGE
CECRA4 Rule 20.2 Reserved seats on Regional Councils	RULE CHANGE
CECRA5 Rule 64 Candidates for Local Public Organisations	RULE CHANGE
CECRA6 Rules 65.3, 65.4, 65A.8 Political Fund	RULE CHANGE
CECRA7 Rule 36.9 Branches	RULE CHANGE
CECRA8 Rule 46 Clause 1	RULE CHANGE
CECRA9 Rule 46 Clause 2	RULE CHANGE
CECRA10 Rule 50 Strike Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA11 Rule 53 Victimisation Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA12 Rule 54 Disablement Grants	RULE CHANGE

CECRA13	Rule 58	Fatal Accident Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA14	Rule 59	Weekly Accident Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA15	Rule 65	Political Fund	RULE CHANGE
CECRA16	Rule 65A	Political Fund (Northern Ireland)	RULE CHANGE
CECRA17	Rule 17e	National Officials	RULE CHANGE

MOTIONS CARRIED BY CONGRESS

MOTION		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
EM1	Ban the Blacklisters Carried with Statement	CEC Organisation Committee Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
EM 2	National Grid Greed	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
EM 3	Corus Steel Teesside	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
EM 5	ID Cards- Aviation Industry	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
EM 6	Iraq Carried with Statement	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
EM 7	Fighting the Fascists in Elections	
7.	Working Together With Unison Carried with Statement	GS, CEC
8.	Geographical Boundaries of the GMB Carried with CEC Qualification	GS, SMT
C1.	National Migrant Workers Recruitment & Organising Strategy Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Organising Dept)
17.	Environmental Representatives	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
28.	Retired Members Association Contributions Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee, RMA
32.	Equalities	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
34.	Young Members Age Restriction	
35.	Motion on Abortion Rights Carried with Statement	
MOTION		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
36.	Health & Safety Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
37.	Display Screen Regulations and Cash Registers	
C2.	Final Salary Pension Schemes Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions)
41.	Pensions	
42.	State Pension Only Carried with CEC Qualification	
C3.	Re-Establish the Pensions Earnings Link Carried with CEC Qualification	
48.	GMB Campaign for Environmental Investments Carried with CEC Qualification	
52.	European Case Law	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
53.	British Jobs Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
56.	Exploitation of EEC Workers by Security Companies	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)

57.	Employment Protection Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
58.	Employment Carried with CEC Qualification	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
59.	Tips	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
60.	Working Time Regulations and Holiday Pay	
62.	Public Holiday - Respect our Armed Forces Carried with CEC Qualification	
63.	Paternity Leave Carried with Statement	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
64.	Temps to Permanent Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
65.	Redundancy	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee CEC Organisation Committee
66.	Statutory Redundancy Pay	
67.	Redundancy Payments Carried with CEC Qualification	
C4.	Employment Tribunal Awards	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
72.	Controlling the Use of Subversive Surveillance in the Workplace	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
74.	Equal Pay	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal) Section National Secretary (Public Services)
75.	Undocumented Migrant Workers	CEC Organisation Committee
C5.	The Role of Energy Regulators	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
79.	OFGEM Proposals to Regulate the Pension Rights in the Utility Industries Carried with CEC Qualification	
80.	Campaign to Reform OFGEM	
81.	Energy Companies Profits	
82.	Government Regulation of Utility Companies Profits	
83.	Utility Providers of Energy	
84.	Utilities Companies' Pre-Payment Tariffs	
86.	Energy Prices	
87.	Exemption from Parking Restrictions for CVIT Vehicles	
89.	Zero Hours Contract in Security	
C6.	Support for Manufacturing Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Organisation Committee
C7.	UK Manufacturing Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
MOTION		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
C8.	Reemploy Carried with Statement	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
98.	Retain Britain's Jobs in Britain Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
99.	Manufacturing of Windfarms Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
100.	Scotch Whisky - Safeguarding Our Future	
101.	Manufacturing Carried with CEC Qualification	
C9.	Invest in the Public Sector	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
106.	Economic Climate Impact on Public Services	Section National Secretary (Public Services)

108. 109.	Local Government Reorganisation PFI	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
111.	Public Sector Apprenticeships Carried with Statement	Section National Secretary (Public Services) CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
C10.	School Support Staff Carried with Statement	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
121.	Public Sector Pensions	Section National Secretary (Public Services) CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions)
123. 124. 126. 127.	Local Authority Care Homes Private Sector Care Homes Staffing Levels in Mental Health and Learning Disability Local Government and Equal Pay	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
C11.	UK Economy and Public Sector Funding Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
130. 131. C12. C13. C14. 139. 140.	Global Reconstruction Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy Credit Crisis and City Bonuses Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy Short Selling Shares Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy Banking and Finance Industry Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy House Repossessions and Mortgage Protection Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy Financial Industry Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy Tax Havens	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
141. C15.	A Council Building Programme Redundancy & Short Time Working Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
146.	Funding Recycling In The Future	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
147. 148.	Phase 3 European Emissions Trading Scheme Carried with CEC Qualification Gender Bending Chemicals (Endocrine Disrupters)	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
162.	MP's Expenses and the Taking of other Remunerative Posts	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
168.	Europe	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
171.	Cammell Laird 1984	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee CEC Organisation Committee
173.	Police Cautions with Security Guard on Duty	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
	MOTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
174.	"Train to Gain"	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Organising Dept)
175. 176.	ELQ Funding Social / Political Studies Carried with CEC	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee

Qualification		
C18	Royal Mail & Post Office Closures	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
179.	The Morning Star	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee CEC Organisation Committee (Comms)
180.	I.C.E	CEC Organisation Committee (Comms)
181.	Communications Data Bill Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
182.	Financial Elder Abuse Carried with CEC Qualification	
183.	Safety, Sex Work and Human Rights Carried with Statement	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
185. C19.	Housing Local Authority Housing Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
189.	Community Housing Carried with CEC Qualification	
191.	Housing	
192.	Tenants Management Organisation	
193.	Council Tax	
194.	Work Environments in Community NHS and Social Work	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
195.	New Labour's Health Plan – Undermines Founding Principles of NHS	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
199. C20.	Hospital Parking Hospital Parking	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
C21. C22.	Care of the Elderly Care Workers	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
211.	Paying Grandparents	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
213. 214. 216.	Domestic Fuel to be Zero Rated VAT Severe Weather Payments Winter Fuel Allowance For Families with Disabled Children	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
217. 218.	Claiming Unemployment Benefit Unclaimed Benefit	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
219.	Free Television Licence for Everyone at State Retirement Age	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
220. 222. 224.	Support for Gaza Carried with CEC Qualification Gaza War Carried with CEC Qualification European Trade Agreement with Israel Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
225.	Burma	
226.	Banks & Arms Trade Carried with CEC Qualification	

Policy Work

Ida has responsibility for progressing policy on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) which celebrated its 10th Anniversary on 1st April 2009. This has involved co-ordinating the GMB response to two Low Pay Commission Consultations; a general one covering the annual review and one on recommendations for an Apprentice Minimum Wage (written together with Charlie King). We gave oral evidence to the Low Pay Commission in support of both submissions. Ida also attends regular meetings with TUC, BIS (Department

of Business, Innovation & Skills), HMRC, Civil Servants and Policy Officers on NMW issues: Tips, Enforcement, Apprentices and Guidance.

Ida co-ordinated and submitted a response to BIS on their Consultation on Service Charges, Tips, Gratuities and Cover Charges in February 2009 and GMB were one of the four Trade Unions who submitted a formal response.

There is long standing GMB Policy to campaign for tips to be excluded from National Minimum Wage and we were delighted to see that when the results of the Tips consultation were published in May 2009, GMB had been successful in influencing the change in the Regulations. As a result the Government made changes to National Minimum Wage Regulations to exclude service charges, tips, gratuities and cover charges in payment of the National Minimum Wage, from 1st October 2009 and this will affect around 60,500 workers.

To follow this through, Ida has represented GMB as part of a Stakeholder Group of consumer groups, unions, (Unite and TUC), employers and Government to produce a cross sector Code of Best Practice on Service Charges, Tips, Gratuities and Cover Charges which was launched on October 1st 2009 . As part of this process, Ida had some useful feedback and case studies from Adrian Baker on Casinos and Gill Bigwood (President, GMB London Hotel and Catering Branch) and Raj Gill on practices in the hospitality sector. There will be information made available on the new GMB website and in Regional Magazines and Ida produced the GMB Charter for Fair Tips which can be downloaded from the site (www.gmb.org.uk)

As part of progressing Motion 72 to Congress 2009, Ida is working with the Commercial Services Section on a leaflet on Monitoring and Surveillance.

Dolores has been involved in developing a close working relationship with the Child Poverty Action Group, the leading charity campaigning for the abolition of child poverty in the UK and for a better deal for low-income families and children. Part of this work involved the GMB/CPAG Special Report to Congress 2009 on in-work poverty and policy issues on welfare reform proposals.

Consultations

Ida produced a response to the Department of Business, Innovation & Skills consultation on "Information Sharing between bodies responsible for enforcing workplace rights".

Dolores co-ordinated the GMB response on Reforming Financial Markets and ensured that the policy issues carried in the 2009 Congress CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy were taken forward in this response. She attended the FSA Conference in June on Consumers and the Recession and put forward a number of points for them to take forward in providing advice and assistance for redundant workers.

Central Arbitration Committee Applications and Voluntary Recognition Agreements

The Section produces a regular report for the CEC on Voluntary Agreements. Over the year, GMB Sections and Regions and have reported 35 new Recognition agreements. All agreements received have been scanned and have been added to a shared database which is available to all GMB Regions.

Special Projects

The section assists the General Secretary by undertaking special projects and duties as directed, producing presentations, briefings, statistics, profiles and research intelligence for the General Secretary to use in internal or external meetings. In February 2009 Ida assisted the with the preparations for the third annual Full Time Officers meeting in Edgbaston and assisted the General Secretary at the event which took place on 20th March.

Information Systems and Other Resources for Bargaining & Representation

Ida Clemo continues to monitor and train Regional and National staff in the use of research information systems ensuring that these products are used effectively for bargaining support, recruitment initiatives and company research. This is part of an ongoing initiative by the Senior Management Team to provide officers with immediate access to bargaining and information tools. As of the end of the year, training has been completed in 8 regions and to date over 80 staff and officers have been trained. Ida has also rolled out training on the GMB Membership system to staff at National Office.

To support this initiative, Ida updated and distributed a Regional Guide to Information Systems Leaflet to inform them of the resources they have access to for organising and bargaining support and also negotiated GMB member access to an online LRD Publications system.

Ida has been part of the National Office Project Team set up to approve the design and implementation of the new GMB National website which will be launched in Spring 2010.

TUC Congress 2009

Dolores and Ida ensure that Congress decisions and GMB policy are taken through to TUC Congress. They are also responsible for supporting the GMB delegation and raising the GMB profile at TUC. They planned and organised (with assistance from colleagues in the General Secretary's office) the GMB stand and office at TUC Congress. TUC Congress was once again successful for the GMB delegation and GMB was again at the forefront of debate.

The team co-ordinated and provided 31 speech drafts for the delegation and liaised with the TUC to ensure that GMB speakers were called. From the GMB delegation of 64, GMB had 26 speakers (18 Male, 8 Female), moved 4 motions, seconded 9 motions, opposed one, raised a question on the GC report and put questions to Gordon Brown and Ed Milliband. Notable highlights were the General Secretary's vote of Thanks to Sheila Bearcroft the TUC President and GMB NPower Branch being presented with the TUC Organising Award.

GMB motions on Quality Pensions and Temporary Agency Workers were carried, as was the GMB Emergency Motion on National Grid and we withdrew our amendment on the Palestine motion in favour of a General Council Statement on the Middle East.

TUC Congress Motion	GMB Position	GMB Speaker
EM 6 National Grid: National Greed (GMB)	GMB Moved	Gary Smith
Comp 2 Temporary Agency Workers (GMB)	GMB Moved	Kevin Flanagan
12 Against racism, against homophobia (TUC LGBT)	GMB Moved	Nick Day
Comp 10 Defending Quality Pensions	GMB Moved	Paul Kenny
6 Bogus Self employment (UCATT)	GMB Seconded	Phil Davies
20 Save our Steel (Community)	GMB Seconded	Keith Hazlewood
36 Transport (URTU)	GMB Seconded	Bernie Taylor
38 UK indigenous coal reserves (NUM)	GMB Seconded	Gary Smith
44 Transport (URTU)	GMB Seconded	Ben Rankin
65 Probation service cuts (napo)	GMB Seconded	Rehana Azam
73 Workers in adult entertainment (Equity)	GMB Seconded	Cathy Murphy
78 Asbestos (ATL)	GMB Seconded	Allan Garley

81	High Heels (SCP)	GMB Seconded	Mary Turner
47	Air passenger duty (Balpa)	GMB Opposed	Mick Rix
16	Agenda for economic recovery (TUC Black Workers)	GMB Supported	Kamaljeet Jandu
17	Discrimination, recession and welfare reform (TUC Disability Conf)	GMB Supported	Elaine Daley
Comp 8	Manufacturing	GMB Supported	Emma Ritch
Comp 9	Reforming the financial and banking systems	GMB Supported	Steve Kemp
25	Attacks on terms and conditions (Community) (speak to Unite amendment on Diageo)	GMB Supported	Harry Donaldson
Comp 16	Defending the NHS	GMB Supported	Sharon Holder
Comp 21	Public Services and the Economy	GMB Supported	Brian Strutton
Comp 4	Enforcement of fair and safe employment rights (NASUWT)	GMB Supported	Edna Rolph
	Question to Gordon Brown	Question	Malcolm Sage
	Question to Ed Milliband	Question	Lynn Brook
	GC Report Para 3.12 Transport	Question	Charlie King

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Introduction

GMB continues to be a player on the international stage as befits an organisation at the forefront of the global campaign for social and economic justice. As well as affiliating to and participating in a number of bodies involved in various activities around the globe, the Union is also pursuing its own agenda by assisting sister trade unions in projects with clear aims and objectives designed to bring tangible gains to their members. GMB's international work is not separate from its domestic commitments, nor is it of secondary importance. In today's globalised economic environment where transnational companies' only loyalty is to their shareholders, GMB's operations cannot be constrained by national borders.

Shipbreaking

GMB's proposal for a joint project on ship breaking with the Mumbai Port Trust Dock and General Employees Union was accepted by the Department for International Development (DFiD) in May 2009.

The aim of the project is to lift workers, many of them migrants lacking local languages, out of poverty through trade union organisation and representation. As part of the scheme, the millennium goals on child education, adult literacy and access to health services were prioritised to cover the families of those working in this dangerous occupation. The DFiD grant is worth £445,000 over five years and will be used in Mumbai and Alang. There is a delay in disbursement of the funds owing to regulations put in place by the Indian authorities to prevent money laundering.

The project is currently being headed up by London Region's Hitten Vaiyda whose language skills are invaluable. Hitten replaced Joni McDougall who was instrumental in developing the initiative before leaving GMB in the summer 2009.

Costa Rica

GMB signed a ground-breaking agreement with Costa Rican trade union, SITRAP at TUC Conference in Liverpool in September 2009. SITRAP, who organise and represent workers on banana and pineapple plantations, have had a long relationship with the London Region but this agreement moves relations between our two organisations onto a higher level and provides a template for similar link ups along international supply chains. 25% of the bananas sold in the UK come from Costa Rica and GMB/SITRAP can lay claim to representing workers all the way from farm to supermarket. Costa Rican trade unions are under sustained attack from an unsympathetic government firmly wedded to unsustainable neo-liberal social and economic policies within the framework of the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

There will be elections in Costa Rica in February 2010, but the Presidential candidate currently leading in the opinion polls, Laura Chinchilla, has pledged not to support legislation enhancing workers' rights and is instead supporting a bill that would legitimise alternative forms of workers' representation that would place her country outside the ambit of core ILO conventions. Trade unions grouped in the *Central Social Juanito Mora Porras* (CSJMP) have a long standing complaint submitted to the EU asking for a full formal investigation into Costa Rica's persistent failure to honour obligations enshrined in ILO conventions that they have ratified, specifically those relating to trade union rights and freedoms and labour standards, which form the body of conditions for benefitting from the Generalised System of Preferences plus (GSP+) preferred trading status. GMB and our Costa Rican trade union colleagues were bitterly disappointed that the EU Commission announced in January 2009 that it would renew the trading status, which was under review, without the investigation we had requested. GMB's Brussels office continues to assist the CSJMP by mobilising our sponsored MEPs in support of the complaint, and in urging the Costa Rican Government to accept the CSJMP suggested amendments to pending Labour law proposals in Costa Rica in relation to direct settlements and permanent committees. The CSJMP's International Secretary is Gilbert Bermudez who is also General Secretary of SITRAP and Coordinator of the Latin American Banana Workers Unions, COLSIBA.

GMB is preparing to host a visit to the UK from SITRAP young activist, Johana Thomas Rodriguez in January and February 2010, where she will follow a course in English, spend four weeks at GMB Head Office in Wimbledon, and a week in the GMB Brussels office. During her stay, a demonstration is being planned outside the Roman Catholic Cathedral to protest about the Church's participation in anti-trade union activities, and demand the closure of its Juan XXIII School in San Jose, which is dedicated to assisting companies in the techniques of union busting. GMB is also currently planning a five strong GMB delegation to Costa Rica for the beginning of March 2010, where GMB activists will see conditions on the plantations at first hand and participate in meetings with SITRAP.

EUROBAN

GMB is a longstanding member of the European Banana Action Network (EUROBAN), a body composed of trade unions and NGOs active along the banana supply chain. Meetings take place 3 or 4 times a year and attendees include representatives from COLSIBA and WINFA (Windward Islands Farmers Association). EUROBAN is widely recognised as an effective pressure group and advocate for workers' rights in the banana business and played a crucial role in the establishment of a multi-stakeholder forum for the industry at a meeting convened under the auspices of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in Rome in December 2009. GMB participated in this unprecedented gathering, which brought together trade unions, NGOs, supermarkets and producers in working towards a sustainable banana industry.

Fairtrade

GMB is represented on the board of the Fairtrade Foundation and has a representative on the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO) certification committee which meets quarterly in Bonn. During 2009, GMB has supported FLO on a part time consultancy basis to assist them with the numerous problems they are encountering on Fairtrade plantations, particularly in Latin America. This was done at the behest of our

colleagues in COLSIBA pending the appointment of a full time FLO employee to deal with labour relations in October 2009. In July 2009, GMB was present in Colombia for the signing of a preliminary agreement between FLO, COLSIBA and the IUF. The "Bogotá Declaration", as it came to be known, was supposed to herald a new improved relationship between FLO and the trade unions but, sadly, little progress has been made to date.

Guyana

GMB London Region has historic links with unions representing Guyanese sugar workers as a result of organising in Tate & Lyle. In 1977, GMB members refused to handle imports of sugar from Guyana because the unions there had called a strike and two officers from the Region went over to South America to lend support. More recently, GMB applied for a grant from DFID's civil society challenge fund to assist the National Association of Agricultural Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE) and the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) in training their representatives. The bid was not successful but it will be re-submitted in 2010 and, in the meantime, there is a possibility of obtaining money from another DFID scheme, administered by the TUC, to commence a smaller training programme.

GMB is currently preparing for a meeting with senior officials from GAWU and NAACIE in London scheduled for January 2010. They will be accompanied by Jorge Chullen, the IUF's sugar specialist. GMB is considering support for the founding of a new network of unions representing sugar workers around the globe with the emphasis on the ACP countries who are in receipt of nearly three billion euros from the EU. The money is supposed to benefit all "stakeholders" and it is envisaged that Jorge will liaise with GMB's Brussels office to see whether some of the money can be earmarked for the trade unions.

Colombia

The Union affiliates to Justice for Colombia and Richard Ascough sits on the Executive.

Colombia remains the most dangerous place in the world for trade unionists. Since 1986 nearly 3,000 trade union members have been assassinated. GMB Southern Region jointly funds a campaign together with CWU and Thompsons Solicitors to assist families of political prisoners. Martin Sandoval, a trade unionist and human rights activist, has spent the majority of his life working to end the abuses within Colombia and bring those responsible to justice. In November 2008 as a result of his work, the Colombian regime jailed Martin Sandoval. He was never put on trial, never convicted of any crime, nor told when he might be released.

Shortly after Martin's arrest, British trade unionists, in particular GMB, began campaigning for Martin to be freed. Martin was released from prison in May 2009. Martin visited Britain in November 2009, and Richard Ascough along with others spoke at a meeting to welcome him to the UK. Martin was very clear that his release was a clear example of international solidarity making a difference.

The Union has also been using its influence within the European Parliament to campaign against the conclusion of EU trade agreements with Colombia. GMB wrote to the EU Commission Trade directorate to insist that there was a full formal investigation into abuses of trade union rights and freedoms, human rights, and labour standards in Colombia during the review process of the Generalised System of Preferences plus (GSP+) trade status. We were dismayed when the status was renewed in January 2009 without any serious enquiry. GMB is now working with other trade unions and the ETUC to block the conclusion of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Colombia in relation to the continuing violence against trade unionists and abuse of human and trade union rights and freedoms. The Uribe Government has begun a counter lobbying campaign in the European Parliament where they attempt to mislead the international community by sponsoring unrepresentative "trade unionists" from small organisations like the agro-industrial and livestock sector to promote supposed advances made by the Government in human rights, to promote the early conclusion of the FTA. The exact opposite of the position held by legitimate Colombian trade

unions affiliated to the ITUC. GMB and our trade union colleagues in EU are exposing these devious practices.

Venezuela Solidarity Campaign

GMB affiliates to the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign which changed its name in the course of 2009 from Venezuela Information Centre. Richard Ascough sits on the Executive committee.

During 2009, the campaign organisation has concentrated on defending the Chavez regime in Venezuela, which is under threat from outside pressures. In particular, this centred on the crucial discussion on the US militarization of Latin America and the threat to progress this represents. For this reason the organisation also campaigned on the coup in Honduras, which had displaced the democratically elected President.

Cuba Solidarity Campaign

The Union affiliates to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and Richard Ascough sits on the Executive. Despite the election of Barack Obama in 2008, the US continues to pursue an anti-Cuban line, singling Cuba out as one of the countries described as "state sponsored terrorism". The UK Government continues to play a significant role in influencing European policy, and plays a negative role in relation to Cuba.

The campaign continues to work on behalf of the Miami Five who remain in prison in US with their families still not able to visit them.

Throughout 2009, the campaign has celebrated 50 years of the Cuban Revolution with a number of exhibitions, concerts and seminars, which GMB has supported.

Middle East

Sheila Bearcroft represented the GMB on a visit to the region in November 2009 as part of a British trade union delegation involving a number of the larger TUC affiliated unions co-ordinated by Trade Union Friends of Israel. The programme was intensive, and the delegation met with both Palestinian and Israeli trade union colleagues and visited both areas, holding discussions on key concerns in the region. Sheila reported that the visit gave an invaluable insight into the complexity of the situation in the region, and the challenges facing trade unions there, and that she was grateful to the GMB for the valuable and unforgettable experience.

GMB put an amendment to the motion on Palestine at TUC Congress 2009. GMB withdrew its amendment on the Palestine motion in favour of a General Council Statement on the Middle East, which was carried and takes precedence over the motion.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Introduction:

This has been a year of change and development for the department. John McClean relocated from the National Office in Wimbledon to the new facilities in Baldock, Hertfordshire, with some new ways of working required as a result, primarily in terms of remote management and closer co-ordination of diaries.

The department has a developing workload across a wide range of areas with environmental issues continuing to take up, understandably, greater time and resources. There is a need to ensure that those industrial and political areas that require support continue to receive it which was unfortunately impacted upon by a long term absence during the summer this last year.

Motions from Congress 2009 which required action are dealt with in the body of the text.

Asbestos

2009 has been dominated by the issue of Pleural Plaques, and unfortunately the year ended as it began with the failure to restore compensation for sufferers of the condition. The department had genuine hope that the decision to withhold compensation would be overturned, but this was not to be. There were a number of solid reasons to expect a positive decision.

The passing of the Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions) (Scotland) Act by the Scottish Government gave genuine hope that the UK Government would follow suit. However, the law was immediately challenged by the insurance industry, though this appeal was dismissed in 2010. This has created a position where those workers exposed in Scotland can claim compensation, but those working for the same company, performing the same type of work, in England and Wales are denied the right to claim. This has created an untenable legal position, which will need to be resolved by the Government.

For this reason, GMB and its MP's supported Andrew Dismore's Damages (Asbestos-Related Conditions) Bill, which was submitted as a Private Members' Bill, and would allow for compensation to be restored. The Bill ran out of parliamentary time in December 2009, but it has been resubmitted in both the Houses of Parliament, and GMB will continue to push for the Bill to be enacted into law.

GMB also brought two important new research findings to the attention of the Government, which we hoped would change the complexion of the debate. Firstly, research from America demonstrated that pleural plaques can cause damage to the ribcage, resulting in excruciating pain. This challenges the current belief that plaques are symptom less. Then a report from Japan showed that 1 in 8 workers with Pleural Plaques went on to develop lung cancer. The previous estimate was 1 in 100. This latter figure has been considered established medical fact and was a key part of the reason why the pleural plaques case failed in the House of Lords.

The department raised these reports with the Industrial Injuries Advisory Committee (IIAC), who agreed to consider it as a matter of urgency. We had hoped therefore that the presence of the Prime Minister at GMB Congress might result in a positive announcement on the issue, but Gordon Brown instead committed to a report by Summer Recess at the end of July 2009. To date, no response to the October 2008 consultation exercise has been received.

As a result, GMB again organised a very successful lobby of parliament in October which was addressed by the General Secretary, many MP's and Ministers, and served as a reminder to ministers that we would not let the issue fade away. To publicise the event, the department appeared on the Radio 5 show "Wake up with Money", as well as the Today Programme on Radio 4.

The department was also involved in filming a short video on pleural plaques for TULO (The Trade Union Liaison Organisation) in order to keep up the pressure on the Government. The video was shown at TUC Congress and Labour Party conference, and can be viewed on the TULO website.

The pleural plaques issue will need to be resolved definitively in 2010. We continue to press for a positive resolution, but are also actively considering our next steps should the right to compensation not be restored.

There was better news on the proposal to establish a dedicated National Centre for Research into Asbestos-Related Diseases (NCARD). Such a centre would help to identify both methods of discovering work-related cancers earlier, and develop palliatives and work towards a cure in the long term. This has been favourably received by ministers and has the potential to help reduce conflict on areas of dispute such as Pleural Plaques.

As with many public buildings, schools often contain asbestos. GMB has joined with the other trade unions within the education sector to raise awareness on this and to ensure that management are properly trained and that the presence and condition of the asbestos material is recorded. Some of the difficulties occur as there is often a reluctance to identify just who is responsible for the maintenance of the school infrastructure.

The department also got involved in the "Asbestos: Hidden Killer" campaign run by HSE in which trades people were specifically targeted. The department was also involved in helping HSE develop materials to raise asbestos awareness amongst trades people and in reviewing the initial outcomes from the campaign. This used the wider media, principally radio, and used trade organisations and builders merchants to issue literature to back the campaign up.

The department also had the sad duty of appearing on Radio 4's obituary programme "Last Word" in February, following the untimely death of asbestos campaigner Nancy Tait. Nancy, who launched and was the figurehead of OEDA, the Occupational and Environmental Diseases Association, was a close friend to the department, and her passing will leave a huge hole in the campaign against asbestos use.

Support to Sections

This has been a year of increased activity, as industry seeks to cope with the health and safety implications of the recession. The department continues to be involved with a number of initiatives on behalf of the Commercial Services, Manufacturing and Public Services Sections.

Commercial Services:

The department has seen the development of positive relations in the distribution arm of Asda over the course of the year. We agreed the terms for a national Health and Safety committee, which has met a number of times, and is beginning to develop a workable structure for consultation on health and safety matters. We also worked closely with the National Organising Team and the Communications department on a number of initiatives, primarily a new Accident Book for Asda members to record details of incidents.

In the utilities sector, the department continues to liaise with British Gas on the direction of 'Project Novo', a trial of new management practices with implications for health and safety. We convened several meetings with senior Safety Representatives, and have met with management to discuss concerns. Consequently, we attended to discuss the new way of working with safety reps, and the feedback to date has been very positive. As a result, the department has taken a seat on the Project Novo steering group, and we will maintain an oversight role for the duration of the project.

We also provided training to senior Reps in British Gas on the safety implications of Change Management Programmes, following a deterioration of industrial relations in the company.

Within National Grid, we met with management to negotiate the terms of new policies on Drug and Alcohol abuse, and wider well-being. The management approach in both cases has been at odds with GMB policy and members interests, and discussions are ongoing to attempt to resolve matters to mutual satisfaction.

In the Security Sector, G4S held their first Manned Guarding National Health and Safety Committee in January 2009. The department has provided advice and support on developing formal constitutions, sub-committees and policies. Early developments included a new policy on stress management, and involvement in a working group reviewing how attacks on members are investigated.

We are also working with G4S on the Cash and Valuables in Transit (CVIT) side of the business, on the development of an audit process to obtain ISO 18001 Certification, which covers the management and operation of health and safety systems. We have also been involved with the development of training on attack management, and have negotiated on the creation of a health and safety toolkit for all CVIT branches.

Within Loomis, the department has been involved in negotiations to curb a pilot scheme using lone workers instead of teams to deliver cash. We are now members of a working group to develop agreed terms of reference for a future trial, looking at new working methods, introducing new technology, and addressing ergonomic issues from one-person delivery.

The department has also been heavily involved in the development of the GMB SafeGuard campaign in the static guarding industry. We have been particularly active in developing campaign messages and materials to address the lack of investigation and support to members following attacks. The campaign will be rolled out in early 2010.

Aside from this, the department provided advice and support at a meeting with management, Reps and HSE Inspectors at London City Airport. The meeting sought a way forward on the management of fumes from aircraft at the airport, which are affecting staff working in the terminal building.

Manufacturing Section:

The department helped to negotiate a Drug and Alcohol policy for Hanson Heidelberg. Again, the management approach significantly diverged from GMB policy, and the department worked with the National Officer to rectify matters and publicise the nature of the disagreement. As a result, Hanson has reviewed their Drug and Alcohol policy, and increased the limits within the policy in line with the law on driving and blood alcohol levels. This is a significant victory, and the department thanks Allan Black for his considerable efforts in negotiating with Hanson management to effect this policy reversal.

Within the construction sector, we continued to provide support and advice to assist with recruitment of members in Bouygues, though the planned joint project with Bouygues and Construction Skills on Health and Safety and apprenticeships was put on hold due to the downturn in construction activity.

The department also assisted Keith Hazlewood in preparing GMB's argument to the IMF Congress that defeated a motion proposing relaxation of the international ban on asbestos use.

Public Services:

For Public Services section, the department spoke at a Veolia Waste H&S day, where the issue of proper consultation and worker involvement was emphasised. Veolia have been acquiring a number of companies in the waste and recycling area and as a large company it is important that we establish a good working relationship with them, involving the local reps.

As a part of developing this relationship, the department developed a joint bid with Veolia for HSE funding to operate a worker involvement project. At time of writing, we are still awaiting the outcome of this bid, and are hopeful of a positive result.

The department continues to play a leading role in the HSE WISH (Waste Industry Safety and Health) forum. The department has also met with the HSE and other public sector unions with a view to re-establishing a Local Authority Forum to raise health and safety issues.

There has also been a meeting with the HSE on re-establishing the Local Authority Forum, where health, safety and welfare issues were discussed on a national basis. Again this involved all the public service trade unions, including those in the education sector and at the time of writing we are still waiting a response from HSE. The upcoming year, where local authorities face the prospect of a tight financial squeeze, will need vigilance from our reps to ensure that H&S standards do not slip.

At the tail-end of the year, we were made aware of a significant issue in the ambulance service, concerning the use of Tetra Wave communications equipment. Tetra Wave has been linked to a number of health

issues, though research into the health effects is scarce. As a result, the department has attended several meetings to discuss the nature and scope of the issue. We expect this to rise up the agenda in 2010.

Environment

This has been a year of activity on both the policy and practical levels on environmental matter.

Issues around the environment continue to move up both the political and industrial agendas. The “credit crunch” has forced the Government to look at creating green and sustainable jobs but many trade unions feel that more could be done, particularly at local level. The department continues to represent GMB on TUSDAC – the Trade Union Sustainable Development Action Committee – which continues to inform on Government policy and other trade unions position. In particular, the department played a key role in ensuring that worker involvement was a core part of the Government’s Carbon Reduction Commitment.

The department contributed to a chapter of the Green Alliance booklet, “Working on Change: The Trade Union Movement and climate change”. Our focus was on the opportunity for change in the public sector, particularly spotlighting the value of worker involvement and the critical contribution that Green Reps can make.

The department attended the launch of the NHS Sustainable Development Unit, where the issue of workplace environmental reps was raised. If these are accepted in the NHS this will give some leverage in getting these green reps into other workplaces.

We also responded to an ACAS consultation document on Time Off for Trade Union Duties, highlighting that the reference to environmental representatives in the consultation only acknowledged their voluntary existence and did not appear to offer statutory rights. No response had been received at time of writing.

The department spoke at the Trades Unions Against Climate Change event in London in February. John McClean addressed delegates in an opening speech, and then debated Heathrow expansion with John McDonnell MP in an afternoon workshop.

We sent a delegation to the TUC’s “Green Growth Conference”. TUC President Sheila Bearcroft chaired the event, and contributions were made by National Secretary Gary Smith, who spoke on Green Energy; and CEC Environmental Sub-committee member Jane McCann, who raised a question on renewable energy during the panel debate. The event was very worthwhile, and the lessons learned will be fed into the development of future GMB environmental initiatives.

The department sent a delegation to the Anglo-German Trade Union Forum on ‘green jobs’ held at Frankfurt-am-Oder in Germany. The delegates, Ian Barrett, Jane McCann and Dan Shears, spend two days discussing the merits of environmental jobs, the creation of the green economy in mainland Europe and the differences between German and British practice on green issues. The event included a site visit to an assembler of wind turbines, and provided real food for thought on future ways to develop GMB’s organising agenda on environmental issues.

The department played a leading role in a series of meeting on low-carbon manufacturing and carbon leakage (Motion 147) in the run-up to the Copenhagen global summit in December. The department has been in close contact with civil servants in DECC and BIS to ensure that the issue is raised at the highest levels of Government. We are particularly concerned with the potential for the ceramics and steel industries to be negatively affected, with manufacture at risk of relocating to Northern Africa, and have worked hard to ensure that these sectors are given priority consideration in the formulation of Government environmental policy.

We have ensured that carbon leakage is on the agenda of the Just Transition Forum, on which General Secretary Paul Kenny sits, and the Trade Union Sustainable Development Action Committee (TUSDAC). We will also be writing to the relevant Government Ministers, Lord Mandelson, Ed Milliband and Hilary Benn, urging them to ensure that Government action is well-coordinated and safeguards British interests from carbon leakage.

The Green Working Party continued to meet during the year with a remit of keeping up with environmental developments externally, and seeking improvements internally. At the December CEC it was agreed that the programme for the coming year would include an audit of GMB to see if efficiency savings could be made by measuring energy output and possibly identifying wastage.

Policy Development

The year began with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) consulting on its' future strategy. The department attended the national launch and a number of regional events to ensure that there was a consistent message with particular reference to workers consultation and involvement. The strategy is relatively worker friendly, but is pitched at a very general level, and can be summarized as "motherhood and apple pie". The issue of resources for adequate enforcement remains high on our agenda and we press for proper HSE funding in our response.

The department also regularly attends meeting with other trade union specialist H&S officers under the TUC umbrella, where a cohesive approach to industrial health, safety and welfare problems are discussed and common positions reached.

The department contributed to the GMB response on the DWP Paper –"No-One Gets Left Behind", which is looking at the area of welfare reform. This followed the Dame Carol Black review last year which looked at occupational health provision and the return to work of those with disabilities. Frankly, unless there is proper provision of resources, sufferers from upper limb disorders (often classified as RSI) may well be forced back into the workplace only to injure themselves again.

We also provided evidence to Rita Donaghy's review of fatalities in the Construction sector, and were pleased to see so many of our suggestions included in her final report, "One Death is Too Many". We are hopeful that the Government will act upon the recommendations in the report, particularly on formal legal duties for Directors, and will continue to campaign for this objective.

The department responded to many consultation exercises in 2009. We submitted a response calling for the formal recognition of International Workers' Memorial Day by the Government, and this was achieved in January 2010 – a huge boost for health and safety campaigners across the UK. We supplied evidence to the Sentencing Guidelines Council on proposals for sentencing in Corporate Manslaughter cases, as the initial draft was less hard-hitting than GMB had hoped. We also replied to an HSE consultation proposing a register for all Tower Cranes, though no outcome to this exercise has been announced yet.

The department has also undertaken lobbying of policymakers and Ministers in order to advance motions from Congress. The CEC Environmental Sub-committee has explored in greater detail the skills, knowledge and experience needed for an Environmental Representative to work effectively, and are influencing the Department for Energy and Climate Change in developing a number of tools to help develop the role.

We have also continued to lobby DEFRA, DECC and BIS Ministers on the formal, legal recognition of the Environmental Representative role, with function comparable to those of a Health and Safety Representative (Motion 17).

We have discussed the issue of reportability of stress (Motion 36) with our fellow Union Health and Safety Specialists, many of whom share similar concerns, and have raised the matter with the Health and Safety Executive. The current HSE line is that there are no proposals to alter the RIDDOR regulations, following an aborted review of the Regulations in 2005-7; in addition, HSE does not consider "stress" to be a reportable disease, as it is an umbrella term for numerous conditions, including depression, fatigue and anxiety.

We have contacted Health and Safety Minister, Lord McKenzie, in order to formally raise these concerns and personally lobby the Minister.

We have discussed the application of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations and checkout equipment (Motion 37) with colleagues in USDAW, to look at previous campaigns, and have raised the issue more widely with sister unions to gain broad support for a possible campaign.

In our dealings with HSE, they have stated that cash registers do not fall under the DSE regulations, but should be subjected to ergonomic risk assessment under general health and safety law. We will again be contacting Lord McKenzie to formally object to this approach.

GMB has been heavily involved with the development of the UK approach on the REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) Regulations, and the department has been vocal at a number of stakeholder events in calling for HSE to work with their EU and international counterparts to ensure that all due steps are taken to restrict the use of endocrine disrupting chemicals to the lowest level possible (Motion 148).

The department has been heavily involved with the negotiation of a European Framework Agreement on the control of Sharps (needles) in the workplace. This was achieved in a period of six months, when the norm for developing agreements is several years. The department is very pleased with the scope of the Framework Agreement, which will see employers taking responsibility for the safe management of needlesticks and other sharp implements at work.

The department also represented GMB and the UK at an international meeting in Rotterdam to discuss how to tackle the issue of worker poisonings from fumigated freight containers. The department will be working with the Dutch union FNV and various regulators to develop solutions.

The project to support the dockworkers of Mumbai and Alang, emphasising the health & safety aspects relevant to ship breaking down stream industries has been submitted to the Department for International Development (DFID), and the response to the application from the civil service has been encouraging. Hiten Vaidya from London Region has joined the project team to add specific insight and language skills going forward.

Finally, the department also attended a meeting in Brussels on Third-Party violence to workers. We raised the issue of violence in the static guarding and CVIT sectors, and provided some feedback on the success of multi-agency approaches in Britain in tackling crime and reducing incident numbers. We supplied a detailed response to the European trade unions involved, and participated at a follow-up conference in Brussels in October.

Publications

The department published a number of new and revised guidance leaflets in 2009. These included the new Toxic Shock Syndrome leaflet, revised guidance on work-related stress, and a new version of the Care Homes leaflet.

We also contributed to the development of the GMB unofficial Accident Record Book, which was distributed widely across GMB, and is also available to download from the GMB website.

In addition there has been a regular production of electronic newsletters covering a wide range of topics.

This year they have been:

1. Drug and Alcohol Policies
2. Personal Protective Equipment
3. Swine Flu
4. Workers' Memorial Day
5. Review of Workplace Temperature – Call for Evidence
6. Towards Copenhagen – Trade Union Priorities
7. Pleural Plaques – Where are we now?
8. Sentencing Guidelines on Corporate Manslaughter
9. First Aid in the Workplace - Update
10. Lead – Evidence of Increased Health Risks

These newsletters are now placed on the website for Reps to access. Any ideas for topics are always welcome.

Conclusion

Many GMB representatives and members will be under increasing pressure at work in the coming year to deliver a satisfactory performance with diminishing resources and covering for redundant colleagues. It is important that any gains made in workplace health, safety and welfare standards over the years are not eroded. In particular there may be pressure to extend hours to dangerous levels, use equipment that is not properly maintained or be the victim of bullying and harassment. GMB safety reps are trained in dealing with relevant workplace issues and will continue to play their part with the backing of the department.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

PERSONNEL

The Department comprises Maria Ludkin, Legal and Corporate Affairs Officer, and Barry Smith, Legal Officer. Maria is currently on Maternity Leave. Sarah King, Legal Research and Policy Officer, is currently on secondment to the GMB European Office in Brussels.

GMB @ WORK: THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE LEGAL DEPARTMENT

GMB is a campaigning Union for justice and rights for workers. The Legal Department aims to support the Union's campaigns and in particular the strategy in GMB @ work. The Department is now far more closely involved in co-ordinating and developing strategy to support the Union's industrial and organisational objectives than before.

The Department has been heavily involved in organising and developing the multiple actions regarding equal pay litigation. GMB continues to set the agenda, which other unions have followed. The Department is extensively involved in cutting edge legal cases, which are laying new ground in employment law.

The Department has continued to be more involved in political campaigns, as so much more of our work now has a significant political dimension. This activity continues to expand into areas such as GMB's campaign over private equity, rights for pub licensees, intensive campaigns in relation to staff at ASDA and Marks and Spencers.

The role of the Department has expanded to facilitate the co-ordination of legal, political, media and GMB @ Work campaigns which serve to keep GMB at the forefront of issues which are of importance to our members. This has assisted in increased membership growth and our political strength as a Union.

ACTION ON CONGRESS 2009 MOTIONS

Composite 4 – Employment Tribunal Awards

GMB has lobbied for an increase in tribunal awards generally. Following extensive lobbying by unions generally the amount of a week's pay for the purpose of calculating redundancy, unfair dismissal awards etc was increased from £350 a week to £380 a week in October 2009.

74 – Equal Pay

GMB continues to press the campaign for equal pay to be achieved through the process of collective bargaining as being the only way to achieve equality. GMB continues to work to develop the strategy including putting forward alternative proposals to the current litigation process including: the use of a single judge to oversee the tribunal process, using the Central Arbitration Committee to consider larger multiples, and a practical Code of Practice on equal pay. In the meantime GMB continues to litigate hard on behalf of members.

SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION

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

A significant part of the Department's work continues to relate 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 strategy, and we work closely with GMB solicitors.

We contributed to the CEC Special Report to Congress 2009 on Equal Pay. We work to support the Union's aims and the action plan set out in the Special Report:

- Build on GMB's successful campaign launched at Congress 2005, which has already recovered over a billion pounds in compensation for GMB members
- Campaign for equal pay through collective negotiation and litigation where necessary. GMB supports over 30,000 equal pay claims in the public sector, both at tribunal and appeal level in the higher courts. GMB remains at the forefront of the struggle for equal pay.
- Press for full implementation of Single Status in local authorities with equal pay and compensation, and for equal pay compensation in the NHS
- Demand proper funding for equal pay, for collectivism to be brought back into the process of securing equal pay, and for access to justice including reform of the law and procedures.

The Department has provided legal and strategic advice in respect of campaigns for pub licensees and in relation to employees at Marks and Spencers. Working with the organising teams, GMB has seen significant increases in recruitment within these industries. This has been as a direct result of a combination of legal action, good organising strategy, and the work of the press office.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

We have continued to be heavily involved in developing a legal and political strategy to support the GMB campaign to draw attention to the negative aspects of the unregulated private equity industry. We have

continued to contribute widely to publications and conferences arguing the case for greater regulation, as well as interaction with relevant politicians to bring about changes in the regulatory framework.

We have continued to support the campaign for Trade Union freedom, and the removal of the legal shackles placed on trade unions. We remain committed to the repeal without precondition of Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

We assisted the GMB European Office with the responses to the public consultations on the implementation of the EU Directive on Agency Workers into UK law and the Agency Workers Regulations.

We responded to the public consultations on the following matters:

- The revised ACAS Code of Practice on Time Off For Trade Union Duties and Activities
- The proposed new rules on Blacklisting of Trade Unionists
- The Interim Report of the Civil Litigation Costs Review (the "Jackson Review")

We continue to work with the TUC and other affiliates on a wide range of policy matters.

We have been actively lobbying at national and European level for a review of the "pub tie" which gives the Pubcos the opportunity to unfairly exploit their licensees, driving many publicans out of business. Working with industry organisations we have presented evidence to the relevant sub committees and meet frequently with the government departments to advance the debate on the impact of this restrictive trade practice.

We have also been actively working with other unions to change government policy in relation to compensation for pleural plaques which is an indicator of asbestos exposure and a frequent advance indicator of the onset of mesothelioma. Working closely with our "ladders" branches we have been seeking both a political solution and searching for alternative legal options to get justice for members suffering from asbestosis and related lung disorders.

PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION PROVISION

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

At the time of writing this report, we are updating the GMB "Most Asked Questions" to produce the 14th edition. This consists of a series of one page answers to questions covering a wide range of employment issues including Health and Safety, Contracts, Pay, Maternity Rights, Paternity Rights, Flexible Working etc. The aim is to provide a document which Regions can easily send on or hand to members with common enquiries, and for this document to form part of the GMB @ Work Workplace Organiser's Toolkit. The document 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 present statutory recognition scheme has now been in place for almost ten years. We campaign for improvements to be made the scheme, including the removal of the twenty-one workers threshold.

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, and as a procedure for achieving recognition in the face of employer hostility.

We continue to provide support, advice and assistance to Officers in considering and preparing applications to the Central Arbitration Committee. We provide standing guidance to Officers on the CAC procedures. We provide a regular report on the progress of applications to the GMB Central Executive Council. Barry Smith is available to act as "devil's advocate" on applications and to run briefings on the procedures.

SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION

We continue 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 our work.

We provide standing guidance to Officers on the statutory balloting procedures, and we continue to update our guidance to reflect changes in legislation and case law. We have noticed a hardening of judicial attitudes in recent case law. Barry Smith is available to run briefings for Officers.

We remain committed to Trade Union freedom, and the removal of the legal restrictions placed on unions to call upon members to take industrial action. This includes the repeal without pre-conditions of section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

We also remain concerned about the impact of the European Court of Justice cases of Viking and Laval which pose a major threat to trade unions. We have provided legal advice and strategy in dealing with the challenges that have arisen as a result of this particularly in the area of the engineering construction industry. We are hopeful that recent decisions of the European Court of Human Rights on the Freedom of Association will provide a counter balance to these restrictive decisions.

DISCIPLINARY, DISMISSAL, AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The statutory disciplinary and grievance procedures were repealed in April 2009, and replaced by a revised ACAS Code of Practice and further Guidance. We are monitoring the position closely and would welcome any comments from Regions on their experiences since the repeal of the procedures so that we can reflect these in further submissions to the Government in due course.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT LAW

We continue to provide day-to-day support to Officers on individual employment law matters, though as previously collective issues and policy matters remain our priority.

We have provided support to Officers in respect of collective redundancy consultation and changes to terms and conditions, both of which are of particular concern for the Union in the present economic climate.

TRADE UNION LEGAL SERVICES

We remain committed to playing our part in defending trade union legal services. We continue to lobby to prevent any adverse impact on services arising out of Government initiatives on legal services. We responded to the public consultation on the Interim Report of the Civil Litigation Costs Review – the "Jackson Review". The report was published in February 2010 and contains a number of recommendations which, if implemented, would have a serious adverse impact on the provision of trade union legal services. We will keep Officers advised of developments.

We welcomed the Government Inquiry into the activity of no-win no-fee lawyers. We will keep Officers apprised about developments in this area.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Barry Smith was Secretary to the Congress 2009 Standing Orders Committee (SOC). He is Secretary to the Congress 2010 SOC.

PENSIONS DEPARTMENT

ACTIONS TAKEN ON MOTIONS CARRIED IN CONGRESS 2009

Motions 39 & 40 Final Salary Pension Schemes

Pensions Department continue to support Industrial Officers and members defending defined benefit pension schemes.

Motion 41 Pensions

Pensions Department and Industrial Officers continue to advocate consistent pension provision for each workforce opposing both preferential terms for senior executives and unfavourable provision for new employees.

Motion 42 State Pension Only

Pensions Department continue to lead the trade union participation in the public debate and discussion of state pension reform.

Motions 43 & 44 Re-Establish The Pension Earnings Link

We have maintained pressure on successive DWP Ministers and the Treasury to abide by Labour Party Conference and National Policy Forum policy to restore the indexation of the basic state pension to the higher of inflation or average earnings.

Motion 48 GMB Campaign For Environmental Investments

Training materials are being developed in conjunction with the Health & Environment Department and are due to be rolled out during 2010.

Motion 121 Public Sector Pensions

Pensions Department and Public Services Section continue to work with other unions and interested organisations in campaigning for the best possible occupational pension provision for the public sector.

INDUSTRIAL ISSUES

GMB's Pension Department continues to support national and regional officials with negotiations throughout the union on pension issues that arise in the workplace. As in previous years, the trend has generally been one of worsening occupational pension provision. However, in many cases we have been able to reduce the cuts proposed by employers, ensuring greater security and fairness for members' retirements.

Commercial Services

The Pensions Department has participated in or assisted negotiations in the following companies in 2009: BA, BMI, Centrica, DHL, Magnox, National Grid, Wincanton and ASDA.

In 2009, OFGEM stepped up their plans to pressurise companies in the gas and electricity supply sector to reduce their occupational pension provision. In conjunction with the National Secretary for Commercial Services the Pensions Department mounted a concerted campaign to resist the industry regulator's attacks through the production of three formal consultation responses; participation in three seminars with trustees, company representatives and OFGEM themselves; discussion with the Pensions Regulator over regulatory jurisdiction over pension scheme trustees' actions; a meeting with the DWP Minister for Pension Reform on the conflict between the government's stated occupational pension policy and OFGEM's actions. We have also produced briefing material and a presentation for members on the progress of the campaign.

The Pensions Department also worked with employers in the Security Industry to develop a new benchmark pension scheme for premium security contracts. In an area where pension provision often does not exist this represents a significant step forward for a key group of members.

Manufacturing

Unfortunately pension schemes in the Manufacturing section have been particularly hard hit by the economic climate as more companies have closed their defined benefit pension schemes to future service for existing employees. In conjunction with the relevant National Officers, the Department has put forward alternative proposals to these companies and has, through negotiation achieved less drastic cuts to members' pension provision. This trend however, shows no sign of abating. In many parts of the sector members have been faced with a choice between jobs and future pension provision while in others members have been balloted for industrial action to protect their retirement prospects. The Pensions Department has participated in pension and redundancy negotiations in the following companies in 2009 as well as providing generic guidance to the section's officials: Air Products, Akzo Nobel, Burtons, Crown Paints, Dairy Crest, Lafarge, Nestle, Remploy, RHM, Shipbuilding, Tarmac.

Public Services

The Pension Department continues to devote significant resource to the Local Government Pension Scheme, the occupational pension scheme covering nearly a half of all GMB members. In 2009 we produced 43 documents relating to the scheme including a number of formal consultation responses and material for members. New schemes were launched in Scotland and Northern Ireland following several years of negotiation. As in England and Wales, the new schemes are supported by members and introduce better benefits at fairer cost than had been the case under the old schemes. In all areas of the LGPS the work to ensure the schemes' ongoing sustainability continues with the department attending 26 meetings in 2009 on issues including cost sharing, ill health and scheme governance. In light of the increasingly vitriolic attacks on public sector pensions, the department has been building up GMB's campaign materials to counter the ongoing threat.

The joint GMB-T&G Local Government Pension Conference was held in Eastbourne in November providing a valuable opportunity for 100 delegates to discuss developments over the last year and the campaign to defend good quality public sector pension provision. Speakers at the conference included: Angela Eagle, the Minister for Pension Reform (DWP); Tom Powdrill, the Head of Communications at the Pensions Investment Research Consultancy; and Terry Crossley, Deputy Director of Workforce Pay and Pensions (Department for Communities and Local Government).

In the NHS, we continue to contribute to the Pensions Governance Group and advisory sub-groups which oversee the day to day running of the NHS Pension Scheme in England and Wales. The main focus of these groups in 2009 has been the development of the Pensions Choice Exercise which will see members of the 1995 Section of the NHS Pension Scheme given a chance to join the 2008 Section, which was open to new employees from 1 April 2008.

In the run up to the NHS Pensions Choice Exercise, the department has, in conjunction with the National Officer, written 5 briefings for activists and an article for the GMB magazine and spoken at employers' roadshows on the Pensions Choice Exercise. In addition we have also developed, and are continuing to deliver, ongoing briefing sessions for officers and activists on the NHS Pension Scheme and Pensions Choice Exercise. This is supplemented by the GMB Guide to the NHS Pension Scheme which the department has produced.

In the civil service, 2009 has been dominated by a year long negotiation over changes to the redundancy scheme. The Pensions Department has represented GMB at more than 30 meetings and producing ten briefing documents on the reforms.

In the Higher Education Sector, 2009 was spent raising the GMB's profile in pension provision for the sector, and we represented members in meetings with the two main pension schemes: USS and SAUL, as well as meeting with employers and other unions to discuss a long term review of provision.

In addition, the Pensions Department has participated in or assisted negotiations with other employers in the section: Environment Agency, Legal Services Commission, The Rent Service, Compass, Southern Cross and the Royal British Legion.

Regional

The Pensions Department has also participated in or assisted negotiations at regional level in the following companies in 2009: Dunlop Goodyear, H&R, Groundwork UK, TRW, Fujitsu, AGA Rangemaster, GCHO, Rhodia, Prestolite Electric, Christian Salvesen, Thyssenkrupp, Bayer, CWU, Anglian Water, RCOG, Social Housing Pension Scheme, Emcor, Meggitts, Amcor, Aquascutum, the Building and Civil Engineering Industry, Cleveland Bridge, BHS, Harrison and Harrison, Interfloor, Brooks Belfast, Morgan Est, HJ Berry, NILGOSC, LGPS (Scotland), NHS (Scotland) Pension Scheme, HPSS (NI Health Service), Thwaites Brewery, Marley, Eternit, Salton, PPG, North British Distillery, Amey, Basford, Moonweave, Chivas Brothers, the AA, Babcock, Melton Medes, Ineos, May Gurney, Travis Perkins, P&O, Herman Miller, Carlsberg Tetley, BSW, Welsh RFU, Veolia, Tate & Lyle and IKO Holdings.

Many of these changes reflected closures of defined benefit schemes, but some employers have bucked the trend and retained such schemes, albeit in a less generous form. Common detrimental changes include increasing member contributions, reducing accrual rates and changing definitions of pensionable salary and how this increases.

POLICY

In addition to the work outlined above on progressing specific GMB Congress motions, the department has been heavily involved with the DWP and The Pension Regulator on a number of issues:

- Pensions Department has had regular meetings with successive Pensions Ministers at the DWP during 2009 and has used these opportunities to progress GMB pensions policy and address other issues that have arisen during the year.
- GMB has led the discussions with government and other stakeholders developing employer compliance safeguards in the context of the new Personal Accounts framework (NEST) that is to be introduced in 2012. This has involved a series of meetings with the Personal Accounts Delivery Authority, DWP and the Pension Regulator as well as working with pension lawyers and scheme practitioners on the detail of implementation legislation.
- We have continued working with The Pension Regulator on improving the communication and governance practices of defined contribution schemes.
- We have been working closely with DWP, the TUC and Unite on improving the anti-avoidance rules applicable to employers trying to avoid pension obligations through manipulation of insolvency rules and associated legislation.
- Pensions Department has continued to work with the DWP and BIS on the reform of age discrimination legislation in particular the removal of the default retirement age.
- GMB led the debate on pensions at TUC Congress this year and have followed that up with meetings with TUC and government to address the issues raised in the GMB motion.
- We successfully persuaded the Pensions Regulator to issue guidance for scheme trustees discouraging them from supporting employers' efforts to offer inducements for workers to give up their pension rights.

The department works directly with government and the pensions industry on policy issues. In 2009 we had regular meetings with the Secretaries of State and Pensions Ministers at the DWP and also with senior civil

servants in The Pensions Regulator, Pension Protection Fund, Financial Assistance Scheme, Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), Department of Health and Cabinet Office totalling 63 meetings. In addition, the department formally responded to more than a dozen government consultations in 2009 (copies of all these responses were published on the GMB website).

CASEWORK

We continue to receive a large number of requests for advice from national and regional officers, with nearly 350 new requests (not including ongoing cases) being received in 2009. Roughly 40% of requests are related to industrial matters and these are highlighted in the Industrial Issues Section of the Department's report. More than 200 new requests however related to advice on individual requests, such as queries and disputes. The Department aims to advise on such requests within two weeks of receipt, and the average turnaround time for replying in 2009 was just over 3 days. More complex cases can take considerably longer to advise on however.

In all cases, the Department acts in support of full time 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. The Department will keep regional officers advised on case progress at all times. Some members do contact the Department directly and in such instances we deal with these members fairly, but do advise them that their first point of contact should be their regional officer.

We deal 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 can be exceptionally 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. In particular we have noticed a marked increase in the length of time it is taking the Pensions Ombudsman's office to investigate and make determinations on pension disputes. However the Ombudsman's office remains the main arbitration point for pension disputes and we have had to exercise and encourage patience when faced with lengthy delays.

In the more complex cases, the Department will recommend that regions or industrial sections will benefit from legal advice and we have good working relationships with solicitors who specialise in pension matters.

COMMUNICATIONS

As in previous years the pensions department has continued to develop pensions understanding and the profile of GMB through numerous press releases, member bulletins, Pension Q&As, trustee updates and magazine articles as well as targeted briefings for example to Councillors and MPs. We also participate in the wider pensions debate through speeches and participation in conferences and seminars on a range of pension related topics.

Reflecting motion 121 from Congress 2009 and the growing pressure on public sector pensions from Opposition parties, the press and pensions industry, the departments has produced a range of material for members' use in countering the most common attacks. Latterly this material has also been taken up by the other local government unions.

Many of the issues listed in the Industrial Issues section of this report have resulted in member communications being developed by the department. On top of these, we continue to provide bulletins on themes that are common across the union. In 2009, bulletins were written on Redundancy and Pensions, Salary Sacrifice and Pension Contributions, TUPE and Pensions, Inducements to Give Up Pension Rights and Actuarial Valuations.

The majority of our communications are posted on the GMB Pensions Webpage (www.gmb.org.uk/pensions). The website also contains the campaign materials the department produces to defend public sector pensions.

In recent years GMB has been developing a trustee based website in conjunction with Unison under the umbrella of their Capital Stewards project. Unfortunately, there appeared to be little appetite for use of this facility, and so we have reverted back to e-mailed and posted communications aimed at trustees, activists and officers. GMB's first Pensions News was published in December 2009 and aims to give a quick update on developments within the pensions industry and an overview of the industrial issues being faced. Members can sign up to receive this by e-mailing pensionsdeptwi@gmb.org.uk.

CO-OPERATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

GMB Pensions Department continues to work with other organisations where appropriate to promote GMB's pension agenda. This year we represented GMB at a number of public and industry events held by: CBI, Conservative Party, Department for Work and Pensions, NAPO, OFGEM, Personal Accounts Delivery Authority, The Pensions Advisory Service, The Pensions Regulator, Pensions Management Institute, TUC and Unison.

We also hold seats on a number of committees on behalf of GMB (or TUC), these include: The Pensions Regulator Advisory Panel, LGPS Policy Review Group, LGPS III Health Monitoring Group, TUC Capital Stewardship Steering Committee, NHS Technical Advisory Group, NHS Governance Group, CCSU Pension Reform Group, Deregulation Review Body and FAS Stakeholders' Committee.

TRAINING

The SMT agreed in mid 2009 that all GMB Officers would be required to attend a training session on pensions aimed at ensuring all officers have a consistent basic pensions understanding and be aware of the role pension issues can place in organising activities. By the end of 2009 one third of GMB Officers had attended a one day course with further sessions scheduled for 2010.

The re-focus of training upon delivery to full time officers means that at present there is no GMB provision for member training on pensions. The Department has however worked with the TUC Education Department to analyse their Pension Champions course. We have tailored this course to meet GMB's needs and are currently recommending it to Regions who have members interested in receiving training on pensions.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

The Political Department has had a very productive year and has supported numerous campaigns, meetings, along with the European Elections. We have also enhanced GMB's profile at all levels of the political process. We have ensured that GMB's policies have been heard throughout Westminster.

1. ACTIONS TAKEN ON MOTIONS CARRIED IN CONGRESS 2009

Motion 58: GMB has raised this issue throughout Westminster, through discussions with MPs and Ministers. It has also been raised in the Labour Party manifesto discussions.

Motion 64: GMB has continued to raise the issue of agency rights and numerous meetings have been held with other trade unions, MPs and the TUC.

Motion 65, 66 & 67: GMB has continued supported the campaign to increase redundancy pay and capitalise on the increase we secured in the Budget 2009.

Composite 6 & 7: This issue has been raised across Government with Ministers, GMB is involved in a number of manufacturing lobby groups where the points made in these composites have been raised. We have gone further and working with a number of leading manufacturers set up a new Manufacturing Group.

Motion 98: Discussions have taken place with BIS Ministers where we have argued against outsourcing. Lately the mantra of the free market is being replaced with a more protectionist approach.

Composite 9: This motion has been at the forefront of many discussions between GMB, other unions and the Government.

Motion 106: In all our work in relation to public services we have actioned and supported the sentiments of this motion.

Composite 11: GMB has supported the Government's fight to stop the recession worsening. GMB is also involved through the Department of BIS in the Regional Economic Forum.

Motion 130: The sentiments of this motion have shaped discussions with Government and Ministers.

Motion 131: GMB lobbied on this issue and has achieved part of this motion. A commitment for a 50% tax on all finance companies paying bonuses was announced in the Pre Budget Report 2009.

Composite 12 and 13: Correspondence has taken place with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the practice of short selling shares, as well as on the issue of controlling and limiting the bonuses paid to city fat cats.

Composite 14: GMB has campaigned alongside Defend Council Housing to ensure that the issues in the composite are raised. GMB has written specifically to the Housing Minister John Healy on matters raised in the composite.

Motion 139: We continues to campaign for the restructuring of the financial system. Some progress has been made, for instance with the taxation of bank bonuses at 50%, and the G20 agreement on sanctions on tax havens.

Motion 141: GMB have campaigned alongside Defend Council Housing for the government to support a council house building programme. GMB is also working closely with the Government on the expansion of investment on new affordable housing.

Composite 15: The Treasury have been approached on this subject, people whose income falls, because of shorter working hours, cuts in pay, or unemployment, can often benefit from additional support.

Motion 146: This was raised in Labour Party Policy discussions with Ed Milliband, who is pulling together the manifesto.

Composite 16: GMB pressed this point at Labour Party Conference 2009, after much discussion and debate a vote was taken and the sentiments of this motion were carried.

Motion 151: The General Secretary and TULO raised a number of policies in line with this motion. Discussions are ongoing.

Composite 17: GMB pushed this position and it was passed at Labour Party Conference 2009.

Motion 156: GMB nationally and regionally have been reminded of this motion and what is said within Rule 2 Clause 8 of the rule book.

Motion 157: GMB has considered the sentiment of this motion when discussing where resources should be directed in the run up to the next General Election.

Motion 162: GMB stated clearly its abhorrence at some MP'S behaviour in claiming expenses and in particular on the issue of MP'S 'flipping' homes. Press work was also done on this motion.

Motion 171: The Political Department has continued to pursue this campaign within Government and has also organised meetings with specialist lawyers. Meetings have also taken place with the Jack Straw and the Prime Minister.

Motion 175: A letter has been written to the relevant Minister responsible, asking him to reinstate the ELQ funding.

Motion 176: Social/political education already exists in key stages 1-4 which is known as Citizenship.

Composite 18: GMB continues to fully support the CWU's campaign to keep the post office in public hands and to prevent any part of the organisation from being privatised.

Motion 179: GMB has contributed articles to the Morning star including during the TUC and Labour Party conferences.

Composite 19 & Motion 185, 191 & 192: We have continued to campaign on this up to and including sponsorship in support of the House of Commons council housing group and Defend Council Housing. Supporting a lobby and campaign for the need to provide investment for more public housing.

Motion 189: GMB have supported and campaigned for the Government's fiscal stimulus during the recession.

Motion 193: Letters have been written to relevant Ministers in England and Wales asking them to launch a review of the current council tax system.

Motion 194: There has been correspondence with the Minister of State at the Department of Health asking him about the status of older NHS building and the Department's future new building and refurbishment plans.

Motion 195: A letter has been written to the Minister of State at the Department of Health asking him about the availability of personal budgets and the rationale behind it.

Composite 21: The General Secretary has been involved in discussion with the Secretary of State on the issue of care; arguing to stop the current practice where many are required to sell their homes to fund the cost of their care.

Motion 213: We have been in correspondence with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ask him to review the VAT rate on fuel.

Motion 214: A letter has been written to the relevant Minister at the DWP to urge him to consider the issue of severe weather payments and the seven day rule leading to entitlement.

Motion 216: This issue was raised with the Labour Party in formal discussions on the manifesto. We are still awaiting feedback.

Motion 219: A letter has been written to the Minister to request that they review the age requirement for free television licences.

Motion 220, 222 & 224: The General Secretary and GMB delegation raised a number of the issues raised in these motions at TUC Congress. Through discussions in the Labour Party policy process we have also raised concerns.

Motion 226: GMB is continuing to support War on Want's campaigns including their campaign to push all banks to publish the full details of their loans and other services to the arms trade.

Emergency Motion 4: The Labour Party set up a panel to deal with this issue and GMB were involved and supported its implementation.

Emergency Motion 6: GMB supports the public inquiry which was launched in late 2009 and is being televised on the internet.

Emergency Motion 7: GMB has campaigned against the far right and GMB in regions across the length and breadth of Britain.

2. WESTMINSTER OFFICE

The House of Commons office in Portcullis House has supported various receptions, lobbies and meetings. Two receptions were held in the House of Commons. A reception was held for members of the CEC in March 2009 and a reception was arranged in conjunction with Centrica to promote Green Collar Britain in July 2009. Two lobbies have also been held in Westminster: a pleural plaques lobby and an energy sector lobby focusing on Ofgem's attacks on pension schemes. A large number of meetings have also been organised in the House of Commons with MPs where GMB representations have been made. For example, meetings have been held for members of the Professional Drivers Branch and to discuss issues such as statutory redundancy pay and Southern Cross.

3. LABOUR PARTY

Debbie Coulter has been replaced as GMB NEC representative by Andy Worth, Regional Secretary for GMB Midlands & East Coast Region in September 2009. Mary Turner continues as the other NEC representative.

GMB's NEC representatives have continued to play a significant role in holding the Labour Party and the Prime Minister to account. Various issues have been raised during 2009 and these include: temporary and agency workers, asbestosis and free healthy school meals.

We have continued to take a central role in policy discussions. Towards the end of the 2009, the Political Department began dialogue with the other trade unions about priorities for the next General Election's manifesto and selection of candidates.

4. LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

GMB made a significant contribution to the Labour Party Conference in September 2009. The GMB motion on Free School Meals was passed by Conference and has now gone into the National Policy Forum process. There were 6 GMB speakers, including the General Secretary moving a motion on Sri Lanka .

5. PARLIAMENTARY PANEL

There have been 13 rounds of interviews for the Parliamentary Panel. 53 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 Bedworth
- Wimbledon
- Bristol North West
- Brentwood and Ongar
- Kensington and Chelsea
- Guildford
- Kettering
- Sunderland Central
- Rochdale
- Wansbeck
- Rutherglen and Hamilton
- Wolverhampton

In addition, three panel candidates stood in the European Elections 2009.

6. GOVERNMENT

During 2009, a number of regular meetings have been arranged with Government Ministers and Departments. There has been a mix of meetings with Ministers and the General Secretary to National Officers, Regional Officers, Branch Officers and members.

Gordon Brown	Prime Minister
Harriet Harman	Leader of the House of Commons and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party
Peter Mandelson	Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills
David Miliband	Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs
Jack Straw	Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor
John Denham	Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Ed Balls	Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families
Ed Miliband	Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change
Jim Murphy	Secretary of State for Scotland
Yvette Cooper	Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
Liam Byrne	Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Peter Hain	Secretary of State for Wales
Nick Brown	Chief Whip
Jim Knight	Minster for Employment
Pat McFadden	Minister of State, Department of Business, Innovation and Skills
Sadiq Khan	Minister of State, Department of Transport

7. EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

The Political Department worked closely with the European Office to assist in the European Elections throughout the country in 2009. The Political and European pages on the GMB website were extensively used to highlight the profile of GMB candidates.

Various campaigning methods were used. 250,000 automated telephone calls were made to members in key regions. The message was recorded by the General Secretary to encourage members to vote to protect workers rights and stop the BNP. Text messages were also sent to 13,000 members in Midland & East Coast Region and 8,000 members in Northern Region to push members to vote.

In addition, GMB produced 250,000 leaflets for distribution and a letter went to all post holders. Finally, two direct mail letters to GMB members living in target regions were also sent.

8. REGIONAL POLITICAL OFFICERS

There have been numerous meetings throughout the year with the Regional Political Officers to exchange information and to coordinate political work. This has allowed the continued sharing of best practice and an opportunity to highlight regional experiences.

The Regional Political Officers are:

Paul Maloney	Southern
Vince Maple / Gary Doolan	London
Pamela Drake	South Western
Martin Hird	Birmingham & West Midlands
Les Dobbs	Midland & East Coast
Steve Jennings	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire
Colin Priest	North West & Irish
Julie Elliot	Northern
Richard Leonard	Scotland

9. POLITICAL EDUCATION

The Political Department has continued organising Westminster events so organisers and members can hear presentations from MPs and political advisers.

However, a more extensive political education programme is now planned. A one day course has been designed for new activists with the aim of highlighting the importance of the political wing of the GMB and encouraging new members to get involved. There will be two trial days in January 2010.

10. CAMPAIGNING/LOBBYING

Pleural Plaques

The Political Department has continued the campaign to overturn the Law Lords decision and lobby strongly for the reinstatement of compensation for those suffering with Pleural Plaques.

We organised a second successful lobby of Parliament on 28 October where over 150 people and over thirty MP's were in attendance along with the support of other trade unions.

The Department has also supported EDM's on Pleural Plaques and have held meetings with both MP's and Ministers as well as supporting debates on Pleural Plaques in Westminster Hall.

GMB MP Andrew Dismore's bill (Asbestos - Related Conditions Bill) received its second reading and has gone through to the Lords. GMB campaigned for the support of MP's for this bill.

Agency Workers

The Department has been at the forefront along with other trade unions in the campaign to extend the rights of people employed in agency work.

In September the TUC congress in Liverpool adopted a GMB motion specifically requesting that the implementation of the regulations should be adopted by Spring 2010.

Numerous meetings have been held with MP's, TUC and other trade unions.

The Department has worked closely with the European office and continues to do so in particular to the current government consultation on Agency Workers.

The Department supported and lobbied MP's for them to sign the EDM submitted by Andrew Millar which called for legislation to come into force before the end of the current Parliament.

Statutory Redundancy

The Political Department has worked closely with the other trade unions to campaign to increase the statutory redundancy payment. Both an Early Day Motion and a Private Members Bill were used to lobby the Government to increase the amount payable to those members made redundant. This was led by Lindsey Hoyle MP and supported by many GMB MPs. The payment was finally increased by the Budget 2009 to £380.

National Organising Team

The Political Department has supported the National Organising Team's key campaign on Southern Cross as well as assisting on casinos. In both cases, the Department supported lead Regional Officers meetings with Councillors and where appropriate MPs. For example, a meeting was held in Solihull between local Organisers and Councillors to discuss the potential casino expansion there. In addition, meetings are being held with MPs and Officers to discuss Southern Cross.

CEC Political Project

The main political project to drive up GMB involvement in the heart of Constituency Labour Parties is continuing to expand. Luton North was used as pilot during 2009. GMB members living in the constituency received a survey; a number of letters from both the General Secretary and local Organisers, and an event was also arranged.

In addition a number of other constituencies have also been targeted. The GMB members living in Great Grimbsy, Middlesborough, Halesowen, Cardiff South & Penarth, Rutherglen & Hamilton West, Mansfield, Derby South, Lewisham Deptford and Newport West have also received a survey. The Political Department is now trying to work with Branch Secretaries and Regional Officers to develop more GMB activism in these keys seats. Political events and meetings are currently being planned in Great Grimbsy, Middlesborough, Cardiff South & Penarth, Halesowen and Rutherglen & Hamilton West. Finally, through conversations with GMB Branch Secretaries in Rutherglen and Hamilton West two new delegates have now been generated for this Constituency Labour Party.

Free School Meals

The campaign to boost healthy free school meals was given a much needed boost by the Labour Party Conference Contemporary Issue submitted to Conference in 2009. Along with the Public Services Section we are working closely with Unison and a number of MPs to develop an interim report on the two trials currently being undertaken in Newham and Durham.

Anti BNP

Throughout the year the Political Department assisted GMB regions in campaigning against the British National Party and the far right in conjunction with Searchlight.

Before and during the 2009 European Election the department contributed to GMB regional campaign meetings.

The Department also worked closely with the European Office to ensure that on leaflets sent to GMB members the message of voting against the BNP at the European Elections was loud and clear.

The Department continues to work closely with Searchlight / Hope Not Hate on both a regional and national basis.

Councillors Network

The Political Department has worked throughout the year to start to identify GMB Labour councillors. Due to this we now have on GMB database with over 200 GMB Labour Councillors.

On a quarterly basis the Department has sent mail shots out to Councillors on issues such as pensions, public services and equality and we are working to engage better with our councillors in Town Halls across the length and breadth of Britain.

Gangmasters Licensing Authority

GMB continues to sit on board of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA). The GLA is a government agency set up to protect workers from exploitation in Agriculture, Horticulture, Shellfish gathering and processing and packaging.

GMB seeks to ensure that people employed in the industry are both represented and that Gangmasters comply fully with employment law and Health and Safety Procedures. Where there is abuse of these laws and procedures GMB works with the GLA to make sure that Gangmasters are held fully to account. GMB also attends GLA workers representatives meetings.

APPOINTMENT AND ELECTION OF OFFICIALS

1 JANUARY 2009 – 31 DECEMBER 2009

APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL SECRETARY

London Region - Paul Hayes

APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR ORGANISERS

London Region
- Shaun Graham
- Warren Kenny
- Dave Powell

ELECTION OF ORGANISERS

Birmingham & West Midlands Region
- Colin Griffiths
- Lisa Howard
- Mo Khalik
- Sharon Wilde

North West & Irish Region
- Karen Atkinson
- Eddie Gaudie
- Dave Hulse
- Michael Mulholland

APPOINTMENT OF ORGANISING OFFICERS

Birmingham & West Midlands Region	- Karen Leonard
Midland & East Coast Region	- Michael Ackroyd
	- Paul Carroll
North West & Irish Region	- Sue Lee
	- Jim McDermott
Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region	- Tristan Chard

TUC CONGRESS AWARDS 2009

As agreed by the CEC its Finance & General Purposes Committee selected recipients of Congress 2009 Regional Outstanding Achievement Awards to go forward for TUC Congress Awards.

The Northern Region NPower Branch, the recipients of the Northern Region Outstanding Achievement Award 2009, was nominated for the TUC Organising Award 2009. The nomination was successful, and Michael Hunt, the Branch Secretary attended TUC Congress 2009 in Liverpool to collect the award.

Sharon Pickstock, the recipient of the South Western Region Outstanding Achievement Award 2009, was nominated for the TUC Women's Gold Badge 2009.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY (Bro. Paul Kenny): Thank you, President. Congress, I am not going to take the liberties with Standing Orders, but we are rolling up the General Secretary's Report from yesterday, the Accounts, the Finance Report and the two resolutions. So if I appear to be taking a bit longer than normal, it is because we are putting a whole lot together, at least that is my story.

President, I would like to move, as I said, the General Secretary's Report, the Annual Accounts, the CEC Finance Report: Stability & Accountability, and ask you to accept the rule changes contained in the Report. I will speak and reply to Motions 17 and 22.

First, let me say how great it has been so far this week to listen to all the first-time speakers who have come to Congress. (*Applause*) Doesn't it just tell you about the changes that we are seeing! Congress was almost on its knees, which I think was quite a deliberate policy some years ago, and now you see how enthused it is with all the new speakers. Next year, hopefully, they will all back with lots more of them.

In relation to the General Secretary's Report, I want to commend the work of the Pensions, Health & Safety, Legal, Political, Equalities and Finance Departments, my own General Secretary's Office, the NAU, the Organising Department and the Press & Media Department. I think they have done a fantastic job for us during the year and I commend their work? (*Applause*)

If I can touch on, briefly, the General Election, and I do not think it would be possible for me to make a speech now to our first Congress after the election without saying something. The new politics of Clegg and Cameron are not new at all -- cutting public

services, pushing up unemployment, cutting benefits for working families, the sick and the disabled – and what about the complete rubbish talked about by that Iain Duncan Smith, about finding jobs for half-a-million people who are currently on Incapacity Benefit. We really know what that means!

We have three million registered unemployed already in this country, and probably another three million who are on Incapacity Benefit. Many are victims of the old industrial disease areas left as a legacy by the old heavy industries. Do you know how we are going to get these half-a-million back into these great jobs and get the unemployed back to work? We have a quarter-of-a-million registered vacancies. I know that I didn't go to the greatest school in the world, but if you start telling people not that you are going to cut their benefits but that you are going to give them decent jobs, when there are not enough jobs to even reach a fifth or an eighth or a tenth of those currently seeking work, it's a con trick, it's a lie and it's the first line in the attack on those in our society who need help most. (*Applause*) I know that Duncan Smith is a pretty oblique character – I am probably giving him more headlines than he has had in many a year – but you will remember that he described himself once as “the quiet man”. Well, I wish someone would take him down to the Blue Cross and give him a shot in the paw! I really do. (*Applause*) Put him to sleep, somebody. Just shut up and start talking the realities of the new politics.

And they are new politics. The new politics are cutting school meals. This Union fought hard to get free school meals back on the agenda for the most under privileged kids. One of the first vicious acts of the Tories was to announce that those half-a-million new school meal places will be cut. They are re-introducing prescription charges for the long-term sick; cutting social housing projects that we fought hard to get on the agenda; creating unemployment, which is what those cuts in public sector spending is going to do! New politics! New politics my arse! (*Applause*)

We are a union. We don't cry. We don't put bags over our heads. We get on with the job. I want to touch on a few things that have gone on in the Union during the year. I want to talk about the Lindsay Oil Refinery dispute, which is a very important milestone dispute. You saw all of the best and worst elements potentially coming together there, but the one shining light that came through from our stewards and members, who I am proud to say were at the heart of that dispute, wasn't about British jobs for British workers, but it was about stopping exploitation of all workers. For that they deserve our praise. (*Applause*) The BNP showed up and they were shown the door. I pay tribute to the work of Phil Whitehurst, who was one of our senior stewards at Lindsay – I don't if Phil is in the hall. You are – so well-done mate, congratulations. You did a great job. (*Applause*) Also I congratulate Phil Davis. They did a fantastic job in difficult circumstances. Out of that struggle came organisation. We had years of self-delusion that that was an industry in which we were well organised, that *GMB@Work* didn't really apply to us. But when we came to the push, we discovered that we had been kidding ourselves again.

Now we have created a National Register of Skills so that we can start to organise on the level that in fact the shop stewards themselves had been organising on an unofficial basis, because effectively we had not done the job that we should have done. I know that's true and so does Phil, but we are getting there.

When Derek Simpson came up to me – when we went for a ballot, of course, people have to go through their membership records – and said that he thought that we had stolen thousands of their members, I said to him, “Derek, the truth is that you never had them.” That was the truth about it. That forces people to examine the situation.

We had new tactics. I remember when that dispute was going on. In fact, we saw Lord Mandelson – I nearly said something else – in the House of Lords standing up and defending the employers. He didn't ask us what the facts were or what the truth was, why thousands of workers were actually out on the cobbles. He defended the employers. He used this phrase. He said that the dispute was about the ‘Tot-al’ Oil Refinery. I don't know about you, but I didn't even know they were called “Tot-al”. When I went past the garage it just looked like it was “Total” to me. But they were “Tot-al”. *(Laughter)* When I addressed the workers, I said that as far as I was concerned they were a bunch of “Tot-al wankers!” *(Laughter and applause)*

You know you're getting there when we had a rally after the company had dismissed our members. They sacked them for refusing to accept the cuts in terms and conditions. I went down to Lindsay and addressed the workforce. Although it was an unofficial action and we were under restraint, the moment they sacked them I was able to make the dispute official because they didn't work for them any more. So I made it official and I immediately put £100,000 up for a hardship fund so that our members wouldn't be starved back to work. When I came off the stage, this young lad from the SWP – sorry about this, Henry – said to me, “You've just made this dispute official”, and I said, “Yes, I have.” He said, “But you can't do that. It's illegal.” What I am telling is that when we get ahead of the SWP, we are making progress. You know that then, don't you? *(Applause)*

Look at our British Gas shop stewards and the work of Gary Smith and the senior stewards and the fantastic exercise in organisation. Again, it was made clear that our members are not to be bullied. We will negotiate. We will be consulted with, but we will not be talked down to, we won't be trampled on and we certainly won't be belittled or have our terms and conditions taken over by people who earn a lot more than £150K, and I'll come back to that crack in a minute. *(Laughter)*

Fantastic new tactics were used. What made me smile was that we announced our ballot result and everybody in the management of British Gas thought that our action was going to coincide effectively with the anniversary of the founding of this Union, because it would have some impact, wouldn't it? The 31st March was the foundation of the Gas Workers' Union. So they rushed out and took on thousands and thousands of contractors in order to cover the work of our members. Well, I haven't got a handle on my back. I'm not that much of a mug. Basically, they paid all the contractors, our members went

to work and they ended up with a bill and having to settle with the shop stewards. Now, the stewards were tactically acute enough and aware to carry the members with them. I pay total tribute to them.

Around the Union, it has been not a bad year. I spoke from a Congress platform a little while ago – I think it was two years ago – about the battle that the London Region was having with a company called Bakkavor.. I said that the London Region and the GMB would win and that the Bakkavor chief executive would lose. On the morning of the last day of our conference he fell. He had to go. That company signed an agreement with the London Region and we now have 1,500 members on that site. I want to pay tribute to the work of Salish, who is in this hall. *(Applause)* Great work was done by Salish on organising and Hitten as well. Great work has also been done by our London Region stewards in Barking and Dagenham in the branches. I can see Penny in the hall. They did fantastic work in smashing the BNP. Whatever else we do in our life, we can always be proud of what you did there. It was a fantastic achievement. *(Applause)*

Paul Hayes, our new Regional Secretary in the London Region, has done great work. He has led from the front. He took a hundred plus activists, people who had never been involved in political activity, around different constituencies. Yes, there are Tories who are not MPs in the House of Commons propping up this Coalition because of the work that they did. They made a difference in a number of seats.

When I look around, I see so many people who I have worked with. The other day I met Keith Anderson from Hounslow. I see him right at the back. Keith said how proud he was of everything that had happened, that actually all the work we did on the ground meant that Hounslow Council went back to Labour. That meant an awful lot to Keith who had worked all of his life battling against administrations that, effectively, had done nothing but cut their terms and conditions. That was a proud moment for us, and it was a proud moment for you, Keith. Well done, mate. *(Applause)*

Going to the Northern Region, I want to talk about the battle to save Corus jobs. They didn't whinge about it. They have just been getting on with it, battling and fighting to save those jobs. The transformation of the Region is absolutely clear, from me on the outside, anyway. Five years ago, or nearly six years ago, it was a region in decline. I know it and the people in the region know it. Today it is growing and it is economically vibrant. It is a beacon of GMB values. I want to pay tribute to the region. I want to pay tribute to the region because of the work that they had to do and the cross – “cross” is the appropriate word – that they had to bear in terms of the equal pay legislation and the attacks on our Union from carpet bagging lawyers and the way that the Northern Region responded to that. It was a fantastic job. You led the vanguard. It was your actions and your support that, effectively, ensured that this Union was protected, ultimately, from those carpet baggers. You did a great job. Well done. *(Applause)*

I want, particularly, to thank Colin Smith and Maxine Bartholomew, because in the early days, in the difficult cases, there were many people who were running around thinking that they could see the end of the tunnel. Colin never wavered. I was at many meetings

with him, with lawyers, where he eventually managed to convince lawyers that they should take a cut in their fees. Now, any man who can do that gets my vote, I'll tell you. Well done, Colin. *(Applause)*

Now, the South West Region. I normally go to the South West Region and to the Welsh TUC, and I love it. I couldn't go there this year because the dates were changed. I can't remember. It just didn't work for us, and I really miss that because to spend a couple of days with the delegates, the stewards and the branch secretaries from Wales is just an enthralling experience. They know that I really enjoy it. I am very relaxed. I even put my hand in my pocket and buy a drink on occasions. I do it a bit more often than Harry Donaldson, anyway, but there you go. *(Laughter)* Look at Sheila Bearcroft and her time as President of the TUC. She was a real advert for the GMB in action. I want to remind you of the work done by Allan Garley and John Phillips, for their work particularly in the construction disputes at Pembroke and so on. They gave total support to the initiative and total support to me. I will let you into a little secret. They weren't always sure that I was 100 per cent right, but they were always 100 per cent there for us. Thank you very much, Allan. *(Applause)*

Southern Region. If you want an absolute shining example of what you can do in turning people's lives round, look at the projects in Brighton that the region has pioneered, which have been absolutely fantastic. They deserve national recognition. I think it has been a fantastic, fantastic project. I have been there a few times with Richard meeting the stewards. In fact, we were there a few months ago and the branch invited Vera Lynn to come and do the awards. She is 90. I have to say she looked a lot younger than Richard Ascough. She was fantastic. If we are at Brighton next year, and maybe with the good offices of the Region, we might even be able to get Vera Lynn to come along and speak to Congress and maybe sing us a song! That would certainly be something, but she was very supportive. *(Applause)*

The Organising Team efforts in Southern Region by Mark Wilkinson and the team have been brilliant. Their performance has been brilliant. It shines out. There have been spectacularly good results from Mark and the team.

The Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. I travelled to the Yorkshire Region on a Saturday when lots of people are thinking, "Saturday afternoon is my time, isn't it?" On my visit on that Saturday there were 100 plus, 130 – 140 activists at a conference called by Tim Roache about *GMB@Work*. They were enthused and active. You can already see and feel the change. You can feel the enthusiasm. Tim would want me, and I know he does, to acknowledge the fantastic work done by Neil Derrick in the team. Neil, it has been a tremendous year for you both individually and for the Region.

I come now to GMB Scotland. You see I am doing the rounds. I am going to get round to all of you. GMB Scotland to me, for the last number of years, has been a bit of sleeping giant. It really has. Now it has a completely different feel. I think the delegates feel it. I feel it when I visit. I see the enthusiasm and the passion. To see Harry Donaldson last night. The delegates were fired up. We've got new investment in

the Region and Harry's work, who is a patient and dedicated man, with a totally deserved reputation for being frugal (*Laughter*), at the on-going dispute in Glasgow is a sign of the determination of the members and the region that they are going to push on for justice for our members wherever injustice it occurs. We send our members the best.

I want to say a couple of things. One of the things that Harry did last night, apart from dance, which I thought was fantastic, Harry, by the way – you were brilliant. It was the first time I had ever seen it – was that he handed out ASBOs to a number of his delegates. Obviously, to protect the guilty, I won't tell you all their names, but one individual, called Charlie, got an ASBO for being the binge drinking delegate of the Conference. With great humility he said to me that while he was proud to accept the award he thought there were far more genuine cases in the region that he who should have been recognised. (*Laughter and applause*)

I have a special word for a great friend of mine for many years, John McKenzie, or 'Mr. Pastry', as I love to call him. John and I were shop stewards together, we were on shop stewards' courses together and we built a comradeship. He came to my house when we were stewards, and I learnt all the vagaries of *Flower of Scotland*. In fact, he forced me to sing it night after night. At one particular tournament, when we were at a conference, England was playing somebody, John turned up in front of all the shop stewards, who were English, took a big chair, sat right in front of the TV and began to start to scream for the opposition. (*Laughter*) Fearless, absolutely. John, you are a great mate. It is great to see you here. (*Applause*)

Birmingham and West Midlands. It has been a difficult year for Birmingham, but they have had some fantastic ground-breaking new agreements, not sweetheart deals. They turned a load of sweetheart deals down, but they were good solid agreements. I can tell you this. When you go round the Region I am always fascinated and impressed by the quality of our members, stewards and officers. The situation has changed dramatically in quite a short period of time. But I am so impressed when I go to Birmingham and see the officers and the staff. In the election, I am going to try and work for David Cameron in his constituency next time, because everywhere they took me the Tories lost their seats. (*Laughter*) In Worcester, Dudley and Burton we spent time. Martin Hurd and the team were brilliant, as were Sharon, Roger, Wayne and the rest of the team. I want to tell you how proud I felt working with you. It was brilliant. There was great camaraderie and it was what the Union was about. You deserve every bit of applause that I am now going to lead. (*Applause*)

The Midland & East Coast Region is a community region. It embodies great things about the Union. Every year when I come to Congress I get positive advice. I remember Bill Healey giving me ear-hole treatment about Southern Cross, but we listened, we turned it into a target and we've got 10,000 members there now. There is Mick Coppin, who was talking about the NHS. We've now got projects and we are putting resources in. These are people with real positive contributions about how the Union should work. Last year they put forward positive proposals about re-looking at the Equalities Forum, which we

knew wasn't perfect, but what emerged from that, which gave us a chance to look at it, was a much healthier and more representative body.

This year they brought us George! I can tell you this. It brings a tear to your eye to see the compassion and the caring of our people. We care about those who we can help. We care passionately about those who we can do something about. We have a total commitment to fight to do something about those who, at the moment, we can't help. George was a shining example. I thank the Midland & East Coast. I want to thank Andy Worth (*Applause and cheers*) because Andy has taken on many tasks. I have asked him to do a lot of jobs, not all of them are easy because some of them are very bureaucratic, but it meant that other things could be done. I want to thank him personally. He never flinched. He never said "Not me again". He always said, "Of course, mate. Of course, I will, mate." I thank him for that publicly.

The North West & Irish Region. If you ever feel that you are getting too big for your boots, then I suggest you go and have a day with them because they will soon bring you down to earth. If you ever get the chance to go racing with Dougie Henry, never back a single horse that he tells you to back.

Out from the North West & Irish Region has come the Contractors' Forum, the brainchild, a pushchild, from Ian Lowes, in particular. That is going to prove, as it develops, a fantastic and good direction that the Union goes in. If you saw the political work that they have done with Liverpool City Council you would be amazed. Wasn't it great to see a Labour Leader of Liverpool City Council? (*Applause*) To listen to a Labour Leader of Liverpool City Council talking about the fact that the future lies with working with trade unions, not isolating them, not leaving them round the corner like aged relatives who have wet themselves, because that is how I felt occasionally under New Labour. I felt we were almost the aged relatives that they did not want to admit they were having to come to visit now and again. It was a lovely breath of fresh air. I think that with the new council elections up and down the country we will get a fresh reaction.

Finally, on the roundup tour, I want to talk a little about Asda. We have spent a number of years trying to turn the situation in Asda around. I have paid tribute many times to our stewards who have kept the Union alive. We have got many obstacles to get over. We are close but we face many obstacles. Wal-Mart are not sure about us and we're certainly not sure about them. But we have a chance, starting with Distribution to make Asda staff the best paid. Asda needs to understand the issues about loyalty and retention. We have got a chance to make Asda Systems the most efficient and safe in the supermarket business, and it is in our interest to grow Asda's market share through proper change. And Asda's interests are best served by embracing and working with us at *GMB@Work*.

Asda/Wal-Mart is an interesting story of how determined we can be when we set our stall out, from conflict, hopefully, to understanding. Massive change is required in the attitudes of employers who do not see trade unions as relevant. We have had a massive response. We did have the new HR director of Asda here, Mike Goody, and he has been a change for the good. He has been understanding. He has made it clear that from his

perspective the way forward for Asda is to embrace the GMB, is to work with the GMB and is to get collective bargaining with the GMB across the whole of Asda/Wal-Mart's operations. That is a 360 degree circle compared with where we were five years ago. (*Applause*) If they are watching this in Bentonville, I might just have cost him his job, by the way. I shouldn't have said that.

The Distribution national stewards are on the verge of, hopefully, a new agreement, with well paid jobs, secure jobs with productivity and health and safety improvements. Again, I pay tribute to the national stewards who have done so much fantastic work; Mick, Junior, Eadie and the others. I don't know if you are here, but you have done a fantastic job.

Colleagues, 2009 was a bit of a hell of a year for the country as a whole. The financial system was in meltdown, billions were wiped off the markets, the real economy was on its knees and a tragic and wasteful loss of employment across our country, in the worst recession for many, many years. Many GMB members lost their jobs. Membership suffered across the whole of the trade union Movement. At least one large union has seen its membership shrink by a six figure number, and they haven't even got to the graveyard gates yet to start dealing with those numbers.

So how did we really fare in 2009 as a Union. We were doing pretty well. There we go. (*See Powerpoint presentation*) That is our membership, year by year. You can see a steady rise. So we pushed back over 600,000 in 2008, but remember, come on, it was a bad year, wasn't it? So what did we do in 2009? Oh, actually, we did pretty good. I will tell you something else. *That* figures does not include large scale members who do not exist. We do not delude ourselves. The new Organising Strategy, *GMB@Work*, the new mood, the things I have talked about, have put membership up by more than 5 per cent in five years. Then came the economic collapse and where did we go? You can see that membership was up again, not by much but it increased, and that, colleagues, is a fantastic achievement.

Let's have a look at the Accounts, because you can manipulate the numbers a little bit but you can't muddle about with the money. What you see *there*, colleagues, is the performance of this Union up until 2004. It reads a bit like last season's Newcastle United's away record. (*Laughter*) The Sunderland boys told me to say that, by the way. There you can see our performance since we changed our philosophy, our strategy and our direction, and we started to become the GMB again. Each of those years, working on the hard principles that we couldn't just keep spending money we did not have, we had to organise our way out, we had to be more efficient and we, effectively had to be responsive to the members. So we did, as you can see, quite well.

How did we do last year? (*Applause*) Contribution income was up £2.4 million, which tells you that we were not getting money off dead bodies. The figure is a little bit inflated because we put aside money in previous years to deal with the equal pay cases, and we were able to put that money back into the accounts in 2009, as the auditors had asked us to do. But it is a good performance. In fact, it is a good solid performance. It shows good

solid recruitment. It shows that if we keep on top of our data and we keep deleting non-payers, we stop deluding ourselves about phantom membership five years ago, as I said.

Year after year we saw operating losses, when our costs outstripped our income by millions. So we have an operating surplus of £4 million, which is boosted by an adjustment for pensions and because we added back money we had set aside for legal costs, so it is a good figure, but it is one that takes a healthy breath. But it is still a great result, and a tribute must be paid to the regions and the Senior Management Team for their efforts.

We come to the bottom line. How did we perform? *That* is our Income and Expenditure budget, but how did we perform totally? *That* is the transformation in our performance. Had we not been doing this we would constantly have had to come back to you at Congress and not ask for 5 pence increases, as we have done most years, but we would have been coming back here and asking you for 25 pence increases, just to subsidise the losses that we were making. That is a pretty impressive performance. As you can see, it is one that the Executive has said that we must keep the Union in a strong position financially and rebuild our finances.

We now come to the net assets of the Union, because with all those losses all that happened every year was that people went to the assets of the Union and they dug into them to cover the gaps. If you spend more than you get in, you have to start selling the silver. So the financial strength of the Union continues to grow and climb away from the problems of the past. Our net assets, excluding the pension fund provision, because there is an issue about the FRS17 position on the Union's funds, stands now at just under £46 million. The pension fund provision – the accounting requirement is called FRS17 – is an estimate of a long-term liability, and some of it may not be paid out for 50 years, but it is very important that we always make sure that we keep an eye on this. I have to say that the actuaries have been a lot more sympathetic and supportive to us because they can see that the Union is growing, is in responsible hands and that we are mindful of our responsibilities to the pension fund and our responsibilities to the employees in that fund. *(Applause)*

I want to make one last and final point on the accounts. Dave Kempson kindly pointed out to me, he did not raise the question but he did speak to me, that last year when we looked at the account holdings, that we have a holding in the *Daily Mail*. Yes, it was a surprise to me, I have to say, last year. We did give an undertaking that we would do the necessary requirement scrutiny, but we did not, Dave. I apologise for that. I think it is always better to admit your mistakes, as my dad said to my mum. *(Laughter)* If it is there next year, you can give me the kicking I richly deserve, but the intention is to look for better people to invest in than the *Daily Mail*, quite frankly.

Turning now to the contributions issues, Motion 17 asks for consideration of earnings in related contributions. I don't earn £150,000 a year. I am grateful for the pay rise. I don't earn £150,000 a year. You must have me confused with Derek Simpson. My wages are published. It is not a great secret. I think I am fantastically well paid. I get £87,000 a

year. I think it is a fantastic salary. I try to give as much back to the Union in other ways by not claiming all sorts of other things. There are all sorts of other things which I am sometimes embarrassed by, but I am very grateful for it. There are lots of other ways, and I am not going to embarrass myself or you, how I try to offset what I think is a fantastic salary for doing a fantastic job. But 150K it ain't.

The speaker referred to our contributions because we have a lot of low paid workers. He said in restricts recruitment. The problem is that the facts just don't bear that up. They just don't. I mentioned Southern Cross earlier. If you talk to workers in Southern Cross they are on the minimum wage or just above, yet we have recruited 10,000 of them. School support staff are not exactly paid out of the sky, yet we have recruited 90,000 of them. I don't think that that has ever been a real difficulty in recruitment. I know people say that sometimes it is. I can recall when officers told me that if only our contribution rates were cheaper than NUPE, as it was then, then people would flock to the GMB. Then one year, because we did not have a contribution increase and NUPE did, ours were cheaper. Do you know what happened? Our recruitment went down. I think it is more to do with our organisation, our support and service for our members. That is what I think it is about. I do honestly. So I don't accept that as an argument.

The fairness argument is a good one. I think the ability to pay is a good one, but I do not accept that it is an inhibitor to people joining, I really don't. I do go out recruiting still. I am not in an ivory tower. We did look at it hard. I quite liked the idea when Northern Region first floated it a few years ago. We really did look at it, but it comes down to some hard facts. Firstly, it is very, very difficult to implement. We have a very wide-ranging group of members in different companies with different payroll systems and with some paying direct debit. There is a whole range of issues. It is not just as simple as saying that we could implement a process. It is a lot easier for UNISON, even though they have a lot of problems with it, which they are quite open about, because most of their members fit within particular public sector payrolls, but it is not a simple arrangement.

The other thing is that you have to be straight with people. If you reduce contributions at the bottom end, and I think that if people get good trade union support they get it on the cheap, then people are going to have to pay two or three times more at the top, and you have got to be straight with people about that, about how that banding will work. We did look at it. We went out and looked at systems. We have consulted people. At the end of the day, last year Congress just said no, they did not support it. So that is why we say that the motion should be withdrawn. I promise you we will keep looking at it. It would be a great system if we could find a way of making it work but, at the moment, we just can't.

Motion 22 is about life members. The fact that life members turned up at the branch once a year to pay their contributions did not guarantee that they did not die the following week. We send out an awful lot of mailings, and when they come back with "Moved away", we send them back out to the branches, but it is an important point and I don't want to rubbish it. It is important when you only learn about the death of a member

because a bit of mail is returned. I accept that. I think we are asking them to refer that motion on the basis that we would like to look at it. If we have got excessive members on our rolls that are not actually any more active members, and by “active” I mean as them being above ground, we don’t want that. We don’t want to be carrying non-existent members, as is the cult in other unions.

I come now to the interesting bit, Mary, which is the contribution increase. You know, President, and the CEC know, that we had some really difficult discussions about this, in the Finance Committee and at the Executive. We looked at the possibility of a freeze because we were aware of the position of many of our members. But the problem about the freeze is that there is a very clear danger that we will go back to where we were some years ago. We did this before. We froze contributions for two years; inflation went up, the economy worsened and by the end of that period we were losing £3.5 million a year, which would be the equivalent today of nearly £8 million. We had to come back to Congress and increase contributions by 25%. You can imagine how well pleased people were about that. We just cannot go down that road again. We are asking you to agree a relatively small increase. Congress policy, actually, which we are going to ask you to vary, is to increase contributions each year by the rate of inflation. If we use that figure today on the RPI, contributions will be going up by 14 pence on Grade 1.

The Finance Report says that we are seeking a rise of only half of inflation. In fact, it is only about a third. So we are asking you to vary our own standing policy because we recognise that to do that would just be too hard in the current climate for many of our members. I think there is every justification for breaching it. So the proposal is five pence on Grade 1, President, two pence on Grade 2 and no increase on any of the special rates. The CEC strongly believes that this is a sensible and necessary increase. Because this increase is essential for us to protect members and services, all of that increase is going into the General Fund for members and none of it is going into the Political Fund.

Our climb back, Congress, to financial stability means that we are able to deal with a number of things, and this year we are continuing to look at one of the long-standing concerns of branches, which has been the very low level of Funeral Benefit. You will remember that it was only two years ago that we virtually doubled it. It was a pathetic £130 a year for someone who had died and been a member for 30 or 40 years. It was just embarrassing, to say the least, so we put it up to £250. This year we are suggesting that we can push it up a little bit more, so we are suggesting that we push it up by another £25 to £275.

Finally, I want to pick up on some of the points in the Report which refer to the branches. Colleagues, it is always, always about accountability. I reported to you two years ago that some of our branch accounting methods just were not up to the standards that you demand and the financial accountability that GMB members expect today. So we are implementing the next step in the long-term reform of branch financing aimed at putting branch members’ money to work for members, building the organisation, spent and accounted for in ways that everyone can see and agree with.

Since I have been General Secretary I have had to take a few actions on financial concerns. It crops up from time to time. I have never flinched from dealing with it. Serious concerns have arisen over a number of matters in certain branches, how they are run and their finances. I want to stress this. Most branches overwhelmingly – 97% or 98% even – are diligent, with hardworking good branch secretaries and branch officers. Most of them are out of pocket at the end of the work that they do for the GMB. I will tell you this. Any misappropriation of funds will be rooted out and it will be dealt with in the most vigorous fashion available to us. I will tell you why. It is because we owe it to the members! We cannot have the reputation of the vast majority of people who dedicate their lives to this Union, who manage those branch funds, tarnished or besmirched by anybody, no matter how isolated that occasion exists. (*Applause*) I cannot say too much at the moment because there are a number of on-going investigations, save to say that our external auditors and I have raised a number of questions about certain areas where very large amounts of money have been spent without proper scrutiny and without proper approval. Congress, I promise you this. Very firm Executive decisions will be taken in cases of misuse of members' funds, and the necessary sanctions, you can bet your bottom dollar, will be applied! There is just no room in the GMB, no matter how big we get and no matter how big the hall gets, for anybody who steals from us. (*Applause*)

Let me now wind-up. Friends, because I feel like you are friends because I know so many people, comrades, brothers, sisters and delegates, I am very confident. I look forward very confidently to the challenges ahead. I am not frightened of them. We will meet them as a financially strong and accountable organisation. We can be proud of what we do for our members. We really can. Are we perfect? Absolutely not? Will we ever be perfect? We will aim to be. But we will loads of things that we have done this week. With a bit of luck, we will find a cure for George's illness, so that George won't have to inject himself 11,600 times while he is still a teenager. The thought that 500 children who are dying will not die because of our Union, I think, is a fantastic thing that carries us through the day-to-day problems that we are going to face. One of those children, maybe there will turn out to be a cure for cancer, maybe, will turn out to be the new Nelson Mandela, and one of them may even turn out to be the General Secretary of the GMB. Now that really would be a story.

I am really proud about what our people do day in and day out. I did not seek office in this Union to preside over decline or deceit, but to ensure that our Union delivers for our members, communities and our class, and I sincerely hope that you will allow me to continue to do that. Mary, I move of those reports and motions. (*A standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul; as usual, inspiring. Can I now ask Malcolm Sage to formally second?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Formally second.

The General Secretary's Report was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Malcolm. I now invite regions to speak on the Finance Report: Stability and Accountability. I will be calling South Western Region, Northern Region, and then GMB Scotland, and Southern Region. Colleagues, did Paul upset you? Could we have some quiet, please? We are in a very serious debate. South Western.

CEC FINANCE REPORT: STABILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

STABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FINANCE REPORT TO GMB CONGRESS 2010

The CEC is pleased to report that the Financial Accounts which will this year be presented to Congress by the General Secretary once again tell a story of steady progress. For the sixth year in a row, GMB achieved an operating surplus. What this means is that the Union is living within its means and not spending more than members' contributions; not having to rely on investments or the sale of assets to square the books.

During the year 2009, contribution income continued to rise, a result which reflects marvellously on the efforts of all organisers and activists across the Union, given the background of economic turmoil which has put intense pressure on our members' wages and jobs. The CEC's policy of close financial monitoring by the Senior Management Team meant that once again all budgets were tightly managed, and the CEC continued, through a gradual and controlled increase in the officer force, to follow its strategy of moving resources away from back-office administration into organising and producing results that the members can see and feel.

Many Congress delegates may not recall a period when financial surpluses were not an annual occurrence. The fact is that for twenty years up to 2004, the Union was never able to produce an operating surplus. For all those years, GMB was caught in a plunging spiral of making losses, paying out redundancy money to cut costs, still having to sell assets to keep afloat and, with a weakening membership base, heading inevitably towards a fatal takeover by another Union. Seen in that context, the achievement of recent years has been immense. But Congress delegates will also be aware that complacency is not an option. Political and economic attacks on our members' jobs and terms and conditions are bound to increase over the coming months and years. Maintaining and growing membership will take a supreme effort and a rigorous application of GMB@Work strategies from everyone involved in our Union. To continue our modern record of financial success will call for firm financial decision-making, careful spending control and even more accountability at all levels.

In 2010 many GMB members are facing a battle to get any wage increase at all; more are suffering tight wage restraint. When the CEC was considering its financial proposals to Congress, these facts were at the forefront of the debate. Any contribution increase in these circumstances is unwelcome. Our own history does tell us, however, that the long-standing policy of Congress to set an increase in line with inflation has proved the wisest course over the years. The last time contributions were frozen, the result was a deficit of £3 million and Congress had to raise the rates by 25% to mend the financial damage.

The CEC is recommending an increase of 5p per week to the grade 1 rate and 2p per week to the grade 2 rate. This represents an increase of roughly half the level of the retail price index at the

time of writing. There would be no increase to promotional and other rates. The CEC strongly believes that this increase is the minimum required to maintain our financial stability and to ensure that a healthy and strong GMB is going to be able to give full support to our members in the difficult times to come.

The normal practice of Congress is to increase the political fund levy in line with any increase in contributions. Because this year's proposed increase is relatively small, the CEC is recommending that the full amount of the increase should be retained in the general funds of the Union. At a time of heightened political uncertainty and attacks on the Union's freedom to spend money to gain political advantages for our members, the CEC feels that an increase on the rates of the political fund levy would send a message which would be unpopular with many of our members who feel let down by the political establishment. Therefore the CEC is recommending no change to the political levy rate in 2010/11.

In 2008, Congress agreed to a 92% increase in Funeral Benefit. The CEC has long accepted that Funeral Benefit has for years ceased to reflect the cost of a funeral, and this increase kick-started a plan by the CEC gradually to restore the value of the benefit. This year, the CEC proposes a further increase of £25 to the benefit, and the level will continue to be kept under review. The cost of the increase is entirely borne by the Union, as the benefit has no significant impact on recruitment or contribution levels, but the CEC recognises its value to existing members and sees this increase as a way for older members in particular to benefit from our financial stability.

Alongside these adjustments to rates and benefits, the CEC is aiming for a big improvement in branch accountability and openness about how our members' money is spent. Each year, £7 million of GMB funds go to branches. At any one time, £4 million is in branch accounts. This money allows GMB at local level to build and maintain organising and servicing work and cover the day-to-day expenses of branch work. The CEC is in no doubt that the overwhelming majority of these funds are well-managed and spent on essential GMB activities. However, the CEC believes that accountability can and should be improved, to protect the union's funds but, as importantly, to protect the many lay members who are obliged to account for these funds by providing them with robust accounting systems and guidelines.

In his speech on finance to Congress 2008, Paul Kenny, as General Secretary and Treasurer, pointed out that the our current branch accounting returns were out of date and lacked precision. This meant that the standard of accountability to members, and sometimes our ability to deal with statutory authorities was less than satisfactory. As accepted by Congress that year, the Union has now issued revised reporting documents. Manuals and training support are being provided so that all branch secretaries are fully comfortable with the new requirements. Paul also proposed that we move towards electronic submission of branch returns. The establishment of the GMB@Work section, accessible only to activists, in the new GMB website is the first step on that road. Phase 2 of the website development will enable branch secretaries to gain secure access via the website to view membership reports and to complete branch accounting returns on-line. The CEC aims to report back on the completion of this project at Congress 2011.

The need for better branch accountability has also been highlighted by the results of recent audits and investigations in parts of the Union. Some years ago, the CEC had to report on events and abuse in the old Lancashire region, It is now clear that events following Audits in certain areas

have produced major concerns for our senior officers. This process is ongoing at the time of producing this report and more up to date information will be available in due course.

The Union is legally obliged to report on all balances held by branches to the Certification Officer. The new accounting returns make it clear that branches must include details of all the bank accounts they hold, including deposit accounts. Where these balances are lying unused, the CEC will ensure that the funds are put to organising use in consultation with the branch.

Next year, Congress 2007 decisions on branch accounting and payments will come into effect. As well as the new accounting reports, these changes will require updated procedures to ensure that branches continue to make best use of funds and to ensure all payments are properly authorised at Regional level. Payments in reimbursement of properly authorised and receipted expenses will continue as at present, but the CEC will be issuing guidelines to ensure that branches are fully aware of what types of expenditure are acceptable, and, so as to avoid unnecessary embarrassment, what types may need Regional approval. As well as giving Regional Committees guidance as to when additional branch funds can be made available, the CEC will ensure that Regional Committees have oversight of all honoraria or special payments, so that the appropriate reporting mechanisms can be set up.

The branches of GMB are the bedrock of our organisation. These improvements in accountability will mean that the tiny number of examples of inappropriate expenditure can be weeded out openly, and that the hundreds of conscientious and enthusiastic branch secretaries have the tools to get on with the job.

The CEC believes that the contributions and benefit changes and the financial management principles included in this report give our Union a strong platform to face the challenges of the coming year. The rule amendments necessary to give effect to the proposals are recommended as follows:

Rule amendments

CECRA10.

Rule 46 Clause 1,

Line 3: Delete "£2.55", insert "£2.60"

Line 8: Delete "£1.43", insert "£1.45"

Clause will now read:

1 Once they join the union, members will pay a contribution in line with this rule.

Members will pay £2.60 a week and be classed as grade-1 members, **unless** they are:

- part-time members employed for 20 hours or less;
- young people under 18; or
- recruited as being unemployed;

in which case, they will pay £1.45 a week and be classed as grade-2 members. However, grade-2 members can choose to pay the contribution rate for, and be classed as, a grade-1 member.

The above grades are only used for deciding what contributions members should pay and the benefits they may receive

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

CECRA11.

Rule 46, Clause 2,

Line 4: Delete "£2.55", insert "£2.60"

Line 5: Delete "£1.43", insert "£1.45"

Clause will now read:

2 Branch committees will have the power to fix the amount lapsed members (members who joined but later stopped paying contributions) need to pay to rejoin. This amount will be between £2.60 and £10 for grade-1 members and between £1.45 and £5.50 for grade-2 members, except in particular circumstances when we may increase the amount with the approval of the regional committee.

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

CECRA12

Rule 55, Clause 1

Line 5: Delete "£250", Insert "£275"

Clause will now read

1 If a full financial member, who has been a continuous member for 8 years dies, the regional secretary will, having been given a copy of the death certificate, pay the widow, widower, member of the family or nominated person a funeral grant of £275. (This person will need to show that they are responsible for paying funeral expenses.)

CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

(Adopted)

BRO. M. WILSON (South Western) speaking in support of the CEC's Finance Report on Stability & Accountability, said: President, Congress, the financial turnaround in the GMB's performance is quite remarkable, moving from the jaws of insolvency to small but significant surpluses. It is a tribute to the efforts of the Central Executive Council in managing the financial resources of our union. However, there can be no room for complacency and we need to ensure that we continue to live within our means and remain able to finance adequately the benefits and services that the GMB provides.

The proposed increase in contribution rates of 5p and 2p will serve both to retain financial stability and recognise the serious economic circumstances facing many of our members. The region supports the proposals relating to both the political fund levy contribution and the uplift in funeral benefit.

We also endorse the proposal to improve both transparency and accountability in the ways in which branch financial affairs are conducted. Every year significant sums of money are returned to branches in order to promote organising and servicing work.

Proper and responsible accounting systems are therefore required to protect the position of both the lay members who manage the funds and the funds themselves.

It is very important that branches fully understand what they can and cannot do and that is why guidelines on expenditure types and controls are crucial and why regional committee monitoring is vital in ensuring compliance.

Congress, the union has a legal obligation to make sure finances are fully accounted for and has a strategic responsibility to ensure they are put to their most effective use. This report satisfies both of those objectives and will facilitate the continuing financial progress of the GMB. South Western Region supports the report. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Northern Region.

A DELEGATE: Congress, it is a simple truth that recruiting new members, providing an excellent service to them, and retaining them if they move workplaces or retire, is the bedrock of the future of the GMB. For many years prior to this General Secretary we lived outside our means. Like many organisations we must cover our costs. Furthermore, the *GMB@Work* consolidation strategy ensures that basic bread and butter approach, to ensure when we grow we are financially secure, works. No more gimmicks, no more playing the number games. Congress, growth, and to coin a phrase, prudent financial management is the clearest way to safeguard the GMB's future. Northern Region supports.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. I now call GMB Scotland. Southern Region is supporting the report and they are not putting forward a speaker. Thank you very much, Southern. Then I will be calling Midland and Yorkshire.

BRO. V. RABBETTS (Midland & East Coast) supporting the Report: Stability & Accountability, said: Congress, President, six years of stability, it says here. Who would have ever believed that as a possibility let alone a reality? Most of us were there when the end of the GMB was a probability. We just did not know how the end was going to come, merger or meltdown. Close financial monitoring by senior management and the hard work and faith put in by us all has achieved this. Twenty years of doing nothing had left us in a position of political risk. Six years of working together and the *GMB@Work* has put us in the position of the top trade union in this country, the campaigning union, the solid union, the progressive union, the modern union, the family union, the general union, not the biggest, not the specialist, not the gimmickiest, and certainly not the cutest, but the trade union most envied by others and joined by members for representation and strength.

The CEC has recommended an increase of 5p and 2p. None of us want this and we are not interested in how this relates to the retail price index, it is just that we activists get the backlash from the members. That said we also know that not increasing income is not an option. That has been tried with disastrous results. We have to continue to have faith in

our management team and continue to work hard with GMB@Work and our branches in order to continue our sustained growth and financial stability. Adjustment to the political levy is completely appropriate. We will still always support those that assist us anyway. This will be targeted at specifics as we see fit within the structure of the GMB branches and regions, etc.

Funerals are expensive and very difficult to deal with. Any way the GMB can assist our members and families through this traumatic time, and better financial assistance given by the GMB is helpful, however small.

Finally, after stability we get the nitty-gritty of this document, the accountability and branch accounts. Branch officers, secretaries, and treasurers, like me, are and should be completely accountable to the membership. It is not my money, it is not the branch's money, it is the members' money and we are trusted to use the money in the best interests of the members. Yes, we need branch freedom to resource our branch specifics and not national diktat, but this has to be within rules and morals, and available for evaluation and report.

We welcome the national database and open accountability from top to bottom and bottom to top. The GMB@Work is a system for all and the branch accounts need to be one system for all. We support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. GMB Scotland.

BRO. C. ROBERTSON (GMB Scotland) proudly responding as an ASBO recipient! I should have got it for sleeping, Paul. I think the alcohol bit was unnecessary, to be honest!

In responding to the Financial Report: Stability & Accountability, GMB Scotland having considered and discussed this document fully endorse these proposals, which we believe will maintain the financial stability as we move forward. As we face this Government and attacks against the public services we can see our success to date and GMB Scotland support this report and increasing subscriptions as sensible and necessary, and welcome the improvement to funeral benefits. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Charlie. You can give the handcuffs back later! Can we now move to Yorkshire, then Birmingham, and then London?

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, Congress, we welcome the report but with some reservations. Our members are receiving little or no increase and any increase should be kept to a minimum and in line with pay increases. Our members are struggling on a daily basis. It is good to see where we are back in control. We do not want to go back to the dark days of selling assets to survive, such as the national college, and finance needs to be managed correctly. We all have a part to play. The management team, the CEC, regional execs, branches, all have a role to play. We

welcome the increase of 5p as long as any increase is in line with what rise our members are getting.

The GMB like everyone else needs to tighten its belt but at the same time our reps need the tools to do the job. It is good that the branch accounting is changing and moving forward so that miscellaneous money is accounted for. The changes to the website also are welcome. Changes, old and new, are good to see. This is our members' money and so it is accountable. Small yearly increases are acceptable. We do not want to return to the time when our members picked up the cost. We accept the report. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: James, do not leave the platform. Colleagues, you have been very, very generous this week in the appeal from our Remploy members in York. All those who have not donated or did not have their cheque books, when they get back would they please put that good cause to the branches and please send the cheque to head office.

BRO. J. STRIBLEY: Could I ask Paul and the Executive to match any donations? (*Cheers/Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I will not tell Allan Wylie how much they had collected. Did you notice I was very quiet on that so far, but I think we will agree, won't we, that we will match it? We will buy them some furniture. OK. Thanks, James. Birmingham & West Midlands?

BRO. D. KEMPSON (Birmingham & West Midlands) speaking in support of the CEC Finance Report: Stability & Accountability, said: Congress, it is pleasing to note that in the last four years or so we have had stability through sound financial management. The contribution increase suggested is sensible and will be accepted by our membership. It is also good to hear the General Secretary saying we must have transparency. It is also good to hear him say there is no room in the GMB for anyone who steals members' money. Birmingham Region commends the report and we support it. Thanks. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. London Region?

BRO. B. DUFFIELD (London) speaking to the CEC Financial Report, said: President, Congress, London Region fully debated this report and, to be fair, there were foreseeable arguments for and against. In a year when pay was to all intents and purposes frozen and the prospects of much of the same in the next few years, would raising the subscription not be a challenge to the membership? As in the year gone by would a zero increase this year have meant a financial loss nationally in years to come, necessitating an above-inflation rise or even a mega above-inflation rise next year costing us even more members? The London delegation was of the opinion that we had to maintain financial wellbeing to counter the attacks that will come our way from the unholy alliance called the British Government.

GMB has seen off the Lib Dems in Islington and the BNP in Barking and Dagenham, as you know. *(Applause)* These achievements would not have happened if we had a financial deficit. Also can I say, Congress, I believe a little increase would be better to finance the well organised people in our workplace. People do not mind paying their union fees when they see a union rep or shop steward going round talking to them. Even if you go and give them pens, make sure you visit your workplaces. If you do not, if you are not active, then they will talk about the union, "What did the union ever do for me?" I tell you, we do a bloody lot. We do a lot of work for them.

I can tell you now, as well, that we won quite a few cases this year. They wanted to stop election leave and make people take annual leave. The GMB got the days back for 200 people because we went active and we were in there; that is 200 happy people now getting an extra day's holiday.

I can tell you we need this little increase to fight these battles. The 12 BNP we got rid of, it was such a pleasure waving goodbye to them, and their faces, it was fantastic. It was one of the best days and proudest moments of my days.

I believe we should put these up, not tremendously, like Paul said, and I think a little bit will help us to fight the campaigns to get rid of this Conservative Government, which I dread now with all these cutbacks.

I'll tell you what, they will get a lot more for their money now. With these Tories we are going to fight for our terms and conditions, for better pay, and everything, so we will need these contributions. London Region supports this CEC Finance Report. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thanks, Brendan. North West & Irish Region?

BRO. A. MOSS (North West & Irish): Whilst I am standing before you saying we support the financial accounts, all but the increase in the donations, the area that I work in is the public sector and of course the public sector has been hit the worst. We have had no pay rises. We are going to suffer financial losses through rate increases for the police and the fire service when we have single status and job evaluation. So far as I am concerned this is my annual trip up here to block the finances. This is not about blocking finances. The 5p can go ahead. It is the 2p, believe it or not, that worries me. We need to show respect to our workforce, total respect. They are the lowest paid. This is about showing loads of respect to them by not increasing the fee. They are the backbone of this union. They are the public sector. They are the biggest sector of this union and the union should support them. Put it up to the people who can afford it this year. Full-timers can afford it - it should have gone a bit higher - but leave the low-paid workers alone, the cleaners, the cooks, the dinner ladies; you name it, they are all in there. They deserve not to be touched this year. In saying that, we support the financial accounts but do not support the increase. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Anyone else want to come up? No. Very disciplined!

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Thanks everybody. I thought it was a fairly honest appraisal about not wanting to take medicine but understanding the need to have the union's financial structure so that we can fight the battles ahead, and they are going to be there.

One point I want just to come back to, Arthur, was that we had that debate. It was not an easy decision. Trust me, it really was not. It was not like, "Oh, yeah, we'll bung up the contributions." We never do that. In fact, our contribution increases have been steadily lower than in previous years. We have always said the way to stability in the union is growing the union, not keep going back to the members and asking them to foot the bills for bad management, frankly.

We did listen. We did think very hard about our Grade 2 members. In previous years we put contributions up for Grade 1 and Grade 2 members at the same rate, 5p. We basically said it cost exactly the same to service somebody and, of course, we equalised the benefits a couple of years ago so Grade 2 members get the same cash benefits as Grade 1. We said we would not discriminate against people so, effectively, the argument was that it costs the same to represent a member, they get the same cash benefits, and the increases should be the same.

We recognise exactly what you have said, you said it from the heart, and I think everybody understands that and many people in the room, and on the Executive, feel the same way, which is why we went for 2p. 2p a week, I hope I am wrong, is going to be a lot less than our part-time members are going to have to pay in VAT increases when the Tories get their hands around the Budget in a few weeks' time. We recognise the value and so we did respect them, Arthur, and that is why we chose the 2p. Of course, the very low paid on a few hours, and you talked about the SMSAs and people like that, people on 10 hours and less, we said they cannot afford to take any hit and so we have structured the increase in the way your heart tells you.

Please, please, please, please, come to next year's Congress, push up the union membership by 50,000 and I will be able to sit here and say, "By the way, colleagues, there is no contribution increase this year." That is the way to growth. That is the way to stability. So, I do appreciate and understand your concerns but I would say to you, we did think about it. We would never, ever - I would not and the Executive certainly never would - take the members for granted or disrespect them in any way. I just wanted to make that clear to you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Paul. Can I now move to Motion 17, Northern Region, are you prepared to withdraw in favour of the Finance Report? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Motion 17 was withdrawn.

THE PRESIDENT: London Region, are you prepared to refer? *(Agreed)* You are. Thank you. Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Motion 22 was referred.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now move to the General Secretary's, pages 5, 6, 7-22, 33-55. Do we have any questions on that report? No. Do you agree to accept that report? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

The General Secretary's Report (pages 5, 6, 7-22, 33-55) was adopted.

THE PRESIDENT: Does Congress agree to accept the Annual Accounts & Auditors' Report? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

The Annual Accounts & Auditors' Report was adopted.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress agrees to accept "Stability & Accountability" and rule changes? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

CEC Finance Report: Stability & Accountability, and Rule changes, was adopted.

REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION

MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	55,090
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	14,268
MANUFACTURING SECTION	15,628
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	25,194
Grade 1 members	36,521
Grade 2 members	11,667
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	6,902
Male Membership	31,299
Female Membership	23,791
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	8,573
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 (54036) – 31.12.2009	1,054+
Membership on Check-off	31,796
Membership on Direct Debit	17,611

Response to Organising Agenda

The Midland and East Coast Region is continuing to promote and progress the organising agenda by adopting a proactive approach within a number of key workplaces that have been set and prioritised from the national agenda and regional targets. These have also been set and agreed by officers who are working in conjunction with activists and lay reps.

By linking the Region's organising team with area officers, we have developed a sustainable recruitment resource by using teams of workplace activists and organisers. Whether these are existing reps or new recruits, we have found that the GMB@Work ethos/ training and development are paying dividends. With

the increased confidence that has developed in workplace reps as well as officers and well organised workplaces, issues are being put on the employers' table, giving a proactive approach.

The national targets of ASDA, Southern Cross and Schools is still delivering moderate growth, but in order to be more sustainable we need to concentrate on encouraging more of our school contacts to become workplace organisers.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

We introduced 3 pilot projects with regular review periods in Wilkinson's, Leicester City Council and North Lincs and Goole NHS Trust. There is an underlying programme with the development of prototype plans that can be lifted and applied in similar situations. This is still ongoing with the end review and production of final project reports due in early 2010.

Impetus is still on the national targets with a centralised organising team and regular, pre-planned recruitment weeks that are diarised annually at the beginning of the year. This is supplemented with the addition of fortnightly 'organisation' days with the area teams of organisers and activists. This gives us the ability and resources to respond to any opportunities that require a quick reaction such as the construction and engineering dispute at Lindsey Oil Refinery.

This approach has assisted the Region in enabling growth during a year of economic uncertainty, when most other trade unions are perhaps not doing so well. Linking recruitment and organising under the GMB@Work banner is creating a positive formula.

With the assistance of Dominika and Marzena (Polish members of staff at Regional Office), we continue to raise the Region's profile with migrant workers in all areas of the Region.

Retired Members Association

We have a vibrant Retired Members Association that is actively involved in campaigns, particularly those involving pensions. These retired members have also offered their invaluable services and greater experience to campaigns and recruitment initiatives, which will assist in imparting knowledge.

The RMA is going from strength to strength with an expanding core of activists. The national conference took place in October 2009 with motions being passed on Pensions Credits, Health and Transport rail travel. The RMA have also joined forces with NPC and put in submissions on the Government's 'Future of Care' consultation.

Overview of Region's Economic and Employment Status

There is a diverse and disparate structure to the Midland and East Coast Region. We cover an area traditionally known as the East Midlands, Humberside and East Riding of Yorkshire. The Region stretches from Scarborough in the north to Wellingborough in the south and from Boston in the east to Buxton in the west.

A greater proportion of the East Midlands economic output comes from manufacturing more than other regions of the UK. During the current economic downturn, employment figures have not declined as rapidly as the national average.

This picture is portrayed differently in Yorkshire and Humberside, as well as the more rural areas of the Region. Manufacturing has taken a big hit with the movement of global capital and the economic impact of the recession, the abuse and misuse of migrant workers within the food industry, and agriculture.

We have also seen attacks on public services, with local authorities announcing redundancies in all parts of the Region, but, as seen in March at the G20 demonstration, we can mobilise and challenge through these turbulent times in our economy.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	13
Organising Officers	4
No. of Branches	91
New Branches	0
Branch Equality Officers	40
Branch Youth Officers	25

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

The Region has 15 servicing Organisers, supported by a Membership Development Officer and 2 Organising Officers, which form part of the Regional Organising Team who 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	1685.00
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	
Funeral	33,401.00

4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

Communication is one of the core principles to the GMB@Work ethic. The Region has continued to produce the 'Contact' magazine, encouraging participation from both activists and officers of the Region. This is creating a diverse means of communication.

Impetus is still ongoing with the collation of email addresses through online joining and members making enquiries through the website. This gives us a quicker and more cost effective method of mailout lists for regular updates in employment law and political updates, and also enables us to give a speedier response to members' queries.

We have had good and comprehensive media coverage at both regional and national level from organisers and lay reps, an example being the Lindsey Oil refinery dispute, during which media coverage was at a maximum, giving a profile during a potentially difficult campaign.

The information circulated around the Region has also been added to Branch newsletters for circulation to branch members and workplaces. Although this isn't as widespread as we would like it to be, it is certainly moving in the right direction.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

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

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
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732	724
-----	-----

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
911	329	9	513 £5,040,965.15		£5,040,956.15
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			1,231		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	250
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
340	143	8	181 £435,727.36	8 £29,545.73	£465,273.09
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			636		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
7	2		11

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
21	10	9

The Region's Legal Services remain a crucial element of the Region's recruitment, organising and servicing objectives.

The Region's Solicitors, Thompsons, continue to provide a full range of legal services to our members, including personal injury and employment law. The extension of this service to also include cover for members' families on any personal injury incurred outside the workplace, including whilst on holiday or in a road traffic accident, makes what we provide even more attractive.

The Free Will writing service offered by Thompsons remains very popular and the fact that the Will can be made in joint names also benefits the member's spouse/partner.

Thompsons Specialist Compromise Agreement Unit have dealt with a large amount of Compromise Agreements this year as our Organisers have been negotiating these on behalf of members with their employers, rather than go down the route of an Employment Tribunal.

Equal Pay claims are still ongoing within Local Authorities and NHS. There have been many settlements via a COT3 in the Region resulting in substantial payments for our members, albeit not at the 100% settlement figure that our members were advised of. At present we have 437 cases outstanding in the Region with no litigation against the Union. The success is due to full time officer and legal negotiation and advising members as to their statutory rights.

Earlier in the year we arranged for Thompsons to give a presentation and briefing to our Officers and Regional Committee members on the new Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures and ACAS Code of Practice that came into effect in April, and the LRD booklet providing guidance to union reps was circulated out to all our shop stewards to assist them in providing support and advice to our members in this area.

6 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Following the Region's Equalities Conference in October 2009, the final plans have been made to launch the Regional Equalities Forum at a conference being held on 21st April 2010 at GMB Regional Office in Nottingham. The previous conference successfully identified activists committed to and experienced in our seven different fields of equality and in conjunction with the Education department we have set up an email database for communicating with these individuals. Equalities contacts will receive information about equalities, in general, and also information specific to the area of equality they have outlined as their area of interest.

It is intended that by the time the Spring conference is concluded that we will have established even more dedicated equalities contacts and that they will form equalities groups able to stimulate and generate serious campaigning on specific issues that affect our members and promote our values and principles. The Spring conference will be motion based, but in order to ensure we start with a strong foundation the motions will be restricted to ideas and suggestions about campaigns within the Region's equality strands or ideas and suggestions about the Equality Forum's future structure and programme. The Forum will be elected from the delegates in attendance and the conference will aim to put in place a basic structure and constitution in line with Regional policy that will enable the Forum to function efficiently.

Equalities is at the heart of what we do in this Region and all branches are encouraged to send delegates to ensure that the Forum is a success and we continue to be at the forefront of the Equalities agenda.

Ethnic Breakdown of the Regional Race Advisory Committee:

	White	Black	Asian	Other
Male	6	1	1	
Female	2	2	1	

Ethnic Breakdown of the Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committee:

	White	Black	Asian	Other
Male	2			
Female	6	1	1	

The young members of the Midland and East Coast Region in 2009 made continued progress in line with the stated GMB policy support for the organising agenda.

Young members are also trying to find their place in the more streamlined equalities structure within the GMB. To this end a number of young activists attended the Regional Equalities Conference in Nottingham in May 2009. Whilst recognising that a more focused equality structure may propel this agenda forward it is hoped that young members will not be pushed to the margins as this progress develops.

Once again the Region has been able to provide a full delegation to the TUC Young Members Conference this year as on previous occasions. I thank the branches in the region who have supported such initiatives.

A number of young members along with hundreds of other members from our region attended the G20 march and rally in London in March 2009. Although generally ignored by the media this was another huge demonstration by working people against the inherent contradictions and inequalities generated by an unchecked global capitalist system, as once again working people took the brunt of a crisis generated by the greed and reckless stupidity of a small ruling minority.

As the recession bites hard into the economy and jobs, it would appear to be young people who are feeling the pinch. With unemployment at 2.5 million a disproportionate number appear to be made up of the young with joblessness among this group rising faster than any other age group. The unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds is 16% and rising. Even worse is the fact that nearly one in three 16-17 year olds without qualifications are unemployed. This leaves a whole group of young people trapped between a school system which failed them and a shrinking job market with little hope of work.

There are a number of reasons why this is the case with manufacturing decline meaning craft apprenticeships have all but disappeared and two thirds less available entry points to employment training schemes. Young workers are concentrated in a narrow range of service industries such as sales which are often casual and also vulnerable. As we also know young workers are discriminated against through lack of redundancy entitlements and lower minimum wage rates which makes them cheaper and easier to hire and fire in these uncertain times.

The government has made some acknowledgement of the problem by the announcement of a £2 billion scheme for training and funding for 35,000 apprenticeships, however this will never be enough.

The GMB needs to continue the fight for our young members to eradicate discriminative employment legislation and to campaign for better job opportunities for all. The current situation is a damning indictment on an economic system that seems to be punishing the very young people who are in actual fact its future.

7 TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	9	107	37	144	288
GMB Induction (5 days)	9	104	34	138	690
GMB@WORK (1 day)	4	34	12	46	46

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to Health & Safety (3 days)	9	101	32	133	399
Advanced Health & Safety(10 days)	1	7	3	10	100

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Accompanying Reps (1 weekday)	1	7	4	11	11
Grievance and Disciplinarys (1 weekday)	4	42	9	51	51
Grievance and Disciplinarys (2 weekdays)	1	7	3	10	20
Introduction to Pensions (2 weekdays)	2	22	5	27	54
Representing Members Briefing (2 weekdays)	1	16	2	18	36
Tackling Stress at Work (2 weekdays)	1	11	8	19	38

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
TUC courses		84	11	95	
GFTU courses		5	1	6	
Northern College courses		6		6	

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Workplace Organisation and Visits

In the period since last Congress, the RHSO has been involved in a number of visits to workplaces:

- Staythorpe Power Station H&S Inspection/Workplace Visit
- Rigid Containers (Desborough) Migrant Workers/ESOL/H&S
- Ellis Guildford School (Nottm) Work-related Stress

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

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:

- Asbestos GMB Region database scheme
- Working temperatures What is the minimum?
- Adverse Weather Individual Rights
- Risk Assessments Employers legal responsibilities
- Work-related Stress Individual Rights/Absence
- Fumes Effects/Control Measures
- Working Time Rest breaks/payment
- Overhead power cables Health concerns

Training

The RHSO completed the new Workplace Safety Reps Advanced Course and this was piloted in April 2009. The reaction of the attendees was extremely positive and it is therefore planned to further roll out the course.

Other courses delivered in 2009 included:

- Tackling Stress at Work
- Representing Members
- Accompanying Representative Training
- Employment Law Update (including the new ACAS Code of Practice 3)

Information Distribution

During 2009 the following Health and Safety Matters have been distributed to Safety Reps and Branches:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| • January 2009 | Employers Liability |
| • Feb 2009 | Asbestos Campaign |
| • March 2009 | Mesothelioma |
| • April 2009 | New HSE Strategy: be Part of the Solution |
| • May 2009 | Drug and Alcohol Policies |
| • June 2009 | Personal Protective Equipment |
| • July 2009 | Swine Flu |
| • August 2009 | Workers Memorial Day |
| • Sept 2009 | Review of Workplace Temperatures |
| • October 2009 | Towards Copenhagen – Trade Union Priorities |
| • November 2009 | Pleural Plaques – Where are we now? |
| • December 2009 | Sentencing Guidelines for Corporate Manslaughter |

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 Representatives' 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.

Additional Activity

The RHSO undertook training to complete the NEBOSH General Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health. A successful Merit pass was achieved.

(Adopted)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you, Paul. I now ask Andy Worth, Midland & East Coast Regional Secretary, to move his report, pages 101-107. Andy?

Regional Secretary's Report: Midland & East Coast Region was formally moved.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Any questions on the report? No. Congress agree to accept it? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Regional Secretary's Report: Midland & East Coast Region was adopted.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now move to item 7, Social Policy: Justice. Can I remind speakers that the times have been changed which you agreed this morning with Standing Orders. I will now call Motion 141, 142, and then ask Elaine Daley to speak on Motion 142. Vaughan.

**SOCIAL POLICY: JUSTICE
EROSION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES
MOTION 141**

141. EROSION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES

This Conference is alarmed at the steady erosion of civil liberties which has taken place over the last decade and believes that the time has come for the trade union movement to take a stand in resisting the creep of Executive Power.

Congress is specifically concerned by the measure buried in the Coroners and Justice Bill (November 2009) which gives the Lord Chancellor absolute discretion to order a secret inquiry in place of a public inquest. Inquests which might expose the negligence of Government or a public body, or embarrass Ministers or foreign allies, could be censored. This is an abuse of power which *must* be resisted.

Congress is also alarmed by the practice of the police adding peoples' genetic profiles to their DNA database when they are arrested. The fact that those subsequently found innocent will not have their personal profiles removed from the database until *six years* after their arrest is a blatant assault in their civil rights.

Congress therefore instructs the CEC and General Secretary to campaign against these abuses and call for the repeal of these measures. There should be no compromise; we must regain full public scrutiny of *all* inquest proceedings, and an arrested citizen's DNA profile must be destroyed as soon as his/her innocence is established.

NORWICH GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. V. WEST (London): Thanks, Mary. Let's be clear, whilst the last Labour Government achieved much over its period of office and much to be proud of, one area where they failed appallingly over the past 13 years was in the area of civil liberties and the whole civil liberties agenda. Let's be clear, civil liberties is not some academic debate or concept that takes place on late-night TV shows like News Night or Question Time. This Labour Government often centralised and eroded civil liberties under the smokescreen of protecting us against terrorism or policing antisocial behaviour, but do not believe that this does not have an effect on our members.

Let me tell you a story. My youngest son was arrested over Christmas. He was arrested but then released on the same day without charge. It took us over six weeks, nearly two months, and a number of attempts by the police to block us before we managed finally to get them to agree to remove his DNA from the national database.

Think about all the problems our members go through when they have a CRB check every three years or a pre-employment CRB check. If they were arrested but never charged, never found guilty of anything, they worry about the fact that their DNA is still being held on the national database, which may affect their job and their continued employment.

Think about the powers that the Lord Chancellor has to order a secret inquiry instead of a public inquest. Whose liberty does that protect, not yours or our members, but the politicians, the security forces, or civil servants who have something to hide.

This motion talks about those two specific areas but think about all the other things, like the creeping introduction of CCTV that we all know is used to entrap our members in disciplinary cases and the difficulties we have.

This is not, as I said earlier, an academic debate but something we need to campaign on saying to the new Labour leadership, you need to listen, you did not listen on this area over the last 13 years, and we need to say to the new government, you keep your promise that you made about civil liberties because if you do not we will be on your back. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Vaughan. Secunder?

The motion was formally seconded.

JUSTICE FOR WORKING PEOPLE MOTION 142

142. JUSTICE FOR WORKING PEOPLE

This Conference calls on the UK Government to make no further changes to the provision of Legal Aid for working people in England and Wales.

CARDIFF & DISTRICT APEX BRANCH
South Western Region

(Carried)

BRO. I. BOUNDS (South Western): Legal Aid was first introduced in the UK in 1949. It was introduced to enable everybody to gain access to the legal system. Unfortunately, since then the Legal Aid provisions have been repeatedly slashed since it was introduced. This motion calls on the Government to make no further detrimental changes to the UK Legal Aid system. I am quite happy to see them introduce some benefits to the Legal Aid system to make it wider for everybody.

You may ask, why should the GMB support the Legal Aid system given that our members already have access to an excellent legal service? I believe we should support this motion for two reasons.

Firstly, the employees of the Legal Services Commission who administer the Legal Aid scheme are members of our union and as we always do we should fight to protect our members' jobs. Secondly, access to the legal system should be a fundamental right for

all members of society. Our members all have access to the legal system through their membership and whilst we would like all the population to join the GMB, many members of the population do not work and as much as we do not like it there are still some capitalist organisations who believe that union membership is the sign of a troublemaker. Until we have removed this view from society, Legal Aid should be protected. I move this motion. Please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague? Seconder?

The motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? No. Thank you. Can I call Elaine Daley to speak on 142? I will then call Motions 161 and 165, and then move to the Public Services Section.

SIS. E. DALEY (CEC, Commercial Services): President, Congress, the CEC is supporting Motion 141 and supporting Motion 142 on Justice for Working People with a qualification I will explain.

The CEC give their full support to this motion but we need to be clear that we do not want to see any detrimental changes to Legal Aid for working people. The motion as worded would make us opposed to all change, even positive change.

We have heard the new coalition government's announcements of £6.2bn in government spending cuts and heard Ken Clarke, the new Justice Secretary, announce that Legal Aid budgets could be cut.

Congress, we need to wait for further details of where the cuts will fall but we will fight any detrimental cuts to the current service and protect frontline services. Please support 141 and support 142 with this qualification. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Elaine. Does South Western accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Can I now put 141 and 142 to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Thank you. Anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 141 was carried.

Motion 142 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: I ask Midland & East Coast to move Motion 161, and then London Region to move Motion 165 on Wootton Bassett.

SOCIAL POLICY – GENERAL
THE MORNING STAR CIRCULATION
MOTON 161

161. THE MORNING STAR CIRCULATION

The Morning Star must try to publicise themselves more and get onto the shelves of the newsagents, so people can find out more about what's happening in the Union world.

In Scarborough, not a single newsagent sells The Morning Star, and if you want to read all the latest news and keep up to date with all that's happening within the Trade Union movement, you have to personally order a copy.

If The Morning Star could get some sort of contract, maybe on a sale or return for somewhere like W H Smiths, which has stores in most towns and cities, this could go some way to getting the news out to so many more people.

SCARBOROUGH & NORTH YORKS COMMUNITY BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. A. COLLIER (Midland & East Coast): The *Morning Star* must try to publicise themselves more and get onto the shelves of the newsagents so more people can find out about what is happening in the union world. Founded in 1930 the *Morning Star* is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year. The paper has an interesting history and has fought to survive coping with court cases against them, imprisonment of staff, and even censorship by the police. For 12 years there was even a boycott of the paper but the dedicated readers of *The Star* kept their paper going by delivering it to the newsagents themselves. *The Star* is unique in a way that no other paper is by being owned by its readers and through the fighting fund and the generosity of its readers it is able to bring us, the trade unionists, essential news within the trade union Movement. They overcame more obstacles, such as the offices being bombed in 1941 and destroying the building and the presses. This did not stop the paper from bringing us the news and our paper is still going strong today. In Scarborough there is only one newsagent who sells The *Morning Star* but only on certain days. All the other newsagents have not even heard of it. If *The Star* could get some sort of contract with WH Smiths, which have stores in most towns and cities, this would go some way to getting the news out to so many more people. I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

BRO. M. MARGINI (Midland & East Coast): The *Morning Star* is a British daily tabloid newspaper. It covers all domestic news but focuses on social and trade union issues. It has an art page, TV page, and a sports page, and articles from a variety of socialists, social democrats, greens, and has a religious perspective. The paper supported the Miners' Strike and gave a truthful and up-to-date commentary. The *Morning Star* carries little commercial advertising with a low advertising rate and the price does not cover the print and distribution.

The *Morning Star* has also taken a much higher profile at the trade union gatherings and within the UK trade union Movement. It has respect from unions such as the GMB. The newspaper has a high profile at many trade union events such as the Durham Miners'

Gala. However, there is only one way for The Star to improve further and that is to widen its readership base where it will hopefully bring in additional advertising revenue. Perhaps it is time all trade unionists and environmentalists give some support to The *Morning Star* in the most simplistic way, by ordering and calling at their newsagents each day.

The *Morning Star* is the only newspaper worth reading in the country. It is well organised and consistently on the side of the working class in their battle. It is an honest and truthful paper and deserves a much wider readership. Comrades, I urge you to support the motion by going out and ordering the paper from your local newsagent. I second the motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. London Region?

SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR WOOTTON BASSETT MOTION 165

165. SPECIAL RECOGNITION FOR WOOTON-BASSETT

This Conference instructs the CEC to lobby Government to give special recognition to Wootton-Bassett in Wiltshire. This is to be recognition for the unwavering commitment shown by this community to honouring our fallen troops. The community line the Main Street continuously, for every coffin that passes through their small town, no matter how many times this occurs and in all weather conditions. This surely deserves recognition.

CAMDEN APEX BRANCH
London Region

(Referred)

SIS. D. PETERSON (London): President, Congress, only a few years ago the small town of Wootton Bassett was almost unheard of except by the locals. Then Britain went to war in Iraq and Afghanistan and our fallen troops were flown into the nearby airfield of RAF Lyneham, and driven through Wootton Bassett. Soon the dead will not be taking this route back into Britain and this small town is in danger of drifting back into obscurity again.

This Congress instructs the CEC to lobby Parliament to give special recognition to Wootton Bassett, this to be recognition for the unwavering commitment shown by this community in honouring our fallen heroes. The community line the main streets for every coffin that passes through their small town, no matter how many times this happens, and in all weather conditions. This surely deserves honour and recognition and we ask that they lobby the Government to give them the honour and recognition due to them. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Secunder? Colleagues, there is a lot of noise in the hall. Could I please ask you not to hold little conversations in corners? I can hear it up here so god knows what it does to people trying to listen to these important debates. Thank you. (*Applause*)

BRO. A. MIALL (London): This motion is not about whether the delegates at Congress agree or disagree with our service personnel fighting these conflicts abroad. It is about giving recognition to the people of Wootton Bassett. I would be rather standing here discussing our service personnel marching back through Wootton Bassett instead of returning from conflicts abroad. Sadly, this is not the case. They are returning to their homeland fallen heroes to be laid to rest. I agree with my colleague, Dott, and feel that the Government should give special recognition to Wootton Bassett and the local people, and indeed members of the public that turn out and line the streets upon their return.

Whilst I am aware that some of the delegates at Congress are not in favour of our service personnel fighting in these conflicts, I would like to ask Congress to support this motion and give our thanks to the town council and members of the public who turn out on a regular basis and for the support they give to the relatives of their loved ones. Having been a member of the armed forces myself and served in a couple of conflicts I stand here before you and ask you to support this motion. I support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

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

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern): I live three miles from Wootton Bassett and am Branch Secretary of the Wiltshire Branch that has a number of members who live there and work there. I really know that this motion is well intentioned but the town council of Wootton Bassett do not want special recognition. The Mayor of Wootton Bassett has spoken out against special recognition and the Royal British Legion has spoken out against special recognition for the town, and it is for two reasons.

One, the people of Wootton Bassett are just doing the decent thing. When brave young men that have fallen, and I think one woman has come back through Bassett, are driven through they have just stood in the street and done the respectful thing. They do not want attention taken away from the dead soldiers onto themselves. That is the first thing.

The second thing, delegates, is that I am sad to say Wootton Bassett has become a bit of a circus to the disrespect of the fallen and to the disrespect of the people. What happens is that when the bodies come through the press come down, we have politicians trying to jump on the bandwagon, we have even had Nick Griffin turning up, we have had political extremists like the English Defence League, all these people turning up, and the people of Wootton Bassett are very, very wary of political capital being made out of what they have done.

Now, I do not want to oppose this motion, I know it is kindly meant, but you spelt the name of the town wrong which I think does say that you did not ask what people in the area want. I do not want to oppose it but I would ask for you to consider perhaps having it referred back. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Matt.

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London) speaking in support of Motion 161, said: I would just like quickly to relate a tale from the hotel lobby the other day. A certain National Officer

was at the hotel desk reception complaining bitterly, he said, “I wanted *The Morning Star* not the *Daily Star*.” (*Laughter*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Matt. Colleagues, calling Viv.

SIS. V. SMART (CEC/Public Services): President, Congress, the CEC supports Motion 161. We are asking Congress to refer Motion 165 which asks for special recognition to the town of Wootton Bassett. This is a worthy sentiment. The Wootton Bassett tributes were started spontaneously by British Legion members pausing to salute the cortege from nearby RAF Lyneham, which is used to return all those killed in operations. Since then the repatriation ceremonies have grown to involve the entire town and have earned widespread praise and attention. However, although there have been a number of calls for recognition, the people of Wootton Bassett themselves consider that any talk of reward or recognition would be inappropriate while the coffins are coming back and families are grieving.

In accordance with these wishes, the CEC is asking you to agree to refer the motion until such time as the townspeople of Wootton Bassett themselves feel it is appropriate. The CEC will closely monitor the situation and return to this issue when these sad journeys end. RAF Lyneham is due to close in 2012 and it may well be that this will be the time to ask for special recognition.

Congress, we are asking you to support Motion 161 and to refer 165. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Viv. Can I move Motion 161? All those in support, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.
Will London Region accept reference? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

Motion 161 was carried.

Motion 165 was referred.

SHOOTING IN WEST CUMBRIA EMERGENCY MOTION NO.3

EMERGENCY MOTION NO 3 SHOOTING IN WEST CUMBRIA

CONGRESS IS APPALLED AT THE TRAGIC EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE IN WEST CUMBRIA IN THE PAST WEEK.

CONGRESS EXPRESSES DEEPEST SYMPATHY AND SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF CUMBRIA AND THE INNOCENT FAMILIES INVOLVED; AND, IN THE LIGHT OF THESE HORRIFIC EVENTS, CALLS UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO TIGHTEN UP THE GUN LAWS TO THE EXTENT THAT THIS CAN NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN.

**SUNDERLAND 9 BRANCH
NORTHERN REGION**

(Carried)

THE PRESIDENT: I now move to Emergency Motion 3, Shooting in West Cumbria, and can I say, Congress, before taking this motion I know that thousands of people are gathering at midday today for a minute's silence across Cumbria. Can I please ask Congress to stand for one minute's silence here to remember the 12 people who lost their lives in the shooting last week?

Congress stood in silent tribute.

BRO. A. FOSTER (Northern): I am a first time delegate. (*Applause*) Congress, as Billy Bragg has recently said, if you are a farmer using a gun for shooting vermin, who in their right mind needs a 2.2 rifle with a telescopic sight to keep in their own home. I am aware that we have the tightest gun legislation in Europe and that no legislation will prevent illegal weapons being used in this society. This motion is not about that. No legislation will prevent a switch turning on in someone's head. This motion is not about that either.

Congress, I ask you if the police have to be highly regulated in weapons and ammunition why should it be any different for the rest of us. If people want to be in a gun club, no problem, in fact good luck to them, but lock the guns away and store the ammunition centrally. Congress, regulation is something we champion in health and safety. Why should it be any different for gun club ownership?

Congress, let's try to make sure that we have no more tragedies as in Hungerford, Dunblane, or West Cumbria. Please support. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

BRO. G. MAYFIELD (Northern): President, Congress, as the mover of this motion has clearly set out the tragedies of last week need to be prevented in the future. Innocent victims lost their lives last week and some were badly injured. Families were ripped apart. We do not know why these terrible events took place and we probably never will get all the answers but one thing is sure, we can prevent them in the future. We can try and prevent how these events take place.

Congress, thank god we do not live in a cowboy culture; leave that to the Americans. Let's protect the families. I am also proud to live in a country where we regulate guns. Let's tighten it up as much as is required. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? Thank you. Can I move to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Against? That is carried.

Emergency Motion 3 was carried.

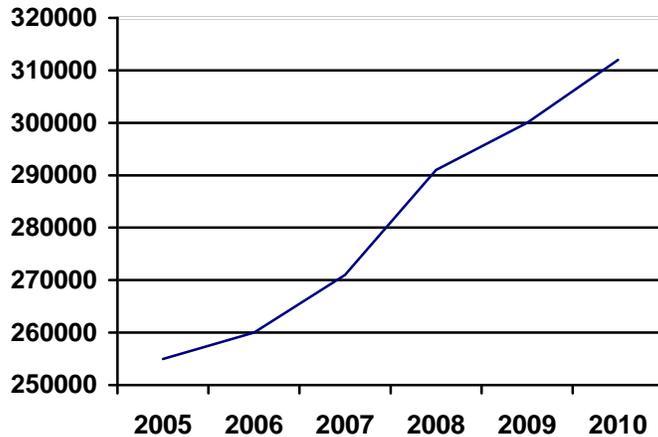
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION REPORT

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

1. PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Public Services Section grew to more than 312,000 by the end of 2009, up from 303,522 at the start of the year. The chart below shows the Section's consistent membership growth.

Public Services Membership 2005-2010



The public sector is under increasing pressure. Thousands of jobs have been cut by local councils and other employers, with more losses on the cards. An election year for national and local government, combined with the media hysteria about public spending, promises to make 2010 a defining moment for public services.

GMB members, backed by their workplace organisers, branch secretaries, other lay activists and full-time officers, are leading the fight to protect public services and the workers who deliver them.

Amidst the challenges, there remains plenty of scope to recruit and organise new members in the sector. The Public Services Section is well-placed to continue its membership growth.

2. NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The role of the National Committee is to consider and determine policy issues and Public Services Section activities at national level. The Section is fortunate in having an active and committed National Committee chaired by GMB President, Mary Turner. Our National Office staff are Brian Strutton, National Secretary; Sharon Holder and Rehana Azam, National Officers; Justin Bowden, on Regional secondment; Mick Hubbard, Productivity Services Officer; Tom Hazeldine, Research & Policy Officer; Angela Sayer, Section Administrator and PA; and Rita Compton, PA. The Section has been well supported by National Office departments (legal, pensions, political, health and safety, communications); the NAU; the National Organising Team; and the GMB Brussels office; all have contributed to help the Section grow and deliver its objectives for our members.

The National Committee decides actions arising from Congress and Section Conference decisions; receives and scrutinises reports from the National Secretary, National Officers and GMB Regions; as well as matters raised by Committee members themselves. Current issues in national negotiations are discussed in particular detail. Minutes of National Committee meetings are approved by the CEC and distributed to branches via Regions and posted on the GMB website for all members to see.

The main points dealt with by the Committee in 2009 included:

- Section membership and growth
- School Support Staff Negotiating Body
- Personalisation of social care
- Public Sector Pensions
- Single status in local government
- Legal Services Commission redundancies
- Southern Cross organising strategy
- Local government pay negotiations
- GMB Further Education Forum
- New ISA requirements
- Two-tier workforce issues and training
- Council housing
- NHS ambulance sector
- Higher Education pay negotiations
- Campaign against PFI
- GMB National Contractors Forum
- Environment Agency pay negotiations
- NHS Pay Review Body
- Academies
- Prison Service pay and job evaluation
- Further Education pay campaign
- Police staffs pay negotiations

The National Committee membership is:

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
David Hope	North West & Irish 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 Representative
Heather Starr	MPO Representative
Steve Rice	ASU Representative
Richard Passmore	NHS Representative
Barry Lambert	HE Representative
Rory MacQueen	FE Representative
Ronnie Hill	Schools Representative

3. SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF NEGOTIATING BODY (SSSNB)

The new School Support Staff Negotiating Body held an historic first meeting on 7 July 2009. This the first national bargaining machinery to be created for many years and a strong achievement for GMB.

The SSSNB gained legal status with the successful passage through Parliament of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act in November 2009. The Act formally entered into force in January 2010.

With the new negotiating body finally up and running, the real work of negotiating a new pay and conditions framework for all support staff in maintained schools in England can begin.

The SSSNB has created two working groups to develop a national pay structure as well as a national core contract of employment. It has procured job evaluation experts to do detailed preparatory work including designing around 100 benchmark roles and a dedicated JE scheme.

GMB is represented on all parts of the negotiating body by three lay members of our National Schools Committee: Alyson Bryan, Christine Footer and Barbara Plant, together with the National Secretary who is Joint Secretary to the SSSNB. The Schools Committee, chaired by Ronnie Hill, oversees the work being done by the negotiating body.

GMB members will have a vote on any proposals that emerge. This is not only an important matter of principle but also an opportunity to invite all school support staff to have their say through GMB membership.

4. HEALTH SECTOR

GMB, along with other NHS unions, remains a key partner in the Social Partnership Forum which brings together NHS Employers, Trade Unions and the Department of Health to discuss, debate and involve partners in the development and implementation of the workforce implications of policy. The main policies dealt with by the Social Partnership Forum in 2009 include:

- NHS finance
- Transforming Community Services
- A new Commercial Operating Model for the NHS and Department of Health
- The NHS as the Preferred Provider of Healthcare Services
- Retention of Employment
- NHS Staff Survey
- NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework
- Staff Passport
- Embedding Social Partnership Working in the NHS
- Pandemic Flu (Swine Flu)
- Healthcare and Associated Infections (HCAI)
- Health, Work and Well-being of NHS Staff
- Personal Health Budgets – Implications for NHS Staff
- NHS Constitution

NHS Membership

At the end of 2009, the Public Services Section's combined NHS and Ambulance Service Sector membership stood at 26,008. GMB is the fifth largest trades union among the fourteen trades unions and professional organisations represented on the NHS Staff Council.

National Advisory Committees

The Health Service Advisory Group and the Ambulance Committee met a total of five times during 2009. Both committees report to the Public Services Section National Committee. Advisory committees provide a platform for regional consultation and for NHS occupations to consider and advise on potential occupational

group implications of emerging Government/Department policy, NHS employment policy and practice, and GMB policies and campaigns.

Current membership of the advisory committees consist of:

Health Service Advisory Group

Phil Baldwin (North West & Irish Region)
Alan Chetwynd (Midland & East Coast Region)
Neil Collinson (Northern Region)
Mick Coppin (Midland & East Coast Region)
Mary Finn (GMB Scotland)
Joss Guittard (North West & Irish Region)
Jean Garside (London Region)
Tony Hackett (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)
Martin Jackson (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)
Gary Lock (South Western Region)
Lynne Myers (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)
Jill McCarthy (South Western Region)
Richard Passmore (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)
Alma Stewart (Northern Region)
Ray Stewart (Southern Region)
Keri Thompson (London Region)
Maya Venkatasawmy (Southern Region)

Ambulance Committee

Mo Akbar (London Region)
Ally Barron (GMB Scotland)
Anne Berry (Midland & East Coast Region)
Alan Giles (Southern Region)
Kevin Lyons (South Western Region)
Ben McGachy (Southern Region)
Dave Midgley (Yorkshire Region)
Sean Mulligan (London Region)
Malcolm Parker (Northern Region)
Mike Quirk (North West & Irish Region)
Steve Rice (North West & Irish Region)
John Roberts (North West & Irish Region)
Tony Stephens (South Western Region)
Sharon Thorpe (South Western Region)
Keith Wellsbury (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)

Advisory Committee chairs are co-opted members on the Public Services Section National Committee.

NHS

Pay, terms and conditions and pensions form the basis of key work undertaken in the NHS in 2009.

NHS Pay 2009/2010

- Currently in the second year of a multi-year pay agreement in the NHS across the UK. Rates of pay from 1 April 2009 were uplifted by 2.4% on National Pay Scales.
- Increases of 2.4% also applied to the National Recruitment and Retention Premia payable to qualified maintenance craftsmen and technicians under the terms of Annex R, paragraph 13, of the Agenda for Change handbook and healthcare chaplains under paragraph 15; an increase of 2.4% of the minimum and maximum value of high cost area supplements.

- Deletion of the lowest point of band 1 from the pay scales.
- An increase in the value of the top pay point of band 5 by an additional 0.33% resulting in re-spreading of certain pay points in band 5 and the first 3 points in band 6.
- An increase of 2.4% to the value of cash allowances payable for on-call work.

Whilst the 2009 uplift was above inflation, the 2007 and 2008 uplifts were below inflation at the time. The Government also confirmed the uplifts had been fully funded. However, reports from some parts of the UK have indicated that local NHS organisations are 'sounding out' staff on their likely reaction to the non-payment of the 2010 uplift, as this too may represent an above inflation uplift.

NHS funding has risen from £37billion in 1997 to £110 billion in 2010 and this money is not being taken away. It is the rate of growth that will end following this period's spending review.

Terms and Conditions

The NHS Staff Council and Executive have dealt with a number of issues, including:

- On-call review
- Mileage allowances
- Knowledge and Skills Framework
- Job Evaluation
- Equality and Diversity
- Partnership reports from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Work/Life balance and improving working lives
- Recruitment and Retention Premia guidance
- Ill health benefits
- Injury benefits
- NHS Pay Review Body evidence
- Facilities for staff organisations
- Skill mix/downsizing/organisational change
- Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) fees
- Unsocial Hours/Annual leave
- Review of professional registration fees
- Travel/car parking issues
- Study time
- NHS carbon reduction strategy
- Occupational safety and health in healthcare

Pensions

The pre-budget report announced in 2009 makes clear that the NHS Pension scheme will have to find £16m in savings. Because of the NHS Pension reforms introduced in 2008, savings of approximately £1 billion will be achieved by 2012.

The 2008 section of the NHS Pension Scheme includes a number of flexibilities which NHS, Trades Unions and Employers agreed could be attractive to existing staff. For example, higher accrual rates which means that benefits could be worth around 8% more if staff transferred to the 2008 section from the 1995 section; also, the ability to draw some of their pension whilst continuing to work.

Provisions set out in the NHS Pensions Agreement, signed in 2007, means that existing members of the 1995 scheme will be given the choice to transfer to the 2008 scheme.

The timetable to implement Pensions Choice began in January 2010.

The Public Services Section, in conjunction with the pensions department, has offered and undertaken briefings in regions on the Choice exercise and continue to provide updates, details of which can be found on the GMB website.

The Scottish Public Pensions Agency are also implementing Choice and, like England and Wales, plan to issue Choice statements to existing scheme members towards the end of January.

5. CARE SECTOR

At the Labour Party Conference in September 2009, Gordon Brown announced, quite unexpectedly, proposals to provide free home care in England and outlined ambitions for the creation of a new National Care Service, which is expected to be one of the key plans of Labour's election strategy. Personal care is currently means-tested but Ministers want to see English Councils provide it free to about 280,000 people in line with the service available in Scotland.

A Social Care Bill was published in November 2009. Subject to parliamentary approval, the Bill, which would come into effect from October 2010, would guarantee free personal care for up to 280,000 elderly and disabled people with the highest needs who live at home. The legislation is intended to be the first step towards establishing a new National Care Service.

Both the announcement and the publication of the Personal Care at Home Bill, although warmly welcomed by GMB, fail to address the fundamental issues affecting the social care sector: chronic under-funding, charges and the impact and implications for the social care workforce, in the community, local government and NHS, of direct budgets and personalisation.

In the last two years GMB has submitted responses to five consultation documents linked to adult social care. Each called on the Government, firstly, to increase funding and, secondly, to make changes to the system that would ensure national standards of assessment and eligibility, which are free at the point of delivery, are fair and easily understood by users, families and carers. Lastly, GMB has appealed to the Government to introduce a national pay and grading system for the care sector with good rates of pay linked to career progression. A copy of GMB's response on Personal Care at Home can be found on GMB's website.

The priority of the Public Services Section across the Adult Social Care sector in 2009 remained in the independent care sector market. GMB membership amongst the largest UK provider, Southern Cross Healthcare, continues to grow and, at the end of 2009, stood at over 13,000 members.

Despite lengthy negotiations on a comprehensive pay claim submitted in July 2009, no agreement was reached and Southern Cross imposed a 1.6% pay award to staff on a Southern Cross contract. Subsequently, in December 2009, the award was unanimously rejected by a ratio of 9:1 in a national ballot of members. GMB's Southern Cross National Committee has embarked on a sustained campaign to re-open talks and to seek a revised award to the one imposed.

The Southern Cross National Committee consists of: Linda Birch (Birmingham & West Midlands Region), Martin Ayliffe (London Region), Helen Ewan (Midland & East Coast Region), Brian Jenkins (North West & Irish Region), John Barron (Northern Region), Joanne Laurie (GMB Scotland), Sharon Rawlings (South Western Region), Anthony Smith (Southern Region) and Michelle Bee (Yorkshire Region).

In parallel, the General Secretary, supported by the regions, the National Organising Team, the political department and the Public Services Section, has commenced a high-profile campaign to highlight the plight of Southern Cross staff with local authorities. The staff are poorly paid because Southern Cross, to maximise profits and results, has adapted a low cost, low wage and low staffing model for the delivery of care services, which does directly impact on quality of care. The local authorities' targeted have either reduced or cut, in real terms, funding levels to Southern Cross which has direct consequences for budgets, pay and conditions and, therefore, GMB members employed by Southern Cross.

6. MOD

The most significant issue addressed in the MOD sector during 2009 has been the Government's proposed revisions to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, in other words, redundancy terms. After eighteen

months of negotiations, an agreement was finally reached at the beginning of February 2010. Five unions, GMB, Unite, Prospect, FDA and the POA, have reached agreement, subject to consultation. The new terms are due to take effect from 1 April 2010 with transitional protections in some circumstances extending well into the future. The following highlight the changes to the redundancy terms:

Proposed New Compulsory Terms:

- Cash payment based on one month's pay per year of service for the first five years and two month's pay per year for subsequent service up to a maximum of the higher of two year's pay or £60,000. Where £60,000 is higher than three year's pay, the payment is capped at three year's pay (see worked examples below).
- Two year's qualifying period for a redundancy payment.
- Guaranteed unreduced pension for those within five years of pension age where the severance payment is insufficient to buy out the actuarial reduction for early payment.
- This guarantee will also apply to anyone aged at least 50 on 31 March 2010 who had a minimum of five years service at that date.
- Severance payments will be clawed back if a person is re-employed in the civil service.
- Limited protection for staff whose last day of service is on or before 31 March 2011 to the existing compulsory early retirement and severance terms only for those who are made compulsory redundant.

Proposed New Voluntary Terms:

- Cash payment up to a maximum of two year's pay but with employers having discretion about what they offer within this.
- Departments will have discretion to offer early payment of pension to those aged 55 or over.

At the time of writing the report, consultation ballots in the MOD, Prison Service, and among other pockets of GMB members covered by the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, are in progress, timetabled to end early March 2010.

The Public Services Section's involvement in the development of the revised Civil Service Compensation Scheme has been hugely supported by the GMB Pensions Department at National Office.

7. LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION (LSC)

The LSC continue with their major plans to transform their business delivery. Over the course of the year the GMB received four HR1 forms which amounted to over 200 redundancies.

Each HR1 form served to the GMB was suitably challenged with every opportunity exploited to minimize job losses. Of the posts at risk a further exercise to apply voluntary redundancy as opposed to compulsory redundancy had some success. After lengthy challenges, including the successful suspension of a 90 days consultation period, a total of 90 posts out of the 240 posts were lost through redundancy of which 30% of these posts were through voluntary redundancy.

On pay the 2009/10 settlement amounted to 1.5% consolidated on all pay rates for LSC Staff.

GMB organisation has been central to the industrial agenda. Each GMB Workplace Organiser is tasked to achieve full membership at all LSC sites. Nationally this objective has been supported by the National Officer, Chair and Vice-Chair through facilitating meetings and ensuring suitable access arrangements are made available to meet with members and non-members. The GMB Senior Reps meet every quarter and the annual conference has ensured that all GMB Reps participate in the process of agreeing the industrial and organising strategy.

Politically we have continued to step up the pressure through a number of means and the members' letter writing campaign peaked in the middle of last year. The recent Audit Commission report identified some weaknesses in the LSC processes. This report will support the GMB's central argument that there is a lack

of capacity available and job cuts will only result in difficulties in delivering services. The Ministry of Justice tasked Lord McGee to undertake a review of the Legal Services Commission through which the GMB has robustly raised the concerns of GMB members. At the time of writing members in the LSC await the outcome of the McGee Report.

The National Chair Peter Earley who works at the LSC South Tyneside Office and Vice – Chair Martin Benham who works at the LSC Birmingham Office have both provided strong leadership and support to all the members in the Commission. It is apt that both Peter and Martin are congratulated and thanked for the unstinting support to organise GMB members and retaining jobs in the LSC.

8. THE PRISON SERVICE

Negotiations are conducted through the Prison Service Joint Industrial Council (PSJIC). Our members in the service include maintenance, catering, cleaning and other relevant occupational groups within an industrial setting.

Workforce modernisation dominated discussions with the Prison Service but as the Prison Officers Association and Prison Governors Association rejected the outcome of the plans around workforce modernisation, the £50 million made available for this was taken off the table by the Ministry of Justice.

Despite the funds taken away the Prison Service continue to press for modernisation of its workforce.

The Prison Service Joint Industrial Council (PSJIC) of which the GMB is a member continues to press the employer to effectively consult and negotiate within the PSJIC collective bargaining arrangements. For too long the PSJIC trade unions to a degree have been bypassed on key fundamental issues on pay and grading. For example over the past three years pay settlements have been imposed. This causes significant anxiety amongst the membership. The key industrial priority is to change the status quo and identify real action from the employer to demonstrate their proper and meaningful engagement with the PSJIC trade unions. Meetings with the Minister have been secured over the course of the year so that direct support can be procured to assist in this fundamental disparity in bargaining arrangements.

Over the course of the year difficult discussions have had to take place to encourage full participation of reps in key industrial issues affecting GMB members. A new national forum has been set up in the GMB where quarterly meetings of reps will take place. A clear direction of priorities steered by the reps should begin to address the culture of dependency that is endemic in the sector. The newly formed reps forum should begin addressing the significant gaps with GMB organisation in the Prison Service. At the time of writing Rob Burnett from Birmingham Region has just taken up the role of GMB National Representative.

9. HIGHER EDUCATION

After protracted negotiations with the unions single table bargaining has been secured for the sector. The GMB was a key player in achieving this for the sector and the original agreement reached which the four unions that signed including the GMB remained unchanged. The agreement included an appendix which addressed the concerns and finally brought about the single table bargaining arrangements.

GMB HE sector retains its position to explore opportunities in building a strong organising culture within the sector. It is fair to say the success of the national organising pilots were rightly scrutinised and the subsequent report tabled at the CEC meeting in January 2010 offered a number of recommendations. The GMB Higher Education Committee has considered these recommendations and at the time of writing will shortly be communicating with the regions the work plan to implement them. Nationally there continues to be a commitment to work with any institution locally to build and support GMB organisation. Such local activity will secure a better understanding within the regions as to how the GMB can exploit opportunities to build membership within the sector.

The previous three year pay deal amounted to one of the best pay deals secured in the Public Services Section. However, the 0.5% pay deal concluded for the pay year 2009/10 was certainly a backward step for the sector.

The GMB believe that there is a crisis in Higher Education. Since March 2009, there has been a wave of job cuts sweeping through the sector affecting all staff including GMB members. These cuts will have a devastating effect on the provision and quality of higher education. The GMB shares the view that an ill-conceived, short term strategy of slash and burn to cut costs is nothing less than a betrayal of current and future generations in communities that are already hit hard by the recession.

The employer's response to offer a pitiful 0.5% and then to threaten that any suggestion for more would amount to further job cuts was challenged robustly particularly considering that the average salary for the head of a university is £193,000. The GMB will continue to demand fair treatment of staff and fair pay. The GMB supported this by submitting a claim for a national agreement to protect jobs. A nationally agreed procedure will commit universities to work with the recognised unions to find ways to avoid redundancies provide training and maximise opportunities for deployment.

GMB Regions are actively encouraged to engage and develop the campaign. Further details of the campaign can be found on www.defendhighereducation.org.uk

The GMB Higher Education Committee supports the aims and objectives of the Public Services Section and brings direct attention to the PS Committee of the activities of the GMB Higher Education Section. The GMB HE Committee have met regularly and supported all the activities around single table bargaining and all issues relating to pay and conditions. The focus to develop support regionally and the sharing of best practice have been central to all activities.

The GMB HE Committee is made up of the following:

John Brannan (London Region)
Alan Budd (Midland & East Coast Region)
Jim Finucane (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)
Les Goodyer (Northern Region)
Barry Lambert (Southern Region)
Fred McDwyer (North West & Irish Region)
Patrick Maddock (Yorkshire Region)
Keith Russell (South Western Region)
Tom Young (GMB Scotland)

It will be appropriate to thank the Chair of the Committee Barry Lambert for his experienced guidance in chairing the activities of the Higher Education Committee and his active involvement in securing single table bargaining for the sector, which is certainly an issue very dear to this chair.

10. FURTHER EDUCATION

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. There continue to be difficulties around settlements that only carry a recommendation to implement. As a result many colleges in England have fallen behind the nationally agreed pay scales.

The thrust of GMB activity has been to encourage regions to begin local FE college organisation. To support this activity regions have been provided with a list of colleges, the recognition agreement, model letters to initiate contact with the college principals and details in how the 'time to pay up' campaign can be applied to support the industrial and organising agenda of the GMB.

In addition the GMB Further Education Reps have asked for a forum for the sector, which the GMB Public Sector Committee approved, and the first inaugural meeting of the forum took place in January this year.

Currently the regions represented on the forum are listed below. Developing Regional GMB organisation should assist in developing the forum and better assist the forum's activities. Regions continue to be supported where required to develop GMB membership within the FE Sector. Full details of the campaign can be found at www.timetopayup.org.uk.

On pay the 2009/10 settlement achieved a 1.5% increase on all salaries and allowances. Unfortunately no underpinning was considered or achieved in this pay round. Again as previously reported, 1.5% is meaningless if GMB Colleges are not implementing the recommendation. It is crucial the GMB take an active role locally to secure the national pay settlements and begin local membership organisation. The National Officer Rehana Azam and National Reps Rory MacQueen and Chris Grice will continue to offer support to regions to make national pay recommendation a reality in regions or support regions in implementing the 'time to pay up' campaign.

The current members of the Forum are:

Chris Grice (Southern Region)
Rory MacQueen (London Region)
Anne Mussan (Midland & East Coast Region)
Derek Sutcliffe (North West & Irish Region)

11. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The majority of GMB membership is held by the Southern Region and the two national reps Terry Sadler and Mike Sutton are also based within the region. National negotiations on pay and conditions are carried out through the National Negotiating Group (NNG) where the GMB has one seat.

2009/10 pay negotiations were protracted and difficult and the Environment Agency was not immune to the pressures and challenges the public services have faced. Despite best efforts negotiations only achieved a 1.5% pay increase which after some hesitation was accepted. The Environment Agency have already communicated how working smarter will be the key objective of the agency in the coming year and job security and retaining jobs and conditions will be a key objective for the GMB. At the time of writing the 2010/11 pay claim has been formulated by the trade union side and was recently submitted to the Employer. The national reps continue to secure engagement across the regions by regularly updating all members on all issues discussed within the Agency.

12. POLICE STAFF

The terms and conditions of Police Staff are negotiated through the Police Staff Council (PSC). The GMB has one seat on the PSC which is currently held by Fergus Murchie of Devon and Cornwall Police. The sector is currently in a three-year pay deal which commenced in 2008 and the pay deal will conclude next year. The offer consisted of pay increases retrospectively of 2.6% in year one, 2.6% in year two, and in the year three the increase will be 2.58% on all PSC pay points and allowances. Year three would see the deletion of the pay points 2 and 3. Deletion of the bottom pay points is a significant step to end low pay in the sector. In addition to this a strong statement was agreed by the PSC on the view to develop a strategic approach to explore a national grading structure for all Police Staff in England and Wales. Unfortunately this work has been delayed due to the lack of movement the employer has made on these issues. Nationally the GMB continues to seek to work with Regions locally to strengthen GMB force organisation.

13. CONTRACTORS

The CEC acted on a Congress decision that the GMB needed to consider a fresh approach to organising members in the local government contracting sector.

The GMB National Contractors' Forum, established in May 2009, will offer an infrastructure for reps in the sector to better engage and exchange relevant workplace organising experiences. The ambition is to

identify a number of national organising targets based on access arrangements and the industrial agenda alongside consolidating membership at sites where GMB already has members. Where national targets are identified the infrastructure to support reps and regions should bring the necessary components required to build and organise membership.

The Public Services Section is currently considering and evaluating relationships with contractors. Historically many of the contractors, whilst holding loose gateway agreements, do not recognise trade unions nationally for collective bargaining purposes but do at site or contract level. The key for GMB is to increase membership density to a level that makes proper recognition inevitable.

14. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Pay, pensions, job cuts and Single Status were key issues in local government in 2009.

Local Government pay

The 2008–09 NJC (Green Book) pay review ended in March 2009 when ACAS awarded an additional 0.3%, bringing the total value of the review to 2.75%, or 3.6% on the lowest spinal column points.

In the 2009–10 review, GMB and other local government unions reluctantly voted to accept the employers' final offer in September 2009. The offer was 1.25% for those earning between £6.22 and £7.10 an hour, 1% for those earning more. There was also an increase in minimum annual leave entitlement for employees with less than five years' service.

Which brings us to the current situation on pay for 2010–11. In October last year, GMB and the other local government unions submitted an NJC claim for a £500 flat-rate increase or 2.5%, whichever is the greater. The employers responded in the New Year by announcing that there would be no pay offer whatsoever for the NJC, Craft or Chief Officers. They were not prepared to enter into discussion or negotiation.

GMB has condemned the arrogance of the employers and their total disrespect for council staff. The employers are pleading poverty but they cannot back this up. This is a political decision by Tory-controlled local government. At the time of writing, the trade union side of the NJC has ruled nothing out, and is taking forward a political and publicity campaign leading up to the pay anniversary date in April and the local elections in May.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS remains a well-funded and sustainable scheme. It has over £100bn in the bank for future council pensions, and an annual cash surplus of over £4bn.

A policy review group, involving the local government unions, employers and civil servants, has continued to discuss a sustainability model for the LGPS. The idea is to buffer the scheme against future cost increases and to demonstrate its long-term viability. In December 2009 the Pre-Budget report created new complexities by including the LGPS in new capping arrangements for employer contributions to public-sector schemes. How this will work in practice has yet to be hammered out.

Limited reforms have been achieved on LGPS ill-health arrangements. We have seen new statutory guidance and some regulatory changes. But progress on this issue is still extremely slow.

We continue to react robustly to the malicious scare-mongering of the Tories, the Lib Dems, the media and self-interested pensions-industry commentators, about the future of local government pensions. A new myth-busting GMB pamphlet on public-sector pensions is being distributed, for information and as ammunition for rebutting further attacks on the LGPS and other schemes. The pamphlet calls for private-sector provision to be raised up, not public-sector schemes run down.

Single Status/Equal Pay

The implementation of single status pay and grading structures in local authorities continues to be underfunded and as a result negotiations have broken down in many councils. This has led to employers

forcing through change by dismissal and re-engagement tactics and GMB and other TUs responding with litigation and industrial action. While hundreds of thousands of women have gained pay rises and often substantial backpay awards there have also been tens of thousands of men and women who have lost out. GMB aims to secure equal pay at the best level for everyone and where employers refuse to do that we take all necessary steps to protect our members interests.

Previous reports have referred to the antics of no-win-no-fee lawyers in persuading union members to take legal action against their unions over equal pay, alleging discrimination. GMB lost a case, Allen, in Middlesbrough and we settled the claims of a small number of individuals. Following negotiations with the no-win-no-fee lawyer, Stefan Cross, he has committed to drop all other outstanding discrimination claims against GMB without compensation.

15. COMMUNITY AND DISTRICT NURSING ASSOCIATION

At the time of writing, members of the Community and District Nursing Association (CDNA) have voted to transfer engagements to GMB and that has been ratified by the executives of both unions. Documents are currently with the Certification Officer and if approved the transfer would be effective in April. This is an exciting opportunity for CDNA and GMB together to grow and organise membership and with it our ability to strongly represent health professionals in the community.

(Adopted)

THE PRESIDENT: I ask Brian Strutton to move his report, pages 81-90. Brian.

BRO. B. STRUTTON (National Secretary Public Services): Thank you, Mary. Good morning, everybody. I am formally moving pages 81-90 and giving the report back to Congress of the Public Services Section Conference.

We had a pretty busy agenda so we began our work on Monday afternoon. We had 142 delegates with us and great levels of participation from everybody. We had the National Committee in attendance as well. The conference was once again chaired by Mary Turner. It is our privilege to have Mary as our President in the section. We had 28 motions, we had one emergency motion, six composites covering major subjects like defending public services and public service workers, but also highlighting some less common themes like the con of fee-charging public service phone numbers, like health problems caused by the new radio system in the ambulance service, and like the injustice of making low-paid care and other workers pay for the Government's safeguarding registration scheme.

We had some really excellent reports; I gave one as well. We had good reports from our National Officers, Sharon Holder and Rehana Azam, and we had an introduction to the CDNA from new National Officer, Anne Duffy. We heard from colleagues in the National Organising Department who work with the Public Services Section, Avril Chambers and Paul Clarke, and we thank them. We had a really uplifting talk from John McClean in our Health & Safety Department about issues in waste and refuse contracting services, and he also talked about the administration of medicine in schools which I have to say is becoming a scandal.

We also had a very detailed insight into Public Sector Pensions from Terry Crossley, who is the head of the Local Government Pensions Scheme, because we know that that is

going to be a key battle ahead and our conference vowed to defend all the good quality Public Sector Pension Schemes that are out there, and so we should.

Indeed, the whole of the Public Services Conference was along the theme of looking at the adversity that lies ahead for public services, cuts on the way of a huge scale that we probably cannot even comprehend just yet, and I really felt some positives coming through from the conference.

We have got over our post-election blues. I felt the mood was ready to face the challenges on public services, on jobs, on pay, on pensions, ready to defend our red lines. We did not cause the crisis so why is the axe falling on us? No one else is going to speak up to protect the vulnerable and the needy from those cuts if we do not. That is what we are here for.

We reflected those themes in the press releases we put out during conference on the terrible news that the Tories are scrapping the free school meal pilots, on the poor state of street cleaning, and on the balmy plan to turn all schools into academies.

Finally, we had an additional husting with Ed Balls, the former Secretary of State for Education, who we had invited to our conference anyway because we wanted to put him on the spot about some school issues. I have to say that my personal highlight of the Public Services Conference was seeing Ed Balls holding a lunchtime meeting with some of our ordinary GMB school support staff reps that are here and being grilled to within an inch of his life as to why he left the school support staff negotiating body in such a mess. I move our report. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Any questions on 81-90? No. Agree to accept that report? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Thank you very much, Brian.

Public Services Section Report (pages 81-90) was adopted.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now ask Congress to move to Emergency Motion No.1, London Region to move and Sharon Holder to reply.

UNITY ACROSS THE PUBLIC SECTOR EMERGENCY MOTION NO.1

EMERGENCY MOTION NO 1 UNITY ACROSS THE PUBLIC SECTOR

WORKERS ACROSS THE UK ARE NOW FACING AN UNPRECEDENTED ATTACK ON PUBLIC SERVICES, BOTH AS WORKERS AND USERS, FOLLOWING THE GENERAL ELECTION AND THE FORMING OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF £6.2 BILLION CUTS TWO WEEKS AGO IS THE FIRST OF ITS' SPENDING CUTS, TO BE FOLLOWED BY EVEN MORE CUTS IN THE EMERGENCY BUDGET ON 22 JUNE AND IN THE SPENDING REVIEW IN THE AUTUMN.

ALL THESE CUTS WILL, IF IMPLEMENTED, THREATEN THE VERY BASIS OF UK PUBLIC SERVICES.

WE NEED TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WE DO NOT ACCEPT THE CONSENSUS THAT LOW-PAID PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS SHOULD PAY FOR THE FAILURE OF THE MARKETS AND THE SUBSEQUENT BAIL-OUT OF THE BANKERS THREE YEARS AGO.

WHILST WE AGREE THAT THE PUBLIC SECTOR DEFICIT NEEDS TO BE TACKLED, WE DO NOT ACCEPT THAT WORKERS SHOULD PAY. IF THE EMERGENCY BUDGET WAS TO PROPOSE A PLAN TO REDISTRIBUTE WEALTH AND IMPLEMENT TAX JUSTICE THEN NOT A SINGLE JOB OR SERVICE WOULD NEED TO GO. THE ISSUE NOW REALLY IS "WHO PAYS". IT SHOULDN'T BE US.

WE BELIEVE THAT WORKERS AND CITIZENS WANT TO RESIST THE COMING ONSLAUGHT ON JOBS, PAY, PENSIONS AND PUBLIC SERVICES, AND IT IS FOR THE GMB AND OTHER UNIONS TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN SUCH A CAMPAIGN.

HOWEVER, WE CANNOT DO IT ALONE. WE WILL NEED TO WORK WITH OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN OTHER PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONS – AND MEMBERS AND FELLOW WORKERS, YOUNG PEOPLE, UNEMPLOYED AND PENSIONERS ACROSS THE UK – IF WE ARE TO PROTECT OUR JOBS AND SERVICES, WHETHER IT'S DEFENDING THE NHS, JOBS OR THE WELFARE STATE.

CONGRESS THEREFORE CALLS UPON THE CEC TO WORK WITH PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONS TO:

1. EXPLORE ALL THE WAYS IN WHICH JOINT CAMPAIGNING ACTION CAN BE TAKEN TO DEFEND MEMBERS AND AGAINST ATTACKS ON JOBS, PAY AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS, AND ON PUBLIC SERVICES
2. OPPOSE BY ALL MEANS POSSIBLE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CON-DEM'S BUDGET ON 22 JUNE AND ALL FUTURE ATTACKS ON WORKING PEOPLE
3. WORK CLOSELY WITH COMMUNITY AND LOCAL CAMPAIGNS TO ENSURE THAT THE RESISTANCE TO THE COMING CUTS IS AS EFFECTIVE AND UNITED AS POSSIBLE.

**GMB@PCS BRANCH
LONDON REGION**

(Carried)

SIS. K. HENDRY (London): Congress, President, on Monday David Cameron announced the Public Sector deficit is actually £770bn. The reason for that phenomenal increase, as was just mentioned, is the bailout of the banks and the financial system, and

Government attempts to spend our way out of the recession as a result of the global financial meltdown in 2008. Two-and-a-half years later we face the prospect of an unprecedented onslaught from the Government which has made it clear that it is going to actually attack workers by slashing jobs and public services. They are going to do it not just because of the size of the deficit but also because the global financial markets are demanding that the deficit they created is repaid within certain timescales, and how it should be repaid. What was more predictable possibly than that was that public sector workers and the public sector services are, as I said, expected to pay for that bailout. It is politically driven.

There has been a constant attack by the media on public sector workers, by Tory MPs when they were in opposition, gold-plated pensions, sick-note culture, private good, public bad, they have been psychologically preparing us for what is to come, softening us up for the cuts, for what Cameron said yesterday will be the biggest public cuts since the Second World War, more than 15-20% throughout this Parliament. They also said this week that they are going to ask voters what services they should be cutting and they are using our language, which is returning power to the people. They are actually going to ask us and the British voters to decide what services should be cut.

Yes, the deficit needs to be tackled but, as John McDonnell said on Monday, we should not pay and our members should not pay. There are alternatives: tax justice (on which there is a motion later and has been previously), redistribution of wealth, and stamping out tax avoidance where the Treasury loses an estimated £100bn a year.

Congress, the Tories went into this election claiming that we are all in this together. They were lying. The unions and working people really are in this together. The Con-Dems are coming for us, they are coming for our jobs, our terms and conditions, our pensions, our pay, and they are coming for us as trade unions. If we are to have a chance of success then we need to build the widest coalition possible.

Congress, this motion calls on the CEC and leadership to work closely with other public sector unions, locally and nationally, so that we can jointly campaign to defend our members and working people in workplaces, and in our communities; also to actively oppose the consequences of the emergency Budget on 22nd June and all future cuts. This means we need to build links in a way we have not done before, find common ground with other unions wherever possible, for example, over pay or defending the NHS, jobs, and the welfare state.

The union Movement and the wider social movement needs to be united against the current and forthcoming attacks. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Kim.

BRO. D. BYRNE (London) seconding the emergency motion, said: Colleagues, we have already received clear indications of the magnitude of the imminent attacks on our public services. It is essential that we organise our resistance in conjunction with the other public service unions and this emergency motion calls upon the CEC to explore ways in

which this can be put into effect to best defend our jobs and our communities. Please support. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny. Anyone wish to come in on the debate? No. Can I call Sharon Holder?

SIS. S. HOLDER (National Officer, Public Services): The CEC is supporting Emergency Motion 1 with the following qualification. The motion calls on the CEC to oppose by all means possible the Tory-Lib Dem Budget and future cuts, and to explore all avenues for joint action with other public sector unions.

This week speakers and delegates at Congress and the Public Services Section Conference have made clear our determination to defend GMB members against the coming cuts and that is exactly what we will now do. GMB will look to work in coordination with public sector unions via the TUC under collective action involving users and employees. We will deal with strategy on a coordinated basis with our public sector partners where it is in the clear interests of our members to do so.

So, the qualification is that the motion's reference to "all means possible" is too open-ended and that we will work in coordination with other unions when that coordination is in the interests of GMB members. Please support this motion with the qualification I have just set out. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sharon. Does London Region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thanks, Kim. Can I now move to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

Emergency Motion No.1 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now move to Social Policy: Education, Composite 13, Student Finance and National Insurance Credits, covering Motions 147 and 148. London Region to move, Southern Region to second. Then I will call Motion 170, GMB Scotland, Composite 17, Cancer Screening, to be moved by South Western, then Yorkshire, priority in debate to Birmingham & West Midlands. Thank you.

SOCIAL POLICY: EDUCATION

STUDENT FINANCE AND NATIONAL INSURANCE CREDITS COMPOSITE 13

(Covering Motions 147 and 148)

C13. COVERING MOTIONS:

- 147. STUDENT FINANCE (Southern Region)
- 148. NATIONAL INSURANCE CREDITS FOR STUDENTS (London Region)

STUDENT FINANCE AND NATIONAL INSURANCE CREDITS

This conference notes that many students from less well off families have spent their entire first term at university without any means to support themselves – some have had to give up their courses and return home, whilst other families have been forced into debt through sending their children money with which to feed themselves. The appalling mess that has been made of the first year students' finance will next year be extended to second years as well when the same company takes over the provision of their loans and grants, so the misery is only set to get worse. At this time we are losing equality within education and will be failing our young people if we do not do our utmost to ensure that everyone has the equal opportunities that are their right.

This GMB Conference believes that equality of access to education is vital. People who choose to go back into adult education at a later stage of their working life should be supported by the system not discriminated against. Some people may get financial help from one or another source including NI credits whilst on sick leave, others who are supported by a partner, and not in receipt of benefits, get nothing. Not only do they have to be reliant on their partner's income, but they have no national insurance contributions being made during this time which impacts on their lives in the future. They may not be entitled to sickness or unemployment benefit when returning to work. Although it is their choice to back into studying and accept that while they are studying they will not be financially well off, they are usually unaware of the implications of not making contributions towards NI which will affect government pension.

Some people return to education because of previous failures within the system and should not be penalised further for this. People returning to education after having worked should have their national insurance credited during the time in which they are studying.

We urge the CEC to raise this matter in the Labour Party, and address the anomaly by way of legislation. This conference resolves that GMB will also campaign strongly for the government to sort out the chaos surrounding student finance.

(Carried)

SIS. S. DAVID (London): There was a time when one went to post-secondary education the once, university for a BA, college for skills. Assistance may have been received from family, and relatively reasonable loans or grants. Remember those? Nowadays, we can expect several career changes and, indeed, the requirement for going back into educational programmes. However, the support is not there. This is an inbuilt discrimination. The assistance is not there. As the motion states, some people return to education due to a fault in the system and should not be penalised further. Equality of access to education is vital. We look for fairness and support, including the continued crediting of National Insurance credits. Therefore, I move this Composite Motion 13.
(Applause)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

BRO. A. NEWMAN (Southern) seconding the composite, said: President, Congress, the student finance companies is what I want to focus on, which has been a complete disaster. These companies pay the maintenance grants for students, which used to be

done by local authorities. Up until 1st March 2010 there were an unbelievable 146,000 students that had received no money at all for attending college from last September. Because it is the maintenance grants these are the young people most at need, from families least financially able to cope with it, and in many cases people have had to divert from paying their mortgage or paying their council tax in order to give emergency financial support to their families.

The student finance company was woefully inadequate in the first two weeks of September 2009 with 95% of calls to the call centre not answered because there was insufficient staff, putting students and their families at tremendous stress and disadvantage. The outcome, of course, is that we are losing equality in education. It has now reached the stage where families and students have to think whether it is even possible for them to go to university if they may have to maintain themselves for a term, or two terms, entirely on their own without financial support.

Congress, it is unbelievable but it is predicted that it is going to be even worse this year. We call on you to support this composite and that the GMB campaigns for the Government to sort this mess out as quickly as possible. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Colleagues, the CEC is supporting this motion but with a qualification. I now call on Tommy Hall to give that qualification. I have just been informed that Tommy is not very well so we have a substitute.

BRO. D. NOBLE (CEC, Public Services): The CEC is supporting Composite 13 covering Motions 147 and 148, with a qualification. The composite calls for adult learners to be given National Insurance credits so that they do not lose any entitlement to benefits or the state pension.

Congress, National Insurance contributions are indeed required for employment, support allowance, or ESA. We understand to qualify for ESA Class 2 contributions need to have been made in the previous three tax years, so a period of study may impact on and potentially diminish this entitlement. However, as far as state pensions are concerned, it is unlikely that a period of study would lead to any reduction.

Thanks to the Labour Government reforms fewer years of National Insurance contributions are now needed to qualify for a state pension. In this area there is a real risk to ESA but less risk to state pensions.

Let us therefore call for reform of the National Insurance system in order to protect the sickness and unemployment entitlements of adult learners. Please support Composite 13 with the qualification I have set out. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. Does London Region accept that qualification? *(Agreed)* Thank you. Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Thank you.

Composite 13 was carried.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Congress, before we move into the National Health Service Debate it now gives me great pleasure to welcome the Community District Nurses Association to their first GMB Congress. *(Applause)*

I now move on to item 13, which is Social Policy: National Health Service, Motion 170, Accountability, GMB Scotland.

**SOCIAL POLICY: NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE
ACCOUNTABILITY
MOTION 170**

170. ACCOUNTABILITY

This Conference is concerned that the NHS is under pressure as never before. The long term prospects for year on year increases in funding are bleak under the current economic clouds. The numbers depending on the NHS are greater than ever before. This Congress demands greater accountability and transparency in how and why the money is being spent and for whom. There needs to be much more debate around the criteria for receiving treatment and at what point does the money dry up. More emphasis needs to be made regarding preventative treatments and the monitoring of long term treatments for chronic diseases. Medication waste is a huge ongoing burden, and despite concerted efforts by pharmacists and GP practices to improve this, the problem continues. More responsibility must be placed on the medical professions to review the effectiveness of medicines and on the public to ensure that they understand the cost and the expected effects of their treatments and the length of time the treatment will be prescribed for.

In Scotland the SNP government has chosen to follow the Welsh policy of free prescriptions for all, a long standing ambition of GMB. However, there is no more cash coming into the system to sustain the investment. This will inevitably have drastic consequences on the other choices on offer for people who have conditions requiring treatments of other kinds.

SCOTTISH PRIMARY CARE NURSING BRANCH
GMB Scotland

(Referred)

SIS. A. DEAN (GMB Scotland): We accept referral for Motion 170.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: They accept referral. Does Congress accept referral?
(Agreed) Thank you.

Motion 170 was referred.

**CANCER SCREENING
COMPOSITE 17
(Covering Motions 171, 172 and 173)**

C17. COVERING MOTIONS:

171. CANCER SCREENING (South Western Region)
172. SCREENING FOR BOWEL CANCER (Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region)
173. SOCIAL (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)

CANCER SCREENING

The GMB want to ensure finding new ways to campaign and encourage those who aren't taking part in screening to participate. This Conference calls upon the Government to ensure that the best possible cancer screening programmes are available to adults who might benefit from them regardless of where they live in the UK and targeted action to be taken to improve the numbers of people attending screening for breast, cervical and bowel cancer. Also that they are providing the best possible screening programmes through adequate funding, staffing and measuring success

This Conference:

- recognises the advances in the treatment and detection of bowel cancer. It supports the increased spending on the detection of bowel cancer by the Labour Government, making testing available for those at risk via GP's. However, testing through biopsy kits is limited. The best way of early detection is through colonoscopies. We call for increased resources to allow those at risk of bowel cancer, either through age of family history, to have a periodic colonoscopy.
- calls on the Government to introduce screening for cervical cancer for women under the age 25. We as a Trade Union believe prevention is the way forward, so we urge the relevant Body to introduce this procedure without delay

(Carried)

SIS. J. SMITH (South Western): President, Congress, we all recognise the advances that have been made in the treatment of all forms of cancer. Although many people take up the options available for screening, there are many who slip through the net. Cancer screening should not be subject to a postcode lottery, it should be available to all. Prevention is the way forward. We need a health service, not a sick service. Early intervention is vital regardless what cancers people develop. The only way forward is to extend the screening programmes with the best possible funding and staffing. Why can't we have mobile screening units as we have for breast cancer screening to cover areas where it is difficult for patients to get to their nearest hospital and for those who are working? This would mean less distance to travel and less time off work.

We call on this Government to introduce screening for cervical cancer for women under 25. Cancer is not age discriminatory; it can strike at any time, any age. Ovarian cancer is often called the silent killer. It is often at an advanced stage when detected, and tragically untreatable. I believe there are ovarian screening programmes in some Scandinavian countries. Why can't our health service invest in these screening programmes to detect

this iniquitous form of cancer? Why wait until it is too late? Where screening is available we must ensure that it is taken up, especially by our young people, male and female. This Congress calls upon the Government to ensure that the best possible screening programmes are in place. I hope this shiny new government will hold up their election promise to protect the NHS. Let them put their money where their mouths are and institute good, widespread, screening programmes. I move. *(Applause)*

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

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire) seconding Composite 17, said: President, Congress, most if not all of us in this hall have been affected in one way or another by cancer. I have lost count of the relatives I have lost to it, including my own mother, a proud member of this union for nearly 20 years, and just last year my Dad was diagnosed with bowel cancer. Now, one of the many unsung achievements of the last Labour Government was the increased spending in prevention, detection, and treatment of cancer, including the introduction of the HPV vaccine against cervical cancer, bowel cancer screening for the over-60s and the two-week rule.

There is just one thing I will be eternally grateful to the last Labour Government for, that is, thanks to this investment last Sunday my Dad was able to take his place alongside me at Wembley watching the pride of South Yorkshire, Rotherham United. To Aneurin Bevan, to the NHS, to Gordon Brown, thank you, thank you, thank you. *(Applause)*

Comrades, as this motion shows, there is still much to be done. Whenever I have spoken at Congress the Regional Secretary has always shown great faith in me doing my own research. Well, I am sorry, Tim, but not this time. No doubt Cameron, closet Tory boy Clegg, and Gideon Osborne, that is one bit of research I did do, have facts and figures that prove white is white, the moon is made of green cheese, and spending on preventing and detecting cancer is not cost-effective.

Colleagues, our loved ones are not abstract statistics and that is why I am asking you to support this motion. It is not because I can provide you with overwhelming evidence but for the simple reason we all became union activists: because we care about people. That is why. Support this motion to enable us to have a greater chance of surviving cancer. Support this motion for our loved ones who did not have that chance. Support this motion because you put people before pound notes. *(Applause)*

BRO. G. RICHARDSON (Birmingham & West Midlands): Never mind the postcode lottery, what we need is early detection as that gives us the best chance of cure. Early detection is more or less impossible if there are no tests; some areas do the tests and a lot of areas do not. One of the key features of cervical cancer is the fact that you can detect it early and its progression from normal to pre-cancerous state and then to a state where it is cancerous is very easily detected. This is extremely important, it gives a chance of detection early and it can be really, really, successful.

Screening yearly from 18 is the recommended best way by cancer research. This is quote close to me because my sister has cervical cancer. She was pregnant at 16 and tells me

her cervix has got her into trouble all her life. When I have been to visit her - and unfortunately cancer is not so discriminatory, it does not pick out older people, it picks out the young - there were a lot of young kids there with cervical cancer that I saw talking to her. There are some groups that do not even go for tests: a lot of ethnic minorities do not go for whatever reason, and a lot of lesbians will not go.

In America at the moment there is a concentrated early vaccination programme and it has had massive, massive results and reduced the deaths from breast cancer, cervical cancer, and bowel cancer.

On behalf of my sister, if it is good enough for the women of America, it is good enough for us. I support. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague.

**BANNED HEART DRUG COSTING JUST £2 PER DAY
MOTION 176**

176. BANNED HEART DRUG COSTING JUST £2 PER DAY

This Conference calls upon the NHS to make the heart drug Dronedarone available free of charge to sufferers of Atrial Fibrillation, a type of abnormal heartbeat affecting more than one million sufferers in Britain.

T10 TAMWORTH BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

SIS. L. McLACHLAN (Birmingham & West Midlands) moving the motion, said: At the time of writing this motion NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) adopted not to recommend the use of Dronedarone for the treatment of irregular heartbeat, a condition that affects over one million sufferers in the UK.

Dronedarone is a drug that was approved for use in the United States over 12 months ago following the ATHENA trial which amended the efficiency of Dronedarone in the prevention of hospitalisation or death from irregular heartbeat.

The decision by NICE was based primarily on cost effectiveness. That decision received widespread criticism with over 170 doctors writing to NICE in protest and urging them to reconsider. The protests were joined by MPs and a number of patient groups.

On 24th February 2010 NICE agreed to reverse that decision but only to allow Dronedarone to be used as a second-line treatment to a select group of patients. Further guidance is expected from NICE in August when we hope this drug will be made freely available to sufferers of a condition which is becoming increasingly frequent and can in many cases be extremely difficult to treat. I ask Congress to support this motion.
(Applause)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

The motion was formally seconded.

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FUNDING TO SUPPORT NATIONAL DEFIBRILLATION PROGRAMME IN CHILDREN'S HOSPICES
MOTION 177**

177. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FUNDING TO SUPPORT NATIONAL DEFIBRILLATION PROGRAMME IN CHILDREN'S HOSPICES

This Conference states that every year 75,000 people die from cardiac arrest outside of hospital. The National Statistics show that recovery from cardiac arrest is just 5 percent. With the introduction of community AED's (portable simple to use defibrillator) statistics of survival go up from 5 percent to 50 percent. If a community defibrillator can be used within one minute of cardiac arrest this goes up by 90 percent. For every one minute delay, chances of survival are reduced by 10 percent.

The National Defibrillation Programme has successfully provided free equipment and training to many workplaces in the community, including some Nursing Homes, extending duty of care not just to resident but to staff and visitors.

The programme has not reached our children's hospices. The modern paediatric Hospice no longer tends to just the dying child but reaches out to incorporate respite care to children with disabilities and conditions where survival may we take them into adult years. Life saving emergency equipment such as an AED should be an essential part of resuscitation equipment. As children's hospices do not receive the level of government funding that adult hospice's enjoy, we ask Congress to support this motion to provide such equipment and training, for our struggling children's hospices.

W75 WORCESTER BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. CLARKE (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, this motion states that every year 75,000 people die from cardiac arrest outside of hospitals. The national statistics show that recovery from cardiac arrest is just 5%. With the introduction of community AEDs, a portable simple to use defibrillator, statistics of survival go up from 5% to 50%. If a community defibrillator can be used within one minute of cardiac arrest the figure goes up to 90%. For every one minute delay chances of survival are reduced by 10%.

The National Defibrillation Programme has successfully provided free equipment and training to many workplaces in the community, including some nursing homes extending duty of care not just to residents but to staff and visitors. The programme has not reached our children's hospices. The modern paediatric hospice no longer tends to just the dying child but reaches out to incorporate respite care to children with disabilities and conditions where survival may take them into adult years.

Life-saving emergency equipment, such as an AED, should be an essential part of resuscitation equipment. As children's hospices do not receive the level of government funding that adult hospices enjoy, we ask Congress to support this motion to provide such equipment and training for our struggling children's hospices. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Secunder?

The motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Can I ask the mover of Composite 18, then 181, 183, and 184, movers and seconders, please come to the front.

**FUNDING FOR CARE FOR ALZHEIMER'S AND DEMENTIA
COMPOSITE 18
(Covering Motion 179 and 180)**

C18. COVERING MOTIONS:

- 179. NHS FUNDING FOR MEDICAL CARE FOR THOSE DIAGNOSED WITH ALZHEIMERS (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)
- 180. DEMENTIA DISGRACE (Midland & East Coast Region)

FUNDING FOR CARE FOR ALZHEIMERS AND DEMENTIA

This term of Labour Government has time and time again failed in its promises and commitments – 'repeal of all anti trade union laws' to name one.

This Conference states although there is a provision for **social** care to be funded for those with Alzheimer's there is no automatic provision for **medical** care. It is highly unusual for Alzheimer's patients to receive this level of care although so many clearly are in need of this. This financial and emotional burden almost always falls on close relatives resulting in anxiety and financial pressure. All sufferers of Alzheimer's should be given this level of care.

Congress, we ask that GMB progress this on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves and also to support their families.

This Conference calls upon the Labour Government to honour its commitment to making Alzheimer's a national priority.

(Carried)

BRO. K. CHESTER (Birmingham & West Midlands): President, Congress, funding for Alzheimer's and dementia is long overdue and the last government did not deliver on its promises for funding. We must use all our efforts to compel the coalition government to provide proper funding for this serious condition. I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. S. ALLINSON (Midland & East Coast): In February 2009, the Department of Health launched an ambitious and comprehensive five-year national dementia strategy aimed at helping sufferers to live well with dementia. The department estimated that the strategy would cost £1.9bn to implement over 10 years. Unfortunately, the department has failed to deliver on this commitment of implementation. A study has reported that since February 2009 there has been a failing to ignite passion, pace and drive, leadership alignment, or funding. The appointment of national clinical directors also faltered until January 2010. These directors could have played a pivotal role in driving forward the strategy.

Unfortunately, due to lack of funding most people with dementia receive their day-to-day needs from domestic family carers or care home staff and, unfortunately, the latter have very little understanding of dementia. Dementia is like cancer in the 1950s, it is still very much hidden.

There is a need for a massive campaign to promote openness and debate on this important and challenging issue. There are estimated to be 600,000 sufferers in England, which is expected to double in the next 30 years. That is food for thought indeed. Please support. I second. *(Applause)*

PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH TO REDUCE NHS COSTS MOTION 181

181. PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH TO REDUCE NHS COSTS

This Conference calls for the GMB to campaign for a culture change in eating and drinking habits and lifestyle to alleviate demand on the NHS. Health Service resources are becoming increasingly overstretched by avoidable illness and alcohol fuelled accidents. The increase in obesity, alcoholism, diabetes and heart disease is as serious a public health issue in the 21st century, as clean water and a functioning sewage system were to the Victorians in the 19th century.

NORFOLK PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. V. THOMAS (London): The increase in obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and alcohol-related illness is just as much a public health issue for us in the 21st century as clean water and a sewage system were to the Victorians in the 19th century. Reform was needed then to decrease disease and mortality rates but it was not until the stench coming from open sewers and the River Thames stopped MPs from sitting in Parliament that they brought in the reform.

Progress has been made. There is the smoking ban in workplaces and public places. Thank you, Labour, you got that one right. In schools children do learn about nutrition and a balanced diet but for families on low incomes with a limited amount of money to spend on food the healthier foods often cost more. Big business is only interested in

profit. If the £2.7bn a year cost of alcohol-related illness was laid at their door only then would they market their products responsibly.

In yesterday's paper Dr. Nick Edwards, a doctor in A&E, told us how alcohol is costing the NHS a fortune and putting millions of patients' health at risk. Two patients injured in an alcohol-induced punch-up between them needed four operations over eight days in hospital, were attended by three A&E doctors, six surgeons, four anaesthetists, six intensive care doctors, 17 nurses, 12 operating department practitioners, three physiotherapists, three pharmacists, and an occupational therapist. He has invited the new Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, to join him on a Saturday night in the A&E.

The National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence says that the advertising of alcohol to young people needs better regulation. Andrew Lansley says social norms and peer influence are important factors. Well, maybe MPs can take the lead here and start by taking out all the subsidised bars in Parliament. Congress, how many of you have a bar in your workplace and are allowed to drink alcohol at work? Please support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. O. UCHECHUKWU (London): First time delegate. *(Applause)* Thank you. President, Congress, I am supporting this motion purely for the fact that currently, apart from the need to cut down accidents caused by drinking, there is a strong need to educate our population on prevention because prevention is better than cure. Secondly, there is a need to educate our population on self-control in drinking. We have the anti-smoking campaign which is working very well.

I must tell you that currently all the food we eat contains chemicals arising from fertilisers, which some of us do not know affect our health. You go to the chemist, you go to the market, you go to the shops, and you buy some food. When you eat it you do not realise that it can actually cause problems to your health. This helps to increase the costs of the NHS.

I would strongly suggest that we look further into agriculture and the sort of chemicals we use. In manufacturing it is known that at present some of the sweeteners we use affect our health. Therefore, there is a need to have a very strong campaign to protect our children as regards agriculture and manufacturing, and ensure that we actually reduce the level of chemicals that affect our health. The healthier we are the healthier the population and then the less cost on the NHS. I would strongly suggest, Congress, just by this current move the present Government could cut NHS trust funding. I please ask Congress to support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

DEAF PEOPLE IN HOSPITAL MOTION 183

183. DEAF PEOPLE IN HOSPITAL

Generally there is no provision for British Sign Language interpreters in hospitals, unless they are booked in advance of an appointment. This means that when a deaf person is rushed into hospital, the staff have no means of communicating with the deaf patient.

This is totally unacceptable in our modern society, and we believe that pressure should be put on the Government to send all Doctors and Nurses on sign language courses.

SCARBOROUGH & NORTH YORKS COMMUNITY BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. A. COLLIER (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, unless interpreters are booked in advance of an appointment the NHS staff have no means of communicating with a deaf patient. With one in seven people in the UK being deaf or hard of hearing this problem affects a substantial number of people every year. 42% of deaf or hard of hearing visiting for non-emergencies find it difficult to communicate with NHS staff. This leaves the deaf person feeling very frustrated and frightened as they cannot understand what the doctors and nurses need to do to help them get better.

The scale of the problem became apparent when our sign language tutor told us of a deaf friend of hers who was rushed into hospital suffering very bad pain. The nurses shouted at the deaf patient to try and communicate with her about what they were going to do to make her feel better. She was sent to various departments with no idea of what was happening to her, leaving her very upset as a result. To make matters worse our tutor offered to interpret for the staff so her friend would have known what was happening to her, but was refused as it was not visiting hours. When returning home from hospital after a few days stay she was so traumatised by the whole experience that she did not leave her house for two years afterwards.

In my view, this is totally unacceptable and should never have been allowed to happen. I believe more can be done to help communication with deaf patients in hospital where they are admitted or just attending for an appointment. We now have visual alert systems in our GP surgeries, which could be introduced into hospitals so the deaf know when it is their turn to see the doctor as their name flashes up on the system. Also, loop systems and deaf awareness training could be introduced which will go some way to addressing the problem.

In Nottingham NHS staff have worked together with the Deaf Society to improve services for deaf patients by introducing a Minicom Textphone service to aid communication with the deaf. I have had training on how to use this and I have also had deaf awareness training which has much improved the service in the area. If it can be done in Nottingham, why not across the UK? If a few nurses or doctors in each hospital across the country learnt basic sign language they could be interpreters and this would make a big difference to the deaf community. So let's campaign to try and make this a reality as the Government needs to realise this issue needs addressing as soon as possible. I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

BRO. K. BRINKLOW (Midland & East Coast): In our modern society I find it hard to believe that some hospitals and GPs surgeries do not have in place the provision of the necessary in-house trained staff, i.e. doctors and nurses, with the basics in British sign language and skills to enable them to communicate, especially in an emergency situation when a deaf person is admitted under their care.

As a Union Learner Rep I receive shed loads of information on courses and learning opportunities. In Nottingham, at the South Notts trade union-friendly college, in their guide to courses at various schools, libraries, and centres, there are courses running all the time. As an example, one started last April, Introduction to British Sign Language, duration two hours albeit in the evenings, 6.30 till 8.30. It is running for six weeks and it only cost £24. That is a small price to pay rather than having to buy in an interpreter.

This good practice needs to branch out and pressure needs to be put on other providers in other areas so they can train up their doctors and nurses in the basics. Then at least a deaf person has some idea of what is going on, plus it is forging better links and better confidence for those in the deaf community that when they attend an appointment they know they will be fully understood and receive the correct treatment quicker. I second this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

PRIVACY AND DIGNITY MOTION 184

184. PRIVACY AND DIGNITY

This Conference says to the Department of Health their new policy on standards set out for privacy and dignity causes additional stress to patients by not allowing their relatives to be present in the Day Patient Unit within hospitals.

EAST DEREHAM BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. J. SMITH (London): Mary, before I start I would like to thank everybody who donated to STEPS, which was London Region's bucket collection. It is very much appreciated and the family when I rang home and told them what we had in the bucket were delighted with that. I do not know what they are going to say when I tell them that London Region has doubled the amount and, Mary, with your promise this morning the amount so far on the money collected will be about £2,500. (*Applause*) Can I say STEPS provide specialist toys and switches for multiple-disabled children; we have one in our family. They loan these toys and switches to families, and to hospices. What they have done at the moment because funds are getting tight is written to families who use their system seeking donations. We greatly appreciate all you have done to assist this company. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Privacy and Dignity: colleagues, this motion has come about through personal experience. In March of this year I had to go into hospital as a day patient for gynaecological problems. When I got there I was presented with this document, Privacy

and Dignity. This means in their day centres now, where at one time your next of kin or carer could accompany you, they are no longer able to do so. They have to sit either in the restaurant or in the waiting rooms until such time that you are ready to come out.

On the day of my treatment I was able to argue for calling my husband to accompany me to see the gynaecologist who would be performing my operation, and also the anaesthetist, because at that time I had suffered a chest infection and I was still recovering, and I had gone totally deaf. From that point onwards I was then on my own.

I am a person who takes a long time to come round from anaesthetic so do not always understand what is being said to me. Can I say at one stage after listening closely into their faces I specifically asked if they would go out and explain to Colin what had happened and what the results were. When I stumbled out at 7 o'clock at night I asked Colin if they had spoken to him. Can I say, sadly, no, they had not. At the bottom of their paper they say, if there are specific medical needs and it means the patient does need a carer or relative to stay with them, please discuss this with the nurse in charge. As I have said, colleagues, I had duly done this because I could not understand what was happening due to the deafness I was suffering at that stage.

I have brought this resolution because I do not want anybody else to suffer and go through what I did. Had I been in a normal ward then a relative or my carer, or anybody else who needs a carer, would have been told and could have made enquiries as to what was happening. I move this resolution. Please support. (*Applause*)

BRO. J. RICHMOND (London) seconding the motion, said: President, Congress, there is absolutely no doubt that an increase in day care treatment in the NHS hospitals provided by the previous Labour Government reduced waiting and treatment times. However, as the mover has said, the nature of this treatment can and does cause stress and potential problems for the day care patient. Anaesthetic, local or general, affects people in different ways. Some come round immediately and others remain in a comatose state somewhat longer. Congress, the very nature of the day care is to have a quick turnaround. When a patient is still to come round from anaesthetic he or she will miss vital information from a surgeon, doctor, or nursing staff. That is why, colleagues, relatives or trusted friends should be allowed to be present. There may be an argument that the presence of such friends or relatives may impinge upon the privacy of other patients. That may well be a valid point but day care units in NHS hospitals are not something out of a film or the TV series Mash. They have privacy curtains around every bed and they also have separate areas to insulate particular procedures. Congress, on the safeguarding of all day care patients, please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jim. Can I now call Anne Duffy on behalf of the CEC on Motion 170, 181, 183, 184? Congress, GMB Scotland has agreed to refer Motion 170. Is that agreed? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Anne.

Motion 170 was referred.

SIS. A. DUFFY (National Officer, Public Services): President, speaking for the first time on behalf of the CEC. (*Applause*) The CEC is supporting Motions 176, 177, Composites 17 and 18, and supporting Motions 181, 183 and 184 with a qualification. We thank GMB Scotland for accepting to refer 170.

Congress, on Motion 170 it is clear that there are complex questions to be addressed on the allocation of NHS resources, funding, clinical priorities, and the provision of treatment. These are all wide-ranging issue which affect our GMB members working across the NHS. Again the CEC will refer this motion to the Public Services National Committee to seek the views of our professional healthcare workers on the issues raised.

Turning to Motion 181, it is calling for GMB to campaign for a culture change, and habits and lifestyle, to alleviate demand on the NHS. The CEC fully supports these principles. The qualification is that we do not need to instigate a campaign; it is already an integral part of our policy work. GMB has a long-running campaign around free and healthy school meals, for example. Now we need to push on with this very important public health agenda.

On Motion 183 we agree it is unacceptable for the NHS staff not to be able to communicate with deaf people. However, compulsory sign language courses for all staff might be too much for the stretched NHS finances. Therefore, the CEC suggests the GMB campaign for sign language interpreters to be made available throughout the NHS in the same way that spoken language interpreters are provided.

On Motion 184 the CEC agrees that if a patient wishes a relative to be present, this should always be facilitated wherever possible. However, any revision to NHS policy must take into account the rights to privacy and dignity of other patients which take priority over the rights of visitors.

In conclusion, Congress, the CEC is agreeing to refer Motion 170, please support Motions 176, 177, Composites 17 and 18, and also support Motions 181, 183, and 184 with the qualifications I have set out. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Anne. Anyone wish to come in on the debate?

BRO. M. AKBAR (London) speaking in support of Motion 183, said: I am a member of the National Equality Forum Committee and also work for the ambulance services. This motion is a very important motion and we have to look at it very carefully. It is not the expense that we need to look at. What we need to look at is the emergency services do need it very urgently and I would also go so far as to say that this should be a motion put to the House of Parliament to teach our young children the sign languages, put them forward and bring them up to standard so that everybody in the country can understand languages. We can talk, we can react, but when you are attending an emergency, whether you are in the police, whether you are in the ambulances, you need to understand how that patient or how that person is going to react. I say please support with or without the qualification; that is irrelevant. People need it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mo. Mo, can I say that some schools do that, especially in the infant and junior. I know my grandson's school does.

Can I now ask London Region, do you accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. Midland & East Coast? (*Agreed*) London Region, 184, you accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

Can I now put Motion 170, Composite 17, Motion 176, Motion 177, Composite 18, Motion 181, Motion 183, and Motion 184 to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Composite 16 was carried.

Motion 176 was carried.

Motion 177 was carried.

Composite 18 was carried.

Motion 181 was carried.

Motion 183 was carried.

Motion 184 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I just have a couple of announcements to make. On Remploy they raised in total £9,512. (*Applause*) Here comes the next one. The GMB union has agreed to underwrite and guarantee £35,000 for the lease of the premises in York to carry out work that is so badly needed. (*Applause*)

Thank you. Anybody seen Allan Wylie? Has he fainted yet?

Colleagues, I have some up-to-date information, and then I can give you the rest in about 10 minutes on the leadership election. There are four people so far are on the paper, and it is now closed: Andy Burnham, Ed Miliband, Ed Balls, and David Miliband. John McDonnell has withdrawn and has put his votes in favour of Diane Abbott but we do not know if others have. I will give you that when I get it.

Can I now call Allan Garley to move his report?

REGIONAL SECRETARY'S REPORT: SOUTH WESTERN REGION

SOUTH WESTERN REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	49,168
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	12,237
MANUFACTURING SECTION	9,240
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	27,691
Grade 1 members	31,938
Grade 2 members	12,357
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	4,873

Male Membership	25,206
Female Membership	23,962
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	6,044
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	80
Membership on Check-off	32,284
Membership on Direct Debit	10,945

The South Western Region continues to fully appreciate the hard work and endeavours of Branch Officials, Shop Stewards, Staff Representatives, Activists, Full Time Officials and Regional Staff.

Despite the economic difficulties caused by the “banksters” recession the South Western Region is in good shape.

Colleagues will recall, prior to the General Election the opposition parties were attempting to outdo one another in their fervour for savage spending cuts in public spending. Such policies can only damage the fragile economic recovery and increase the possibility of a “double dip” recession – a return to economic contraction after a brief period of economic growth.

The economic agenda set by the irresponsible “money for nothing” bonus culture of the city speculators and their ilk that brought our system to a virtual collapse, has become dominated by the budget deficit, i.e. the gap between Government revenues and expenditure. This is a grave mistake.

The deficit is a symptom of the current economic difficulties, not the cause. To reverse the widening of the deficit, Government policy should be aimed at reviving the economic activity. Only an increase in activity – and the taxes that come with it can revive the economy and restore Government finances.

The challenges ahead, from wherever they come from will be met head on by the Union and the Region and to those who continually strive to protect the interests of GMB members, your endeavours are highly valued and the Region says to you all, well done, keep the GMB flag flying.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

The GMB@Work organisation strategy remains central to the Unions membership growth. The Unions purpose is to get a better deal at work by building the Union in numbers and in power in every workplace we have members. The Region now has five GMB Organiser Tutors in place, responsible to the Regional Senior Management Team, operating in accordance with the GMB@Work national strategy, endorsed by the Central Executive Council. Thanks to the endeavours of everyone involved, the regional in-house educational programme has surpassed all expectations and is held in exceedingly high regard by Shop Stewards and Activists within the Region, making a significant contribution to membership and retention. Well done to everyone involved, keep up the good work!

Following the 2007 closure of Burberry's South Wales Treorchy factory, the Region campaigned and was successful and instrumental in the setting up of the Rhondda Trust, the function of which is to distribute the £1.5m secured from the Burberry Company over the next ten years. The first grants totalled £328,330 and will help nineteen organisations and twenty four individuals, including two former Burberry workers who will receive payments of £1,275 and £1,587. Rhondda Trust Administrators include Chris Bryant, Labour MP, Leighton Andrews, Welsh Assembly Member, GMB Senior Organiser Mervyn Burnett and former Burberry employees Gaynor Richards and Joan Young. Mervyn Burnett, who was at the forefront of the battle with the Bond Street based Company, said: “We are pleased that the first round of grants have been paid and will benefit the local community, which was devastated by the closure of Burberry.

Branch Secretary Colin Puckett has been re-elected as Staff Side Chair for the North Bristol NHS Trust. Colin will serve a two year term in the post at a time when the NHS in the West Country is going through some major changes.

Congratulations to GMB Stewards Adrian Davies, Bev Carlick and their team on recruiting their fiftieth member in the Welsh Blood Service, Velindre NHS Trust. This hard working team has transformed GMB membership within the Branch in a little over a year and has seen GMB rise to prominence in the Organisation.

The Pontypridd and North Glamorgan NHS Branch, Cwm Taf NHS Trust, has successfully achieved pay band three for Hospital Sterilisation and Disinfection Unit (HSDU) staff at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital after three years of hard work. This follows on from a similar success when the Trust's Laundry Staff were re-banded from one to two after a lengthy appeal.

The Region is pleased to report that following the Bristol Employment Tribunal decision that Bristol City Council had unlawfully dismissed Bob Straughan, a GMB Health and Safety Representative, the Council made a significant "out of court" settlement to Bob, which included pension protection. Bob was pleased with this settlement. He said: "I hope this case will help protect all other GMB representatives from the dreadful situation I found myself in. The way I have been treated by Bristol City Council has affected my whole well-being, including my self-esteem and confidence in my own ability. I can now start to move forward in a positive way. I would like to thank GMB South Western Region for its support and continued belief that I have been victimised by my employer on the grounds of my trade union activities." Organisation Officer Rowena Hayward said that this case highlights the fact that the law relating to dismissal on the grounds of trade union activities needs to be strengthened - "Bob has shown a great deal of tenacity and resolve to keep going throughout this whole situation, where many would have crumbled. We wish Bob a very happy, healthy and successful future."

When GMB Organisers in the Region received information of proposals to transfer work from Gwent Council members to the private sector, they sprang into action. The Council's intention was to transfer 1,300 weekly hours of home care from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council employees to the private sector.

GMB Organisers made the first protests at the Joint Trade Union meeting, with the Chief Executive present, followed by meetings with the Service Directors; however the final decision lay with the Council Budget Committee. Consultation meetings took place with GMB members and a demonstration was planned to take place on the 2nd March 2009 when the Budget Committee was due to meet. More than fifty Home Carers, all GMB members, attended the demonstration at the Project Office in Ebbw Vale, supported by service users and opposition Councillors from the Wales Labour Party. The ruling Councillors and officers attending the Budget Meeting were taken aback by the demonstration and lobbying from GMB members, they were also mindful of the presence of the local press. As a result of this activity the recommendation to outsource to the private sector was defeated. The hours will now remain in-house. The GMB again proving it is the campaigning Union! So well done and congratulations to the Home Carers from Blaenau Gwent for standing tall and fighting for what is right.

GMB South Western Region was well represented by Activists and Officials at the "Put People First" demonstration, which took place in London ahead of the G20 Summit in March. It was evident from the crowds that people from all walks of life are interested in and concerned about the state of the world's economy and climate change. Whether they were people from the trade union movement, who are involved in a daily battle to save member's livelihoods, or they were people concerned about climate change and the environment, everybody was committed, dedicated and a valuable presence on the march. The GMB South Western Region was proud to take part in this demonstration to highlight the concerns for employment and the economy in the UK.

The GMB South Western Region enjoyed a high profile presence at the Wales TUC Conference held in Llandudno during May 2009. GMB General Secretary, Paul Kenny, spoke to GMB's motion in the economic debate and GMB also took part in several debates and Conference fringe meetings. The Conference was presided over by GMB member Vaughan Gething as Wales TUC President, and was further enhanced by having the GMB South Western Regional President, Sheila Bearcroft, speaking to Conference as National TUC President. In her address Sheila told delegates at the Conference how proud she was to be the first Welsh woman to hold this position. Regional Secretary Allan Garley also addressed the Conference on how the Labour Government must reconnect with working people.

GMB members from the Region joined around one hundred Trade Unionists at the TUC South West Regional Conference which took place in North Devon during April 2009. A full programme of speakers addressed Delegates, including TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber, who highlighted the difficulties facing Unions with the recession and the need for Unions to keep the pressure on Government to support members facing job losses. Delegates debated motions concerning job and budget cuts, redundancy consultation and pay. The Region seconded a motion calling on the Government to increase support for our members facing loss of employment through increasing closures within the retail, manufacturing, public and the private sectors. GMB Delegates also emphasised the need to make it more difficult for organisations to close their UK facilities as a provision to protect their European interests. The Region is pleased to confirm that Wendy Weston was elected to the Women's Committee Shamin Baloo was elected to the Race Committee and Rowena Hayward, Organisation Officer retained her seat on the Executive Committee. These Committees will push issues to help workers in the Region by influencing Government policy. South Western Region maintains its strong presence on the various Committees within the Wales TUC and South West TUC.

The Region is proud to record the presentation of Silver Badge and Certificate of Service Awards to Margaret Phillips, Wilf Grimstead and Ellis Brodrick who have given very many years of loyal service to the GMB and its members.

GMB's campaigning face was evident once again at a rally of workers employed in the Engineering Construction Industry. Organised by GMB South Western Region the rally took place in Pembroke, South Wales and had an excellent turnout of around five hundred activists. The purpose of the rally was to highlight problems in the Construction Industry arising from the actions of employers who refused to honour the terms of local agreements, particularly regarding the use of local labour on specific sites around the country. Regional Organiser Althea Phillips, who spoke at the rally made it clear that the Union will not tolerate individuals of any country of origin being excluded from work, confirming that the GMB will continue to insist on employment criteria being open and transparent, objectively based and free from any form of discrimination and due regard must be given to skills requirements on new project work, and to the contribution employees can make to the local economy. The Region will continue to recruit and organise workers on every site in the Region in order to defend the National Agreement.

In another new recruitment initiative for the Region, staff at the Alzheimer's Society in Wales and the West of England have been joining the Union. This Organisation has been undertaking a restructure, resulting in staff being relocated or potentially displaced. The employees were quickly attracted to GMB and the Region has been able to fully advise them on all aspects of the Alzheimer's Society's proposals. An approach has been made to the Alzheimer's Society for recognition purposes and a joint meeting has been arranged for the near future.

A recruitment drive at Wilkinson Stores has led a large number of staff to join the Union. Officers visited stores across the Region to explain the benefits of Union membership and the need for effective workplace

organisation in the company. These visits have led to an increase in the number of Store Representatives, a crucial development that will assist greatly in promoting further recruitment activity at store level.

The Region is pleased to report significant increases have been made with regard to recruitment in ASDA Stores.

Ifor Williams Trailers Ltd applied to the Central Arbitration Committee to derecognise GMB at its North Wales site, despite GMB having represented members there for more than ten years. Branch Secretary Phil Hughes and his workplace Activists acted swiftly when the application was submitted, collecting names to support GMB and call for continued recognition. The response was overwhelming as loyal GMB members added their names to the list of supporters. This positive action led the Central Arbitration Committee to decide that there should be no call for a ballot and GMB should continue as the recognised Union. Mark Stevens, GMB Membership Development Officer, praised the members for their efforts and endeavours.

It is great news that the Region achieved full recognition in the North Wales Region NHS Trusts in summer 2009. This was a huge success as the Region had previously been unable to organise in the North Wales and North East Wales NHS Trusts, Organisers have now started visiting the Trusts for recruitment and organisational purposes.

A great deal of interest was shown at the Wrexham Maelor Hospital during the first visit in August, with further visits scheduled for October and December 2009. Visits are also planned for Bodelwythan, Llandudno and Bangor hospitals, with more to follow around the North Wales Region throughout 2010.

The creation of the Betsi Cadwallader Local Health Board presents new challenges to NHS workers and the Region will support staff through the merger process and beyond, providing first class representation and advice to all of its members in the Region.

The Region has been working to secure equality in the workplace, with claims registered against a number of Welsh local authorities on behalf of School Breakfast Club employees. In line with the Welsh Assembly Government's healthy eating initiatives for schools, funding has been provided for schools wishing to introduce breakfast club arrangements for pupils. While the Union supports this initiative and recognises the benefits it brings, it is recognised that employees should be fully covered by the terms and conditions of the mainstream National Agreement.

During a series of visits to schools, the Region has uncovered multiple examples of staff not receiving holiday pay, occupational sickness benefit or retainer payments in the school closure period, despite clear contractual entitlements to do so. Grievance claims have been registered with several authorities, with due consideration being given to entering the rights of staff at the Employment Tribunal. There are reasonable prospects of at least one or two councils being prepared to apply an appropriate remedy. In the event of a failure to do so, the Region will have no hesitation in seeking a resolution through the legal system.

The Region has continued throughout 2009 to consolidate and significantly increase its membership in Public Services and the Region is working actively in pursuing its policy of working collaboratively with such partners as the Wales TUC and the Welsh Assembly Government to tackle equal pay problems. Senior Organiser John Phillips said "that the GMB will leave no stone unturned", in its campaign to achieve fair and equal pay arrangements.

The Region has signed a formal recognition agreement with Eurofoods UK Limited, in Newport. The agreement means the Union will be in a stronger position to fight for better terms and conditions for members. Eurofoods is a cold storage facility, which supplies restaurants, supermarkets and caterers

throughout South Wales and the West. It is one of the fastest-growing food suppliers in Britain and has factories all over the world, including facilities in Sunderland, Croydon, Bangladesh and New York.

Young people discovered what GMB does and why it's so important at an event held on the anniversary of the Chartist uprising in Newport, South Wales. The event, which took place on the 15th October 2009 in the Newport Centre, 'Our Voice, Our Vote, Our Freedom' was organised by the Bevan Foundation. An array of stalls filled the Newport Centre, including stands from GMB, Wales TUC, the Welsh Assembly, the Labour Party, the Chartist Trust and many more. Around 250 local students visited to ask questions and find out more about the work of Trade Unions, employment law and Government activities. GMB was proud to give these young people an introduction to trade unionism.

Throughout 2009, the Region and Union continued the on going fight for compensation for workers suffering from asbestos related illness, and special thanks must be given to Brian Legg, who has been at the forefront of the regional campaign activities.

The GMB campaign for a positive future for Remploy and other supported businesses and workplaces continues and remains as active as ever, in pursuing public procurement as the key focus in ensuring their long term success.

The Region will continue to put resources into recruitment activity across the Region in the Commercial Services, Manufacturing and Public Service Sections.

Last, but certainly not least, the Region is pleased to record that GMB South Western Regional President, Sheila Bearcroft has received the MBE. Sheila was awarded the MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list in June 2009 for her services to the Trade Union Movement. Sheila chose to have the MBE presented to her at the GMB Regional Office in Cardiff. She said: "I chose the regional office because I wanted GMB to be part of the ceremony. Having my friends, colleagues and all my family there was a very proud moment."

It has been well documented that in 2009 Sheila Bearcroft also completed her term as President of the Trade Union Congress and the Region can be proud at the manner in which Sheila proved to be such a sterling ambassador of the GMB. Well done Sheila.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	2
Membership Development Officers	3
Regional Organisers	9
Organising Officers	3
No. of Branches	167
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	
Branch Youth Officers	

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	5,000
Total Disablement	
Working Accident	1,161.80
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	

Funeral	18,675
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4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The Region has continued in being at the forefront of issues relating to the economy and as reported to Congress 2009, the Region has been a major player in the Welsh Government's Economic Summit meetings which encompassed all in Wales in the private and public sectors. The Region's involvement in these areas have proved to be extremely beneficial through the publicity and campaigning the Region has been involved in and this has reflected in the recruitment successes, despite the downturn in the economy and contraction of the manufacturing base.

The Region continues in its endeavours to be a front runner in campaigns in relation to the decline of manufacturing in Wales and support of the Public Services in Wales and the South West. It has maintained its focus through the National Assembly for Wales, the Wales TUC, South West TUC, the Welsh Labour Party and South West Labour Party.

The Region continues to maintain its established contacts with all areas of the media and utilising the press releases generated from National Office and responding to regional issues that affect GMB members and endeavours to maintain a full exposure via the media wherever and whenever possible.

The Region has been actively involved in the affairs and businesses of the Wales TUC and Wales Labour Party and equally through the business of the South West TUC and South West Labour Party.

The combined National and Regional magazine, which is distributed to all members in the Region three times a year, has continued to be very successful and well received by our members. We endeavour to keep members advised through this medium of news and current issues as well as being a very useful recruitment tool.

The Region continues with its policy of using determining factors with regard to sponsorship being granted, with the main factor in granting requests for sponsorship are publicity for the Union and the promotion of Union membership. The Region continues to maintain a 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
349	345

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
470	157	0	313 £1,740,166.79	0 £	£1,740,166.79
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			808		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	349
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost Tribunal	in Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
263	228		35 £63,355.25		£63,365.25
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			403		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
		£	

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
19	11	

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

During 2009 the Region has continued to progress all areas of equality and endeavoured to use the structure at our disposal in getting equality issues over to our members, via Branch Officials, the Equality Forum and through our regional magazine Nexus and the Region is pleased to report that even more of our Branches are now producing their own newsletters where equality issues are highlighted and several branches have set up their own websites to progress all strands of union activities.

The Region maintains its membership and activity on the various Equality, Race, LGBT and Pan Equality Committees on the Wales TUC and South West TUC, along with representation with the Wales Labour Party and the South West Labour Party.

The Region continues to hold the Black and Ethnic Minorities seat on the Wales TUC General Council and as reported to Congress last year, Vaughan Gething was elected Chair of the Wales TUC, being the first BME member to hold such a position and this culminated in him chairing the Wales TUC Conference in May 2009. Vaughan was an excellent ambassador for the GMB throughout his term of office in all areas of equality.

In line with the GMB@Work initiative, new Shop Stewards are encouraged to attend and take active roles in regional conferences, speaking and supporting motions on all aspects of race and equality in the workplace. The GMB continues to have good representation, attendance and participation at all events encompassing equality such as Wales TUC Challenging Racism Conference, Wales TUC Women's Conference and the LGBT Conference.

The Region again was proud to participate in the Diversity Awards Wales and sponsor an award.

The Region's Equality Forum has nine members:

4 females

5 males – 1 of ethnic minority

7 TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (10 days)	3	20	7	27	270
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)					
GMB@WORK	15	100	28	128	384

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3 day Representing Members	1	12	5	17	51
5 day Employment Law	3	24	8	32	160

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
TUC	10			30	300

The South Western Region continues to provide a valued Education and Health and Safety Service to our Representatives and Members and this Department is now headed up by Nick Hughes, working in conjunction with colleagues in The Regional Senior Management Team. 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 work place inspections has played an important part in the recruitment of new members which are reflected in the positive 2009 Regions' recruitment figures.

(Adopted)

BRO. A. GARLEY (Regional Secretary South Western): Formally.

The Regional Secretary's Report: South Western Region (pages 145-151) was formally moved.

THE PRESIDENT: Pages 145-151, are there any questions? No. Agree to accept the report? *(Agreed)* Thank you very much.

The Regional Secretary's Report: South Western Region (pages 145-151) was adopted.

CONGRESS LOCAL GIFT

THE PRESIDENT: I must remind you the bucket collection at lunchtime is my charity, the Jimmy Knapp Cancer Fund, which also helps children in research. A quiet collection, please.

Congress, can I move to item 15, Congress Local Gift. This is in support of two charities in the South West: Ty Hafan (I am a linguist now) a Children's Hospice in South Wales that provides respite care for children with life-limiting conditions and relies on public donations, and the Stroke Association, Bristol, which gives support and guidance for stroke sufferers. Allan, would you like to speak on this?

BRO. A. GARLEY (Regional Secretary, South Western): President, the GMB local gift again shows how the GMB care for those people in need. In Wales Ty Hafan is more than just a place, it is a unique attitude to care and support, one that extends right to the heart of the family providing a much needed source of strength, respite, and support. It is about creating and cherishing a lifetime of memories. It is about joy, laughter, friendship, and it is about life.

In the South West in Bristol the Stroke Association provides invaluable help and assistance to stroke sufferers.

President, both gifts will be greatly welcomed. I say thank you to all the regions and to the GMB. Thank you. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Allan, Congress, we do not have the cheque for the donation but each region will send their donations to Allan who will give it to the charities back in the region, which we think is quite right. Well done. Thank you.

Can I now move to the International motions? I will be calling Motion 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 215, 219, and 220.

INTERNATIONAL

PALESTINE MOTION 209

209. PALESTINE

This Conference condemns the Government of Israel's January Offensive in Gaza, leading it to 1,450 deaths and 5,000 injuries.

Congress further condemns the ongoing blockade which contravenes international law. Congress calls on the CEC to continue building solidarity with the Palestinian Federation of Trade Unions.

Congress calls upon the CEC to:-

- Lobby the British Government to make representations to the international community to secure support for a negotiated settlement based on justice for the Palestinians.
- Build solidarity with the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions.

Congress calls upon the CEC to pressure Government to:

- a) Condemn the Israeli aggression and end the blockade on Gaza.
- b) End all arms trading with Israel.
- c) Impose a ban on importing goods produced in the illegal settlements in the occupied territories.
- d) Support moves to suspend the EU-Israel association agreement.

Congress calls upon the CEC to urge Branches to affiliate to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign. Also, Congress urges the CEC to work with the PSC to encourage all trade unionists to boycott Israeli goods, especially products that have been produced in the illegal settlements.

182 BRANCH
North West and Irish Region

(Lost)

BRO. I. LOWES (North West & Irish): Since 1967 the West Bank and Gaza Strip has been under illegal Israeli occupation. For over 60 years Palestinians have been denied the right to self-determination and statehood. Today over 6 million Palestinians live as refugees. Hundreds of thousands live in overcrowded refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza. The past 40 years have seen over 200 illegal Israeli settlements housing half a million settlers in the occupied territories. The separation barrier in the West Bank cuts deep into Palestinian lands. Along with many settler only roads it cuts off communities from water supplies, hospitals, and their agricultural land. Residents face severe restrictions and for many it is impossible to enter Jerusalem or to travel abroad. The treatment of Palestinians both in Israel and the occupied territories is widely recognised as a system akin to the apartheid regime of South Africa. Palestinians are continually under attack from the occupying forces, harassed by settlers who attack farmers and steal the land. The Palestinians, who have remained in what today is the State of Israel, as non-Jewish members of a Jewish state, are discriminated against and treated as second-

class citizens. Israel is a rogue state which claims the right to kill anyone anywhere. Just over a week ago Israeli pirates boarded an aid ship and killed people bringing aid to Gaza.

The boycott of South African goods helped bring down their apartheid regime. A boycott of Israeli goods would help to persuade Israel to comply with the UN resolutions and to end its illegal occupation and its illegal blockade of Gaza and the West Bank. I move. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian. Secunder? I will also be calling Emergency Motion 2, Freedom Flotilla, moved by the London Region.

BRO. W. McCLINTON (North West & Irish) seconding the motion, said: President, General Secretary, Congress, of course all violence is wrong but there is no moral equivalence in this case: one side is a heavily armed modern state armed to the teeth by the West, and the other lives in a state of destitution, what Fanan called “the wretched of the earth”. I would urge you to check David Morrison’s website for authoritative information on all of this, not as recommended by me but by George Soros. Someone made the argument that if this motion becomes operative it will increase the suffering of the Palestinian people. Ian Lowes is absolutely right when he refers to South Africa. Mandela would still be incarcerated and apartheid would still be alive and well following this logic.

Richard Fogg, the UN special rapporteur said, “Obviously Israel does not respond to the language of diplomacy,” which has encouraged the lifting of the blockade. So, what I am suggesting is that it has to be reinforced by a threat of adverse economic consequences for Israel. It is time that western complicity in all of this was stopped. It is time the Israeli state was forced to stop. Albert Camus wrote, “When the guilty put on the apparel of innocence it is innocence itself that is on trial.” Act now. Wake up to this human tragedy and support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. London Region. George.

MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS MOTION 210

210. MEDICAL AID FOR PALESTINIANS

This Conference urges the CEC to actively support the M.A.P (Medical Aid for Palestinians) Campaign.

The prime purpose of this campaign is to overcome the blockade of essential supplies of medical, educational and building materials so urgently required to repair the damage inflicted on Gaza by Operation Cast Lead.

This blockade continues to have devastating effects on the daily lives of the 1.5 million Palestinian inhabitants of Gaza.

This branch stresses that this campaign is designed to achieve its end by diplomatic means.

(Carried)

BRO. G. SHARKEY (London): This motion was drafted well before the outrageous events of last week when Israeli commandos boarded a relief convoy bound for Gaza and killed, wounded, and imprisoned a relief worker crew, many of whom were British.

The Israeli actions last week emphasise much more than any speech how vital it is that this motion is not only passed by this Congress but also taken up by every civilised government in the United Nations to ensure Israel complies with every humanitarian law in existence. The blockade of Gaza came after an Israeli assault which saw 1,400 Palestinians killed and 5,300 injured. Ferocious as the onslaught was it did not cause the casualties the blockade does. This blockade, no matter what the Israeli government or the British Jewish press says, is denying food, industrial education, and medical products into Gaza. Construction materials are denied access so the schools and homes so cruelly destroyed by Israel cannot be rebuilt.

Congress, there is one human right that is paramount, the right to health. Israel's actions in maintaining this blockade are precluding that right for every Palestinian in Gaza. This motion stresses that the blockade can be removed by diplomatic means. Israel's murderous actions last week may prevent that so Britain and the USA must ensure that Israel faces a suitable consequence should it fail to lift the blockade and allow unrestricted aid into Gaza. Colleagues, I move. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, George. Secunder.

BRO. D. BYRNE (London): President, Congress, Medical Aid for Palestinians is not a new campaigning group, it has been in existence since 1984. It was set up originally after the massacres at Sabra and Shatila on 6th June 1982. The aim then, as it is now, was to provide emergency relief and medical assistance to Palestinians. MAP (Medical Aid for Palestinians) works in partnership with local health providers and hospitals to address a wide range of health issues and challenges faced by the Palestinian people living under occupation and blockade. The organisation is primarily involved in health development and emergency preparedness and response to specific crises. It has established offices in Gaza city, the West Bank, Beirut, and London. In order for MAP to be able to continue with its essential work humanitarian aid must be freely allowed to enter into Gaza and the current siege must be lifted. This motion does not ask for sanctions against Israel. This was addressed partially by the previous motion and will be addressed again in an emergency motion; I hope you will support both of those. This motion merely asks the CEC actively to support the Medical Aid for Palestinians campaign and I hope you will support it too. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Danny.

**AFGHANISTAN
MOTION 212**

212. AFGHANISTAN

This Conference calls for the immediate withdrawal of British Troops from Afghanistan.

NORTH WEST LONDON BRANCH
London Region

(Lost)

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London): I am moving the motion with the support of our region. Last Friday Corp. Terry Webster and Lance Corp. Alan Cochran, became the latest UK deaths in the Afghan War. On Monday the Afghan War became the US's longest running war, overtaking Vietnam. On that same day seven US troops died. We have to ask ourselves, are we winning. I think the answer has to be no. The outgoing US General in Chief of Afghanistan told the BBC, "We are not winning." Kim Howells, the former Foreign Office Minister for Afghanistan, described the occupation as being corrupt from top to bottom. The US is currently spending one trillion dollars. It would take one person earning £1 million a year, one million years to spend that or to accumulate that wealth. Britain, on the other hand, is spending £6bn on 10,000 troops. £6bn could pay for free school meals in this country, it could pay for the Remploy factories, and we could take back control of the water companies from private ownership. Currently 2,000 troops are going AWOL. They do not want to take part in this unnecessary war. They know they may not come back, they know they may come back disfigured or maimed, and they know they may come back in a terrible state.

This war is causing slaughter on a massive scale. Tens of thousands of ordinary Afghans have died as a result. More than 130,000 people have been made refugees. We have not brought democracy to Afghanistan, only corruption. This war has not helped women's rights. We were sold this war on this story. It has made the situation worse. Today the occupiers have made alliances with warlords whose regimes systematically abuse women and women suffer the most from the violence and poverty caused by war.

Comrades, I ask you to support this motion that calls for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Afghanistan. The Dutch Labour Party has had a referendum and they are pulling out of Afghanistan. This war cannot go on. We have to pull out now. If it carries on, god knows what else will happen. Please support the motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, with your agreement I think it is only right if I move the Emergency Motion, Freedom Flotilla, after 213 and ask Sheila Bearcroft at that point then to respond. Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Congress, will you also give me the authority to carry on for just a little while so we can finish today's business? Is that agreed? *(Agreed)* Secunder? We are nearly there.

BRO. M. AKBAR (London) seconding the motion, said: Congress, President, this motion is not about policy and procedures. This motion is calling on immediate withdrawal of our troops from Afghanistan to put a stop to the unjust deaths of innocent people, and our

soldiers. Congress, I am sure every one of us watches the TV in the morning before we leave for work or go out. What do we see on the headlines, another soldier has lost his life, inform the family. That is not what the families want.

Congress, I am sure you all agree that the return of our troops from Afghanistan is long overdue. Let me remind you the Russians spent over eight years in Afghanistan and achieved nothing except the death of innocent people. Let me remind you of the 8,000 troops that have been assigned under the United States command, not forgetting the friendly fire that took the lives of our soldiers. It is time to realise that with the deaths of our young soldiers, and innocent Afghans amongst them, we will achieve nothing.

I call on Congress to take this motion to our GMB MPs within the Parliament and force the Government to take action, not tomorrow but today. I support. Please support. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mo.

THE DANGER OF NUCLEAR CONFRONTATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST MOTION 213

213. THE DANGER OF NUCLEAR CONFRONTATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

This Conference is disturbed by the threat of the global spread of nuclear weapons and is particularly concerned by the dangers implicit in their extension to the cauldron of current Middle East conflicts.

Congress notes with alarm the nuclear rhetoric of the Iranian leadership, while being aware of its strategic reasons for the pursuit of nuclear technology and, possibly, weaponry. As a result of its nuclear programme developed over the last fifty years with the (initial) assistance of France, Israel possesses a considerable stockpile of nuclear warheads. These are undeclared and the facilities which produced them unacknowledged by every Israeli Government during this time; but their existence is beyond doubt and they furnish the reasoning behind Iran's ambitions for parity.

Congress therefore instructs the CEC to lobby the British Government to use all of its diplomatic and political influence to persuade Israel to join Iran in signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to support the simultaneous inspection of both countries' nuclear facilities under the auspices of the United Nations.

NORWICH GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. B. DUFFIELD (London): President, Congress, nuclear weapons are a threat to mankind. Their very existence threatens peace and world order. Some countries admit having them and are happy to disclose the numbers. Some countries have them but are not happy to disclose numbers. Some countries have them but deny it. Some countries are developing them but deny it.

One country's nuclear capacity has been developed over the last 50 years with help from major countries, some allies of ours. That nuclear capacity is not recorded. Its existence is denied by the country but every other country in the world knows it exists. That country is Israel. No surprise. Given the known nuclear capability of Israel and its contempt for its neighbours, why is there such international outrage at Iran developing a nuclear capability? Iran denies any hostile intentions stating that possession of nuclear weapons is fire against humanity, but no one believes them. Colleagues, in the wider system of things given Israel's stockpile of nuclear weapons, is it not right that a neighbouring enemy country should possess a deterrent? GMB believe no country should have nuclear weapons but the next best thing is complete openness as to who has them and how many. The Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty is there for a purpose. Israel refuses to sign it. Colleagues, what does it have to fear? The Middle East does not owe Israel anything. If Israel wants peace as it claims, let it sign the treaty. Let it allow UN inspections. If it does not, how can it and other countries condemn Iran, its neighbour, wishing to have nuclear parity with its enemy? Colleagues, peace must overcome. Please support this motion. I move. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Brendan. Secunder.

BRO. K. BREACH (London): First time speaker. (*Applause*) President, Congress, no one wants Iran to have the capacity to build nuclear weapons but at the same time no one can deny the right of Iran to develop nuclear technology. Iran may deny that they want to use this technology to develop nuclear warheads saying they only want to develop fuel. Yes, right, I am sure we all agree with that. We cannot ignore Israel's arsenal of nuclear weapons, an arsenal that is there but not admitted.

Colleagues, it is not acceptable to allow enemy states to play chicken with world peace. If countries have nuclear weapons, let them declare them; if they have none, we must protect them. Please support. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done. Can I ask the mover of Emergency Motion 2, London Region, to come forward, please?

FREEDOM FLOTILLA EMERGENCY MOTION 2

EMERGENCY MOTION 2 FREEDOM FLOTILLA

THIS CONFERENCE IS HORRIFIED BY THE ACTIONS OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY TOWARDS UNARMED CIVILIANS ON BOARD THE 'FREEDOM FLOTILLA'. THE FLOTILLA WAS HEADING TO DELIVER AID TO THE PEOPLE OF GAZA. ON 31ST MAY THEY WERE BOARDED AT NIGHT BY MEMBERS OF THE ISRAELI MILITARY WHO KILLED AT LEAST NINE INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS AND INJURED DOZENS MORE IN AN ILLEGAL ATTACK ON BOARD A VESSEL IN INTERNATIONAL WATERS.

CONGRESS CALLS ON THE GOVERNMENT TO PUT PRESSURE ON ISRAEL TO END THE ILLEGAL BLOCKADE OF GAZA AND CONTINUED MILITARY OCCUPATION OF PALESTINIAN LAND. WE BELIEVE THAT UNLESS ISRAEL IS HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR ITS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, THESE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES WILL CONTINUE.

SPECIFICALLY WE CALL ON THE UK GOVERNMENT TO:

- SUPPORT THE TUC CALL FOR A BOYCOTT OF ISRAELI GOODS.
- CALL FOR A PROMPT, INDEPENDENT AND INTERNATIONAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE ISRAELI ATTACK
- INSTITUTE AN IMMEDIATE TWO-WAY ARMS EMBARGO BETWEEN THE UK AND ISRAEL. SUCH AN EMBARGO WOULD SEND A CLEAR MESSAGE TO ISRAEL THAT ITS ACTIONS ARE UNACCEPTABLE.

GMB HOLBORN BRANCH
LONDON REGION

(Carried)

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London): President, Congress, this motion is about the freedom flotilla that was sailing to Gaza to deliver much needed aid. The reason it was going there is because there is a blockade of Gaza. Gaza is like a prison, basically, for the people in the area. A UN report said that Gaza is actually de-developing, so it is going backwards. Israel has destroyed power generation, sewage works, and things like diarrhoea are responsible for 12% of young people's deaths. These are easy things that can be resolved but Israel is blocking such aid. Their fishing industry has been destroyed; they are not allowed more than three miles off the coast. Half of the agricultural land is out of use. Mary Robinson, the former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, described Gaza's whole civilisation as being destroyed. Israel holds up medicines until they have expired and then they just get burnt because they are useless. Israel has turned Gaza into a ghettoised economy, depending on smuggling in tunnels to receive basic foodstuffs and things like that. This is why the boat sailed to Gaza to try and deliver some much needed aid. The boat was searched as at airports. The position of the boat when it was attacked by Israeli defence forces was in international waters. People on board had no idea that they were going to be invaded. Nine people have been killed so far by 30 bullets. There will probably be announcements of more people being killed because there are people missing. Five were killed by shots to the head in the centre of their eyes. These are not shots in self-defence, these are executions. People were shot with rubber bullets for not walking fast enough. There were people on there from ages one to 89. An old man was told to clear the area and he was shot with rubber bullets for not walking fast enough. This issue has serious implications for any boats in international waters. It gives the impression that what Israel did can be done by any country. It is an act of piracy to invade a boat in that way.

Congress, I ask you to support this motion that calls for an independent international investigation into what has happened and to support the TUC sanctions on Israel. I ask you to support the motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Matt. Secunder?

The motion was formally seconded.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Can I call Sheila Bearcroft?

SIS. S. BEARCROFT (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, I am going to be covering the Emergency Motion, Motions 209, 210, 212, 213, and at this point, Congress, can I inform you that the CEC will be supporting 214, 215, 219, and 220.

President, Congress, can I first say in response to the Emergency Motion that the CEC utterly condemns the deadly Israeli attack on the Gaza aid flotilla. (*Applause*) It happened in international waters. It caused terrible loss of life. It was unnecessary, inhumane, and plainly wrong. (*Applause*) The attack on the flotilla has drawn attention to the terrible suffering and deprivation of the people of Gaza. It has rightly received international condemnation and is unreservedly denounced by the GMB.

We support the call for a prompt independent international investigation into the Israeli attack. We call for an immediate arms embargo between UK and Israel. However, it must be clear that the GMB and the TUC policy is for a boycott of Israeli goods produced in the illegal settlements and a boycott of goods produced by companies involved in the occupation and the wall. This is the position of the GMB and the TUC General Council. Indeed, our General Secretary led the effort to forge a consensus amongst the unions at last year's TUC. We continue to press these issues in meetings with other unions in the interests of developing a cohesive strategy on goods from the illegal settlements. This is not the same as a boycott of goods made in Israel itself. We do not want to hurt ordinary workers in Israel, Israelis or Palestinians, and we do not want to give the Israelis a reason to walk away from talks and increase their sense of isolation and threat.

Congress, this is a time to be building bridges, not tearing them down. That brings me to our position on 209 concerning the Israeli Palestine conflict. Motion 209 calls for a number of steps which are in fact already GMB policy but, as I have said, GMB does not accept the call for a total boycott of all Israeli goods. So far as we are aware the Palestinian General Federation is not calling for a blanket boycott of Israeli goods. A spirit of solidarity between trade unionists on either side is possible and we do not want to come between it. We do not want to snub the good trade unionists in Israel who are working to change attitudes in the country. Therefore, we are opposing Motion 209.

Turning to Motion 212, the CEC remains committed to our established policy carried at Congress 2003 and 2008, that British troops should be withdrawn from Afghanistan as quickly as possible. Immediate withdrawal is called for in the motion and it means just that, immediate, today, and this is not feasible. It would lead to further bloodshed and chaos, and devalue the sacrifice made by so many of our fighting troops to bring order to this cradle of terrorism.

So, please support Motions 210, 213, the other ones I have mentioned, 214, 215, 219, and 220, support Emergency Motion 2 with the qualification we have set out, and we ask you oppose Motions 209 and 212. Thank you, Congress. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Sheila. Congress, I understand that there are some members who do wish to speak on 209 and the Emergency Motion in opposition.

BRO. A. MOSS (North West & Irish) speaking against 209 and the Emergency Motion, said: By my name, Moss, no, I am not Jewish; I would not be bothered if I was. My Dad was from Scotland and my mother was from Southern Ireland, and I am an Evertonian. So, you know what my religion is. What I am speaking against in the first part is that what we are trying to do is stop two sides talking together, whether it be through the trade union Movement or through any other dialogue. I feel that both sides need to get talking. It is with a heavy heart I stand here because I am actually speaking against motions from my own region, and that is wrong. That is the first one.

The second part is that people did die in this action and that was wrong, too. We are talking about blockading Israel. They have a right to their existence whether you feel it or not; they have a right. Now, when that flotilla came forward they did not know what was on it. They thought they would check it out. OK, the way they went about it was wrong.

Now, what goes on in Palestine is something even different. They seem to be able to get rockets in but not nappies and food. Someone after this meeting will tell me how they do that.

Let me tell you about a couple of places where you go around the world. You go to China and you look for democracy. In China they walked into Tibet and shot everyone and still got a foot in that camp. They came out of there. They hold political prisoners. They shoot people in the street. That is a democracy. Believe it or not, they supply 70% of the world's goods. In this country the white goods that you receive are from there. They should not be allowed to do it but they do. If you are in a home and throw all those goods out, you will be sitting on the floor.

The last one, Mary, and I beg your indulgence, is a place where all you people, not all of you but some of you, have gone for your holidays, a nice place, and in that place they kidnap children off the streets, some never to be seen again, some to be imprisoned for a long time. That is because they are kids and demonstrate for a bit of autonomy. I have looked at three T-shirts that you have and the one Mary has on, and that is the place - and it is not 100% cotton. These people are just as bad.

It is just when we go round the world, let's do it to everybody. I ask you not to support 209 and the Emergency Motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: That is it. Thank you. Colleagues, before I go to the vote, Sheila did mention 214, 215, 219, and 220, and the speakers are standing there and they are having

palpitations. I will be calling those resolutions, not now because I am going to finish this debate, but in the next debate. OK. You can stay there.

BRO. T. SCHAFFAUSER (London): Hello, everyone. I want to support Motion 209. During the Second World War the main difference between the UK and France was that France was occupied by the Germans. My grandfather, because of his Alsatian name and because Hitler decided that Alsace belonged to the Reich, was supposed to be enrolled in the Wehrmacht and to be sent to the Russian front. To avoid that he left his family, aged 18 years old, and joined the Resistance. Because he resisted against the occupation of his country he was called a terrorist. Years later Alsace activists who fought against the colonisation of their country were also called terrorists by the French Government.

Each time people rise against the occupation of their country they are called terrorists. Palestine is currently under occupation. If you want world peace you must stop the occupation and the colonisation of new territories. The British contributed to the liberation of France and French people are very grateful for that. Today the Palestinian people are crying for international solidarity. During the last 60 years their territory has been reduced more and more. If nothing is done, during the next 60 years Palestine may well disappear from the map. Moral condemnation is not enough. We need actions. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well done. Congress, can I first take - *(inaudible call from the floor)* – I have not called it yet! I will tell you when it is the right to reply. *(Cheers/Applause)* I am now going to call for the vote on Motions 210, 213, and does London Region accept the qualification on Emergency Motion 2? *(Agreed)* You accept the qualification? *(Agreed)* Does Congress agree? *(Agreed)* Support those. OK.

Motion 210 was carried.

Motion 213 was carried.

Emergency Motion 2 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: I now call the right to reply on Motion 209, North West & Irish Region. *(Laughter/Applause)* You are like a rabbit out of the....

BRO. I. LOWES (North West & Irish) exercising the right to reply, said: It takes me back 30 or more years to listen to the position of the CEC. I remember when we had the debate about a boycott of South African goods and I remember the argument then that the CEC put forward when they opposed sanctions against South Africa. It was on the basis that it would hurt the poor South African workers, yet the trade unions in South Africa, the black trade unions, were calling for a boycott. They were crying out for a boycott, and in the end – in the end – it was those sanctions against South Africa and a boycott of South African goods that helped to bring down that apartheid regime. *(Applause)* The situation with Israel is they do not listen to anyone. They are in breach of more UN resolutions than any other country in the world. If the only thing that is going to force their hand to end the illegal occupation is a boycott of Israeli goods, then so be it. Support Motion 209. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Ian. Motion 212, Matt?

BRO. M. SAYWELL (London) exercising the right to reply, said: The CEC calls for withdrawal as quickly as possible. How quick is quick? Since 2003/2008 we passed motions and we are still saying “as quickly as possible”. I think we have to ask ourselves how quick is quick. We should be demanding immediate withdrawal. You can instigate procedures to implement the withdrawal from today. That is what we are asking for. I would ask you to support the motion. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: OK, Matt. Thank you. I am now going to put Motion 209 to the vote. The CEC is asking you to oppose. You have heard the debate. All those in favour, please show? Those against? That is lost. (*Calls for a card vote from the floor*) I am not calling a card vote. That is lost. OK. Whose little voice did I hear in the London Region? Kim, I have to look and see how the regions decide.

Motion 209 was lost.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now call Motion 212? The CEC is asking you to oppose. All those in favour of the resolution, please show? All those against? That is lost. Thank you.

Motion 212 was lost.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, can we now move to Motions 214, 215, 219 and 220, and you are all aware they are all supported. Thank you.

GLOBAL MINING MOTION 214

214. GLOBAL MINING

This Conference notes that the global mining industry is enjoying an unprecedented boom period, with many companies posting record profits as a result of soaring commodity prices. The UK is doing particularly well: the three largest mining companies in the world are all British, while London provides much of the finance for the industry as well as hosting a major share of global metals trading. The British Government has regularly championed the cause of British mining companies across the world.

Many developing countries, on the other hand, have experienced the negative side of mining. Armed groups have often enriched themselves through mineral extraction, doing deals with companies and using the revenues to fuel civil wars. Human rights violations have occurred where security forces paid to protect mining assets have attacked local communities and anti-mining activists. There is now an established pattern in country after country where local people have been forced off their land by mining projects and those protesting have been intimidated, beaten or shot.

Congress believes that the UK Government must acknowledge the harm being done to local communities in developing countries as a result of British mining companies' activities. Relying on voluntary codes of conduct and self-regulation to police the extractives industry has been shown to be ineffective, and the Government must now take action to make mining companies accountable both nationally and globally.

Congress calls on the UK Government to introduce new rights of redress in the UK and to support binding standards for corporate accountability at the international level. Only through such action will we be able to tackle corporate complicity and human rights abuses.

W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. DALY (Birmingham & West Midlands): I am a first time delegate. *(Applause)* This Congress notes that the global mining industry is enjoying an unprecedented boom period with many companies posting record profits as a result of soaring commodity prices. One of these UK companies is UK Coal Plc. In their 2009 interim report they published profits of £158.9 million. The British Government has readily championed the cause of British mining companies across the world. What we are asking for is for some of these profits to be ploughed back into the local communities that have been devastated. There are in fact no international laws to hold the global mining companies accountable for the damage they cause, which includes the displacement of local communities, families torn apart, destroyed livelihoods, ruined eco systems, and the erosion of ---

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, please, these are also very important debates. Thank you.

BRO. J. DALY (Birmingham & West Midlands): - and the erosion of ancient local cultures. It is the hardship endured by the men, women, and children, of these communities that make our way of life possible. According to a fact-finding mission led by ex-British MP, Clare Short, there have been 16 serious dam failures in the Philippines in the last 20 years. Additionally, over 800 mining sites have been abandoned and never been cleaned up. The clean-up costs are estimated in the billions of dollars range. We believe that the UK Government must acknowledge the harm being done to local communities in developing countries as a result of British mining companies' activities. Relying on voluntary codes of conduct and self-regulation to police the mining industry has been ineffective and the Government must now take action to make the mining companies accountable. Canada, home to about 60% of the world's mining companies, lead the way in the global mining industry but critics have labelled the mining industry as Canada's number one contribution to global injustice as the industry continues to shape the world we live in.

Congress, I call upon you to lobby government to introduce new rights of redress in the UK and to support binding standards for corporate accountability at international level. Only through such action will we be able to tackle the corporate companies and human rights abuse. Congress, I urge to you to support this motion. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Well done. Secunder.

The motion was formally seconded.

CORPORATE TAX DODGING & DEVELOPMENT MOTION 215

215. CORPORATE TAX DODGING & DEVELOPMENT

This Conference believes that UK companies should publicly acknowledge that they have a social responsibility to pay their fair share of tax, not only here in the UK but also in the developing world.

Conference therefore calls upon the Executive to support **WAR ON WANT**'s tax justice campaign and demand that our government:

*reaffirms its key goal of eliminating poverty in the UK and in developing countries.

LONDON STORES GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

SIS. K. HENDRY (London): Congress, this motion is about corporate tax dodging and its appalling impact on the development of the country. It calls upon the CEC to support War on Want's "Tax Justice" campaign. This includes a demand that our government should reaffirm its key goal of eliminating poverty in the UK and in developing countries.

As trade unionists we know that tax is a key weapon in the fight against poverty. Tax is paid by companies and by ourselves as individuals to enable governments to fund vital public services, so when multinational corporations fail or to be more precise actively avoid to pay the tax they owe it is the poor who pick up the bill. Yet companies now see tax dodging as a legitimate part of their business operations. The Tories see it as a legitimate source of their fundraising, and the results are huge.

Developing countries lose an estimated £250bn each year as a direct result of corporate tax dodging. Tax avoidance and capital flight cost African countries alone five times what they receive in aid each year and we maybe should remind people of that when they start complaining about overseas aid development. It is not just developing countries that lose out. As I said when I was moving the previous Emergency Motion 1, Britain loses an estimated £100bn a year through tax dodging. That is one-seventh of the public sector deficit.

One of the main ways that companies avoid tax is to register their companies in tax havens which allow them to get away with minimal payment, minimal tax. Tax havens also place no reporting requirements on companies allowing them to keep secret the true sums they should be paying. This denies vital revenue to the countries in which these companies made their profits.

Britain plays a crucial role in helping companies dodge the tax they owe for two reasons. First of all, British tax havens, such as the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, Jersey, Guernsey, and the Isle of Man, are places where people are able to go and silt away this money secretly. Also within the City of London there are many thousands of people acting as lawyers and accountants to ensure that that money is silted away in tax havens to help big multinational companies dodge taxes.

Congress, we do not need charity, we do not need it in the UK and we do not need it in developing countries, what we need is justice and that includes tax justice. Please support this motion. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Just to let you know, Congress, Diane Abbott is on the ballot paper. (*Applause*) Kim, when you see Dick tell him he owes me that pint of vodka. All right?

SIS. M. BOWMAN (London): Congress, President, Kim has just mentioned tax havens and I will try to tell you a little bit more about them. Tax havens allow big companies and wealthy individuals to benefit from the onshore benefits of tax, good infrastructure, education, and the rule of law, while using the offshore world to escape their responsibilities to pay for it. The rest of us shoulder the burden. Tax havens offer not only low or zero taxes but something broader. They provide facilities for people or large companies to get round the rules, laws, and regulations of other countries, and secrecy is their main tool.

Tax havens allow rich people like Tory sponsor, Lord Ashcroft, to escape tax and regulation. They are also used by criminals and terrorists. As a result tax havens are heightening inequality and poverty, undermining democracy, distorting financial markets, and promoting corruption and crime around the world. The fight against tax havens is one of the great challenges of our age.

Congress, please support this motion and I ask the GMB to join this fight. Thank you. (*Applause*)

EU COLOMBIA FAIR TRADE AGREEMENT MOTION 219

219. EU COLOMBIA FAIR TRADE AGREEMENT

Congress is dismayed that Colombia remains the most dangerous place in the world to be a trade unionist. Over 60% of all trade unionists killed in the world last year were killed in Colombia. In 95% of cases the perpetrators enjoy complete impunity – a green light for the killings to continue

In this environment of ongoing fear, intimidation and continuing human rights abuses, the EU is seeking to conclude a new Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Colombia. The conclusion of this FTA is made all the more shocking considering that similar agreements between Colombia and the United States, Canada and the Norway have been held up due to human rights and labour rights concerns. By giving the Green light to the EU-Colombia FTA, the EU will send a clear signal that human rights and core labour rights count for nothing when it comes to free trade, in total contravention of the EU's own stated values and stated aim to mainstream human rights and promotion of core labour standards throughout its external policy

By denying Colombia progress on the FTA, the European Union holds a powerful tool to promote positive change, but on the contrary the situation is so bad that concluding the current trade deal with Colombia would only be interpreted as endorsing human rights and labour rights abuses.

Congress calls on the CEC to campaign against the proposed free trade agreement with Colombia, and to seek through direct contact with MEPs and EU Governments, who must give this deal their final approval, that progress on this agreement be suspended.

B59 BRUSSELS BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

SIS. K. DILLON (Southern): President, Congress, the UN has described Colombia as the worst humanitarian catastrophe in the western hemisphere. Colombia is the most dangerous country in the world for living if you are a trade unionist. Since 1986 nearly 3,000 trade union members have been assassinated. The ITUC state that two-thirds of all trade unionist killings in the world each year occur in Colombia and in 95% of cases the perpetrators of the crimes have complete impunity. It is a green light to go on killing. It is an environment of ongoing fear, intimidation, and continuous human right abuses and yet it is an environment in which the EU seeks to conclude a European Free Trade Agreement with Colombia.

International trade is taking precedence over the EU stated aims of mainstreaming human rights and promoting core labour standards through its external policies. Similar agreements between Colombia and the US, Colombia and Norway, and Colombia and Canada, have all been halted and suspended due to human rights concerns. Denying progress on the Free Trade Agreement allows the EU to lobby for improved human rights. Conversely, concluding the FTA can only be interpreted as endorsing the consistent human rights and labour rights abuses.

Congress, on 19th May the EU and Colombia signed a Free Trade Agreement but the fight against it continues. The agreement requires ratification both in the Colombian Parliament and the European Parliament. Congress must continue to campaign directly with the MEPs. The GMB has been at the forefront in coordinating efforts of our sister unions in the European Parliament. This must be supported and it must continue. The Colombian Government has begun a counter-lobbying campaign within the European Parliament. They have been funding non-representative trade unionists to visit Brussels and Strasburg to lobby for the FTA. We must continue to expose these measures and progress on the FTA must be suspended. We cannot let a routine human rights abuser benefit economically from the EU. The message is that bananas and sugar is one thing but people's lives and people's rights are worth a hell of a lot more. Please support this.
(Applause)

The motion was formally seconded.

**SRI LANKA
MOTION 220**

220. SRI LANKA

This conference condemns the actions of the Sri Lankan government for its treatment of refugees in government run "welfare camps".

As witnessed by the General Secretary of the UNITED NATIONS, there are 409, 000 displaced civilians, with 60,000 children who are imprisoned in these camps with little or no shelter, insufficient food, water or sanitation.

Conference calls for the CEC to support Amnesty's campaign to "Unlock the Camps" and to support any action to improve access to the camps by journalists, politicians and aid workers.

SOUTH SHIELDS 2 BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

SIS. A. BRYAN (Northern): Colleagues, I am sure that we can all recall the TV coverage of the human suffering caused by the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka, hundreds of thousands of innocent men, women, and children, caught in the crossfire between the opposing troops. The actions of the Government of Sri Lanka were an absolute disgrace. Determined to kill off the Tamil Tiger leadership they broke all conventions of war and placed innocent civilians at risk. Congress, the actions of the Sri Lankan Government was a disgrace but at least at that time its actions were subject to exposure by the world's media. By comparison their actions since that time have gone unnoticed by the world.

Currently, it is estimated that over 280,000 men, women, and children, are being held in camps in Northern Sri Lanka. Aid agencies are being restricted and even the UN has had difficulty getting access. The General Secretary of the UN when he visited the area was extremely shocked by what he saw. He reported that there were over 60,000 young children who were, in effect, prisoners in the camps. He also reported that there were clear problems with inadequate food and water supplies, and that people were living in the worst possible conditions.

Congress, the world's media has moved on to the world's latest catastrophe and innocent victims of the camps in Sri Lanka have all but been forgotten. I urge you to show that we care. I urge you to support this motion. I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. T. TELFORD (Northern): There is an amazing figure, 280,000 people held in these camps, over a quarter of a million, and have been there for over two years. The Government says the delays are necessary to screen out Tamil Tiger fighters. Aid agencies are concerned about an impending humanitarian disaster in the overcrowded camps unless food and water supplies are forthcoming. Save the Children have said over a third of those in the camp, that is, over 100,000, are already suffering malnutrition.

Congress, the union's values are international. The victims in Sri Lanka need help immediately. I urge you to support this motion. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Motions 214, 215, 219, and 220, you are all aware that the CEC is supporting. Can I put those to the vote? Please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 214 was carried.

Motion 215 was carried.

Motion 219 was carried.

Motion 220 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Can I say thank you, Congress, for your patience. I know we have gone over and can I suggest that we return at 2.15 to make up for it. Thank you.

Congress adjourned.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Congress reassembled at 2.15 pm

THE PRESIDENT: Come to order, Congress. I hope you saw the slide show as you returned to the hall. These are the photos showing how the schools have used the money that we awarded them in the last year's *Healthy School Meals Competition*.

I now have a few announcements to make. Thank you all who completed the Congress questionnaire and thank you for your comments and suggestions. I will not tell you what some of the suggestions were. The General Secretary has drawn the winner, who is Martin Jones from South Western Region. Please go to the Congress Office at the back of the stage to collect your bottle of whisky and glasses.

Congress, there is an amendment to a name in your Congress Awards document. A Highly Commended Award for the Most Inspirational Individual on Equalities should read Ellis Parker from North West & Irish Region and not Peter Ellis from Southern Region.

Referring back to the debate before lunch, I would like to make it clear that the GMB does not associate itself with exploitive labour practices. The T-shirts that you have received at this Congress are produced under the Ethical Employment Conventions of the ILO. We are committed to ensuring that everyone, whether it be in Pakistan, India or wherever, involved in the production of our garments, gets a fair deal, a fair pay for a fair day's work. (*Applause*) They are also union organised, and that is the promise we made to Congress many years ago and that is a promise we will keep.

I now move to the business for this afternoon. I do thank you for your patience this morning but it was a really good debate.

EUROPEAN REPORT

THE PRESIDENT: I call on Kathleen Walker Shaw, GMB European Officer to move her report on pages 28 – 32.

EUROPEAN OFFICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The GMB European office continues to campaign at EU and International level to improve employment and social rights and protections for our members and their families. This includes the national level implementation stages, for example of the Temporary Agency Workers Directive and the recast European Works Council Directive. The economic and financial crisis has dominated the political debate over the past year, and the GMB office staff have been monitoring and contributing to the wide debates at EU and International level, and reporting on the actions and policy that is being developed to tackle the deep problems. GMB has campaigned to ensure that the issues of employment, workers rights and their financial security are given a central focus in relation to the crisis. It has been a year of change and upheaval on the EU institutional front, with damaging results in the European Elections in June 2009. The European Union was not seen in a positive light with its dogged struggle to get the Lisbon Treaty ratified, which involved a second Irish Referendum, and leaving the change of EU Commission in limbo for several months. The European office continues to develop positive working relationships and solidarity with our trade union colleagues across Europe and the world in promoting labour rights, decent work, conditions and pay, and to strengthen trade union recognition and organisation.

CEC Political, European & International Committee – The Committee contributed actively to the campaign work around the European elections, to the discussions regarding the national implementation of the Temporary Agency Workers rights, and a wide range of other policy issues ensuring GMB maximises its scope to influence legislative proposals and policy development at national, European and International level. The Committee oversees the development of solidarity campaigns and practical support for trade union colleagues across the world. Following the recent partnership agreement signed in September 2009 with Costa Rican trade union SITRAP, this is now a permanent agenda item of the Committee.

2. PERSONNEL

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

3. GMB MEP GROUP

The European Parliament elections in June 2009 saw significant losses not just for the UK Labour Party, but for many socialist parties across Europe. The strength of the Socialist Group in the Parliament was considerably diminished, which led to a decision to unite with the Italian progressive democrats to form the Group of Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), but is still well below the size of the majority centre right party. Clearly, this will affect our ability to gain support for trade union positions on policy in the coming five years. Worse still, the elections saw two BNP MEP's being elected to the European Parliament for the UK, Nick Griffin in the North West and Andrew Brons in Yorkshire, where GMB MEP Richard Corbett lost his seat by a narrow margin. Reflecting the policy of emergency motion 7 to Congress

2009, fighting the fascists in elections, GMB members joined colleagues from the Hope not Hate campaign in presenting a major petition with the message *Not in my name* to the European Parliament in Strasbourg in July 2009 on the day the two BNP members formally took up their positions, emphasising they do not represent us.

The GMB group is now reduced from seven to three MEPs: Stephen Hughes (North East – Group convenor), David Martin (Scotland) and Glenis Willmott (East Midlands). Robert Evans (London) and Glenys Kinnock (Wales) stood down at the 2009 election. Neena Gill (West Midlands) lost her seat together with Richard Corbett. Richard is now working as an advisor to the new EU President Van Rompuy.

GMB has a very positive relationship with our group of MEPs at European, national and regional level. The group continues to meet bi-monthly in Brussels, and our MEPs provide ongoing practical and political support for our campaigns and policy positions. GMB is delighted that Glenis Willmott remains leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party, where she continues to do an excellent job. GMB MEPs played a key strategic role in ensuring the negative proposals to undermine workers' rights and protections in revision of the Working Time Directive did not succeed, and the proposals fell. We thank them for their solidarity and commitment in what was a very highly politically charged situation.

4. SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION

The GMB European office supports the work of National and Regional Secretaries and officers in organising and recruitment, particularly relating to multinational companies. This work regularly involves the European and International trade union sector federations, ETUC, as well as direct contacts with other European trade union colleagues, MEPs and with the EU institutions.

Comparing terms and conditions – The European office continues to support national and regional officers in comparing rights, conditions and redundancy terms across multinational companies where we have members, 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, can change the complexion of negotiations and strengthen our bargaining position. Support from Finnish trade union colleagues in the ongoing negotiations on the restructuring of Finnforest group in particular, has been invaluable in influencing a more positive approach by management to the threat of job losses for GMB members in one of their UK sites.

Migrant workers – Implementation of the EU Temporary Agency Workers Directive will provide vital protections for both domestic and migrant agency workers in the UK and across Europe. It is clear that enforcing these rights will be difficult for individual workers without the support and resources of trade unions, and it is hoped this will be recognised by agency workers and will lead to further recruitment and organisation in this area.

Information, research and briefings - The European office provides regular briefings on a wide range of policy areas, and a monthly EU bulletin, which can also be accessed via the GMB website. The Brussels based officers also update members, officers and organisers on developments in EU legislation and rights, such as Working Time, Temporary Agency Workers Directive, EWC's and public procurement to assist them in their roles, and support the bargaining agenda.

5. RECOGNITION

Comparing trade union recognition across key target multinational companies is another function of the European office, which has proved valuable in supporting GMB bids for recognition. European trade union colleagues continue to show solidarity in offering support to our members, and raising the issue with management in their national works councils or committees when requested.

6. GMB EU LEVEL CAMPAIGNS AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

GMB has a positive reputation for raising our members' concerns effectively at national, European and International level, and influencing a large number of specific EU policy and legislative issues both within the EU institutions and at the highest level of UK Government:

Working Time Directive Revision – GMB actively campaigned at EU and national level to stop the damaging proposals to revise the Working Time Directive, which would have undermined the rights and protections of GMB members and workers across Europe. GMB and our European trade union colleagues were supported by a significant number of MEPs, our GMB group members being very influential in the decision not to back down on key principles in the conciliation position, which led to a failure to agree, and the negative proposals thankfully falling. GMB remains vigilant on this issue, as it is clear that the EU Commission and Member State governments, many of whom are currently in breach of the existing Directive on the issue of on-call time, will wish to reopen the issue with new proposals, along the same line of weakening rights and protections. The EU Commission has already tried to push through a hasty social partner consultation which was challenged by ETUC and MEPs. Meanwhile, GMB and our EU trade union colleagues are urging the EU Commission to take long overdue legal action against Member States not complying with the Directive.

GMB has also been working with our European Transport Union Federation colleagues to prevent the road transport working time protections being undermined as Governments and the EU Commission seek to undo the agreement in the original Directive that self-employed drivers will be covered from March 2009.

Temporary Agency Workers Directive – The UK Government began the consultation process towards implementing the Agency Workers' Directive in spring 2009. GMB submitted two detailed responses to the two consultation stages by Government, the second one being on the draft Regulations in December 2009. GMB raised concerns that the Government was not providing effective anti-avoidance measures, particularly in relation to calculating the 12 week qualifying period, and was adopting too narrow an approach to definitions on the scope of the provisions, pay and other equal treatment entitlements. In some areas we believed this would put the Government in breach of its obligations under the EU Directive, and we urged significant amendment and improvement in these areas. GMB submitted a motion to TUC Congress 2009 which was unanimously supported calling for strong protections and early enforcement of the Regulations, by spring 2010. A matter of weeks later, the Government announced it proposed to delay enforcement of the rights until October 2011, only weeks before the EU deadline for transposition into national legislation of December 2011. GMB was highly critical of this, considering it was against the spirit in which the TUC and its affiliates had entered into the social partner agreement allowing the Directive to be unblocked.

European Works' Councils – The European office worked closely with European trade union colleagues to strengthen the provisions of the recast European Works' Council Directive, which has now been adopted and must be implemented in the UK by June 2011. Several GMB EWC members attended a major ETUC conference on the new provisions in March 2009. GMB is also preparing a response to the UK Government consultation on draft Regulations launched in November 2009, where we have concerns that the positive progress made at EU level is not being properly reflected in the UK proposals. The European officer also continues to support national and regional officers and GMB EWC members in establishing and developing EWCs in multinational workplaces.

Public Procurement – In line with composite motion C8 on Remploy adopted by GMB Congress 2009, GMB continues to maintain an active campaigning profile in this area. The European officer, together with National Secretary Phil Davies, the Remploy stewards and consortium officers continue to urge Government

and public authorities at all levels to use the EU provisions on reserved contracts status for awarding contracts to supported employment workplaces for people with disabilities. Regular meetings continue with Government Ministers and departments (Department of Work and Pensions – DWP, and Office of Government Commerce - OGC), and Members of the Welsh and Scottish Assemblies, with the aim of significantly increasing the number of public contracts being awarded to Remploy and other supported factories and businesses. GMB played an influential role in shaping revised guidance on reserved contracts produced by OGC early in 2009, and South Western Regional Secretary, Allan Garley, took a leading role in the guidance produced by the Welsh Assembly at the beginning of 2009. Further progress has been made with the Welsh Assembly putting out a framework contract under the reserved contract status early in 2009. In autumn 2009, OGC Buying solutions were preparing a major framework contract in four lots, also to be let under the reserved contract status, which is due to be published in January 2010. GMB is actively encouraging public authorities at all levels to use these frameworks and bring more work into supported factories and businesses.

GMB raised concerns about the subcontracting of elements of reserved contracts to non-supported businesses, and is calling for a code of conduct on this issue to be established to protect the integrity and positive intent of the contract status, which is to provide good quality work for people with disabilities. OGC and DWP have signalled support for our initiative.

GMB continues to campaign to ensure that wider social, employment, ethical and environmental considerations are included in public contracting. GMB co-ordinated a joint EU trade union response to the EU Commission consultation on an EU guide to Social Procurement in May 2009, which led to the EU Commission making positive amendments in a number of areas where we had concerns. The final guide is due to be published in spring 2010.

The European officer is a member of a small TUC delegation which meets quarterly with OGC policy officials on wider procurement policy developments to ensure workforce, employment and social issues are properly considered.

Defending trade union rights, freedoms and labour standards – with substantial active support from our GMB MEPs, the European officer continues to support the work of our international trade union colleagues in Costa Rica, in co-operation with Bananalink, in pressing complaints made under the EU's Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) trade agreements regarding breaches of labour standards and freedom of association. Dismayed that the EU renewed Costa Rica's trade status in January 2009 without formal investigation into its human rights and labour standards record, GMB continues to campaign for the EU Commission to act. A number of letters have been sent to the EU Trade Commissioner and President of Costa Rica by Stephen Hughes MEP, and he has convened meetings with senior EU Commission trade officials. As a result of this pressure, the EU Trade Commissioner has intervened in ensuring the EU Commission delegation in Costa Rica meet with the trade unions there as soon as possible. A meeting is scheduled for January 2010. Similar pressure is being brought to bear through the ILO channels.

GMB had also supported investigation and pressure to be put on Colombia in the review process of their GSP+ status, in co-operation with the Justice for Colombia campaign. Again, the EU Commission renewed their trade status without formal investigation.

The European Parliament has extended powers in relation to trade agreements under the Lisbon Treaty, and the European officer is working with MEPs to explore how this can be maximised in challenging breaches of human rights, labour standards and trade union rights and freedoms, and is contributing to reports on these issues which will go through European Parliament in the first half of 2010.

Anti-discrimination – progress on the proposed Equal Treatment Directive which would prohibit discrimination outside the workplace on grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation stalled during 2009. The European Parliament's Employment Committee Opinion included an amendment restricting the possibility of age and disability discrimination in access to financial services which GMB worked with MEPs to secure. Also welcome were amendments to include multiple discrimination within the

scope of the Directive, and to use policy such as public procurement to encourage providers to purchase and design products and services that are accessible. In April 2009, the European Parliament adopted its report in favour of the proposed Directive. The amendments regarding the use of age or disability criteria in the provision of insurance, and other financial services, made it through to the final report, though GMB would have preferred tighter restrictions. The Directive has since been blocked in Council by Member States' governments. Several Member States have been resistant to the Directive throughout, including Germany which has said it does not want additional regulatory burdens on business and that its legislation is already adequate. Unanimous agreement is required for the Directive to be adopted.

In July, the European Office responded to the Government Equalities Office public consultation on the draft Directive. We highlighted the issues of concern, particularly in relation to age and disability discrimination in the provision of financial services, and urged the Government to adopt a positive negotiating position which strengthens, rather than weakens, the Directive.

Cross-border healthcare – the European Commission's controversial proposals for a Directive on the application of patient's rights in cross-border healthcare have raised serious concerns that it is an attempt to liberalise the public health sector by the back door, encouraging an internal market for healthcare. The proposed measures are a disproportionate response to the issue of cross-border healthcare, which the Commission admits only affects a tiny percentage of EU citizens. GMB has been working with public sector sister unions and the European Federation for Public Service Unions (EPSU) to raise awareness of these concerns and to try to secure key amendments to the proposals. The European Parliament narrowly adopted its report on the proposed Directive in April 2009. Amendments proposed by Socialist, Green and European United Left MEPs, which would have improved the Commission's proposals, were not adopted and the Socialist Group therefore abstained from the final vote. EU Health Ministers were unable to agree on a common position when they met in December 2009. EPSU and HOSPEEM (the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers Association) are urging governments to assess the draft Directive in the light of the new public service provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in December 2009. The European Office has been approached by Helen Eadie MSP, with a view to providing a trade union perspective on the issue to other MSPs.

European Court of Justice Cases/Posted Workers - the fall-out from the Viking, Laval, Ruffert and Luxembourg Cases continued during 2009. In line with motions 52, 53, 54, 56 and 57 adopted at GMB Congress 2009, GMB stepped up its long established campaign for the UK Government to implement the Posting of Workers Directive (PWD) more effectively to prevent undercutting of terms and conditions. At European level, GMB and our European trade union colleagues continued to call for a revision of the PWD and the adoption of a Social Progress clause to deal with the effects of the judgments. In January 2009, the European Commission angered Socialist MEPs and trade unionists by rejecting the European Parliament's call for a legislative response to the problem. Instead, the Commission proposed a task group to consider the impact of the decisions, and urged the EU social partners to consider the issue, both seen as delaying tactics, and have made little progress during the year.

The negative effects of the cases became very clear in the early part of 2009 with the refinery disputes in the UK in reaction to exploitation and undercutting of terms and conditions in the sector. GMB played a major role in resolving the disputes, whilst warning that the unrest would re-emerge if the underlying problems were not seriously addressed. GMB is grateful for the magnificent support and solidarity we received from European trade union colleagues during the disputes, which was invaluable in showing that workers will not be set against each other by divisive employers seeking to exploit us.

The European Commission defensively tried to suggest that the disputes at the UK refineries were down to "protectionism". The General Secretary wrote to President Barroso pointing out that the crux of the disputes was, in fact, the imbalance of the social and economic dimensions in Europe, further fuelled by the ECJ cases, and called for the Commission to urgently address the issue. In April 2009, the European Court of

Human Rights' (ECtHR) provided a more positive perspective on these issues with the judgment in Enerji Yapi-Yol Sen v Turkey, ruling that the right to strike is a human right and can only be limited in strictly defined circumstances. ETUC and GMB pointed out that the Viking case law is in contradiction with the ECtHR case law and therefore needs to be addressed.

In September 2009, GMB seconded a motion on posted workers adopted by TUC Congress, calling for the urgent revision of the Directive at EU level as well as domestic action. President Barroso, bidding for a second term in office, indicated to the European Parliament he would consider an "implementing" regulation on the Posted Workers Directive. In reality, the proposed regulation would focus only on implementation and enforcement. GMB and ETUC have made clear this would not address the major issues such as the restriction on trade unions' ability to take collective action to secure equal treatment for posted workers.

In December 2009, the Swedish Labour Court gave its final judgment in the Laval case. It ruled that the Swedish unions involved should pay 2.5 million Swedish Krona (£213,000) in damages and costs to the company, though it decided that the unions did not have to pay for economic loss as the company was unable to provide any evidence of financial loss. The Swedish Government has presented a legislative bill which will restrict trade unions' right to take collective action relating to posted workers' working conditions, other than regarding national minimum conditions, which the Swedish trade unions are challenging.

The ETUC's Expert Group on Posting of Workers, which includes the TUC, continues its work, and is expected to present its final report in March 2010.

Financial and Economic Crisis - measures to deal with the financial and economic crisis and recession continued to dominate the EU agenda throughout 2009. GMB and our European trade union colleagues ensured that social and unemployment concerns were also firmly on the agenda, emphasising that workers and ordinary citizens are the innocent victims paying the price for the bankers' recklessness and greed. Unions called for a New Social Deal, highlighting the fact that, even before the crisis, people were faced with rising inequality, with downward pressure on wages (while executive salaries spiralled ever higher), the growth in precarious jobs, attacks on workers' rights and collective bargaining, and the pressure to cut state welfare systems. People were now additionally faced with rising unemployment, massive public deficits and threats to cut public expenditure and/or increase taxes to pay for the bail out. GMB took part in the ETUC *Fight the Crisis* campaign in May 2009 during which some 350,000 people demonstrated in Madrid, Brussels, Berlin and Prague. GMB has worked with European trade union colleagues and MEPs to campaign for strong regulation of global finance at national, EU and International level.

The crisis has rekindled discussions on the establishment of a Financial Transaction Tax, which has been gaining support among several EU Member States.

At the end of the year, unemployment in the Euro zone reached 10% with predictions that it would continue rising until at least 2011. The European trade union movement's New Year's message to the EU Leaders was "You've rescued the bankers, now what about us?"

Hedge Funds and Private Equity – the Socialist Group in the European Parliament was the first political group to act in response to the alarm bells GMB and other European trade unions had been ringing about the dangers of unregulated private equity and hedge funds. Reluctantly, the European Commission was forced to come forward with a proposal for a Directive on Alternative Investment Fund Managers (AIFM), including hedge funds and private equity firms, in April 2009. The proposals were meant to increase transparency and the supervisory mechanisms, but had a major weakness in that they failed to regulate the funds themselves. GMB and our European trade union colleagues called for this loophole to be closed. The main issues for trade unions include: the need to regulate the funds themselves, how workers can be better protected, and preventing asset stripping. The financial services sector has been lobbying heavily for limited regulation. GMB and our EU trade union colleagues are working in co-operation on proposals for amendments reflecting our key priorities, which we hope will be supported by MEPs as the proposals progress through European Parliament in 2010.

Lisbon Treaty – the long running saga of the Lisbon Treaty (formerly the Reform Treaty) concluded with the Treaty coming into force on 1 December 2009. Ireland held a second referendum in October 2009 following a compromise reached in June 2009 between EU Heads of State and Government providing legal guarantees requested by the Irish Government in exchange for holding the second poll. GMB and European unions hoped this process would address the imbalance on the social and workers rights, but were disappointed. Whereas legally binding guarantees on issues such as taxation policy, the right to life, and family and education were incorporated into a protocol to be attached to the Treaty, no more than a token gesture was made to workers' concerns raised by the Irish. EU leaders agreed a "solemn declaration on workers' rights, social policy and other issues" which is not legally binding.

EU Jobs and Growth Strategy – in November 2009, the European Commission launched a public consultation on the future "EU 2020" strategy to succeed the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, which expires at the end of 2010. GMB responded critically to the approach and weakness of the document, and presented our key priorities for action in this area. A decision on the final strategy is expected at the June 2010 European Council.

7. SUPPORT FOR TRAINING, EU FUNDED PROJECTS, DELEGATIONS

The European office continues to offer support and guidance to GMB regions and sections in developing EU funded projects. The staff participate in a range of conferences, meetings and training sessions relevant to our work, and in support of GMB members and officers.

The European office provided advice and support for a joint GMB/CGT French union project proposal for European funding to develop trade union co-operation in the nuclear industry. The proposal needs further work before re-submitting in 2010.

Assistance was given to Manufacturing Section colleagues for the submission of a bid for European interregional funding for a skills and employment project to rebuild the Medway Queen paddle steamer.

Our links with Danish trade union colleagues continue, and visits by their delegations provide a valuable opportunity to exchange information on industrial relations and organising.

(Adopted)

SIS. K. WALKER SHAW (GMB European Officer): I formally move my report, President.

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any questions on Kathleen's report? *(No response)* Does Congress agree to accept the European Report?

The European Report was adopted.

ADDRESS BY FRANCES O'GRADY, TUC DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I have been joined on the platform by a good friend to us and somebody who were admire. I would like to say Frances O'Grady, Deputy General Secretary of the TUC, welcome. Francis became TUC Deputy General Secretary in January 2003, the first woman ever to hold this post, and not before time that we had a woman breaking through the glass ceiling. *(Applause)* She has lead responsibility for a wide range of key areas of policy development across the TUC's work, including trade union recruitment and organisation, inter-union relations, and TUC services to members.

She is a committed trade unionist and has been active in a number of employment rights, women's and community campaigns. She is one of the trade union commissioners on the Low Pay Commission and, plus, she comes from somewhere I was born in – she is Irish. (*Applause*) Frances, please address Congress.

SIS. F. O'GRADY (Deputy General Secretary, TUC): Thank you, Mary. Can I thank you for the outstanding service that you as a trade union leader but also as a sister have given to the whole Movement. (*Applause*) It is a pleasure to bring greetings and solidarity on behalf of the TUC to what is a great but also crucially, from my perspective, a growing Union. It is an honour to have the opportunity to address your Congress.

I was sharing with Paul how much I enjoyed watching the TV coverage of the Labour leadership hustings yesterday in this hall, the tough questions, the nervous candidates and the ruthless judges. Who needs *Britain's Got Talent* when you've got the GMB Congress? (*Applause*) And who need Simon Cowell and Amanda Holden when you can have Paul and Mary? (*Applause*)

This year has certainly been a year of many highlights for Paul, and last month we witnessed an achievement none of us would have thought possible, something unthinkable just a few years ago, something which I know matters enormously to Paul, and that was Fulham in the Europa Cup Final. (*Applause*)

Congress, I want to begin by paying tribute to everything that you have achieved during the past year, because you have led the debate on private equity, you stood up for members of the AA fighting to protect their terms and conditions from those asset strippers who now run the company, you have achieved recognition for many of your members in Asda, taking trade unionism into the heart of the Wal-Mart empire, proving that our brand of trade unionism knows no frontiers. You won a fair settlement for the refuse collectors in Leeds (*Cheers and applause*) who were on strike for eleven weeks because they had the courage to resist the Liberal/Tory Council and their bid to slash their wages by a third. Nevertheless, in the midst of the worst economic crisis in living memory, you have continued to recruit new members, to build rank and file organisation and create a shining example of how organising does work. All this and there are many more reasons to be proud. I am proud that the TUC has worked alongside you to advance our shared cause. I am proud to have supported you on the dispute at Lindsay Oil Refinery and other power stations across the country. (*Applause*) Because I am second generation, if you don't mind, Mary, I am going to make it clear that for me and for many like us, this was never about British jobs for British workers, but for us it was always about unionised jobs for unionised workers (*Applause*) and on industry rates of pay that the Union fought for. I am proud, too, that we have worked with you to help resolve the dispute at British Gas, and I applaud those workers for refusing to kowtow to management bullying and, because we have to focus on the next generation, upholding our right to recruit and organise apprentices. I am proud – very proud – that we have supported you on the Remploy campaign. (*Cheers and applause*)

I want to pay personal tribute to Phil Davis and to the Remploy shop stewards, and what leadership you have shown by taking that Remploy factory in York, condemned to closure by management, and transforming it into a trade union collective run for and by disabled workers. (*Applause*)

Congress, today we have got to be honest with ourselves. If the last few years have been tough, then the next few look to be the toughest we have faced in a generation. This is a defining moment for our Movement, the 6.5 million members we represent, and for all working people, not just in this country, not just in Europe but around the world. Here, at home, as we saw at your Congress, Labour is beginning that process, that necessary process, of a bit of soul searching, reflecting on how it can win back the many millions of votes that we lost. While they are doing that the new Con-Dem Coalition is already sharpening the axe. We are now faced with a government that is committed to making the most savage cuts in history, worse than even under Thatcher, and we know that the consequences for millions of people will be devastating. At a time when the economy remains on its knees, the TUC believes that spending cuts of this order are a monumental mistake. They risk a double dip recession, a huge increase in unemployment and untold damage to our public finances in the long run. Let's be clear. We are not just talking about job losses in the public sector.

Just think of the many construction companies that depend on public contracts. Just think about the security firms and the cleaning contractors that depend on public contracts. Think about what those job losses will do to consumer demand and the knock-on effect that has on other businesses in the local economy. Think what it does to our tax take when we are throwing thousands and thousands on to the dole.

Two weeks ago the Government over £6 billion worth of immediate cuts, the effects of which will be felt by all of us, but you know and I know that they will be felt especially by the poorest and the most vulnerable in our society. We know that are going to have children who will miss out on the extra reading classes they need and who will miss out on the free school meals that your Union has fought so hard for. We know about the families who, frankly, stand a better chance of winning the Lottery than the keys to a council flat. We know that the long-term sick will now have to pay for their prescriptions and about the young unemployed who can kiss goodbye to hopes of jobs and training promised by the Future Jobs Fund.

So let's be clear about this. This isn't a Coalition government. This is a demolition government. (*Applause*) Congress, when I hear David Cameron saying "We're all in this together", when we here talk about "A big society", about "A progressive approach to cuts", let all of us expose this for the spin that it really is, because the truth is that we have a Government drawn from a very narrow elite of white public schoolboys, a Tory Front Bench of multi-millionaires who not only have no idea how the other half live, but they've got no idea how the other 99% live! (*Applause*) As the countdown to the Budget begins, the new Government is trying to soften us all up for what lies ahead. Outside of protected areas, such as the NHS, the Institute of Fiscal Studies has calculated that we could be facing cuts of up to 25%, and this is not just about efficiencies, and none

of us are fooled that they will still protect the front line. We are all of us facing a fundamental attack on the universal values and services that we have built up over generations that bind communities together, that give everybody a stake in the Welfare State, which is the lifeblood of any civilised society.

Congress, let's just get one thing clear here. The point is that the black hole in our finances was not caused because we have too many jobs for school dinner workers, too many refuse collectors, care workers or community nurses. It was not caused because public sector wages are too high, or that latest insult to our intelligence because we have a so-called 'public sector pensioner aristocracy'! No, the recession was caused by the greed of a tiny number of bankers, financiers and speculators. It was their reckless gambling that took our economy to the edge of an abyss, who landed the taxpayer with a trillion pound bill and who, even now, continue to stuff their wallets with telephone number bonuses.

So, today, let our message go out loud and clear from this hall. We will not let them get away with it! (*Applause*) We will not let ordinary hardworking families take the rap for the bankers' economic crime of the century! Our Movement will defend services from attack, we will resist savage cuts and we will protect the jobs, the pay and the pensions of dedicated public servants who did nothing to cause this mess.

Don't let anybody tell you that we have no choice, because there is an alternative, an alternative where fair taxes tackle the deficit, where we clamp down on that £25 billion pounds worth of tax avoidance by the super rich, where we have a Robin Hood tax on financial transactions, crack down on speculation and ensure that the banks pay their fair share, and where we tax those bonuses in the City. In other words, where the rich and powerful have to play by the same rules that the rest of us play by. (*Applause*)

Congress, we also have to make the intelligent case for a fairer, more balanced, more sustainable and stable economy over the longer term. That has to be, in my book, an economy that puts modern manufacturing at its heart, because what we need now is a little less financial engineering and a little more real engineering. For far too long, manufacturing has played second fiddle to services and it is high time that the pendulum began to swing the other way. Let's be clear about this. We can't sustain an economy of 60 million people by selling each other mortgaged backed securities, skinny lattes and mobile ring phone tones. It's only by making and selling them to the rest of the world that we will be able to build Britain's prosperity. There is so much more that we could and should be doing in the months and years ahead, whether it is high speed trains, whether it is electric vehicles, wind turbines or smart metres, because we have the skills, experience and expertise to make them here.

Britain's manufacturing industries can drive the dynamic low carbon economy of the future. All we need is the political will to make it happen. That is why I call on the new Government not to abandon the industrial strategy started by Labour, but instead to build on it, because the change that we see, that we need, will not come from some kind of

invisible ‘hand of the market’, but only through intelligent and active leadership from the State.

Building a new economy that provides decent jobs, affordable homes, dignity in old age and a living wage are the big ambitions that we now have to make the case for. Given the political and economic realities facing us, I don’t for one minute under-estimate the scale of that task. I also believe that we, in the months and years ahead, will have to pick our battles wisely. We will have to build alliances. We will have to take the enthusiasm and energy in this hall out into our communities and win hearts and minds. But at a time when ordinary working people, I think, are crying out for a better quality of life, for a sense of hope about their future, I believe that together we can make progress and you, colleagues, you delegates, have a unique contribution to make. As the voice of more than 600,000 working people right across the country, you can be a real force for social justice and economic renewal.

My message today is let’s together seize that chance, let it be your Union that leads the way, that reinvigorates the Movement, that shows that a better life, a fairer society, is possible. We want to work alongside you so let’s together speak up for public services, let’s together make the case for a new kind of economy and a compassionate society, and together go forward to build a fairer, greener future for all. Thank you very much, colleagues. *(A standing ovation)*

THE PRESIDENT: Frances, that was an inspiring speech, and that is exactly what we need now from the TUC. I know that with your good offices we can lead the way. It would be remiss of me not to say this. As we are in the North West & Irish Region, I want to say ‘thank you’ to you for your support to make sure that with the GMB that we get justice for our Cammell Laird brothers, if we do nothing else. *(Applause)* We will stand shoulder to shoulder with them until those workers and families get justice. Thank you. *(Applause)*

I now ask Frances to accept that bottle of Scotch and glasses that have been going round all the week on behalf of our members and this Congress.
(Presentation made amidst applause)

THE PRESIDENT: We now move on to Employment Policy: Rights at work. This debate covers Composite 4, Motion 61, Composite 5, Motion 80 and Motion 83.

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: Rights at work.

TEMPORARY AND AGENCY WORKERS

COMPOSITE 4

(Covering Motions 55, 56 and 58)

C4. COVERING MOTIONS:

- 55. TEMPORARY AND AGENCY WORKERS RIGHTS (GMB Scotland)
- 56. AGENCY WORKERS REGULATIONS (Midland & East Coast Region)
- 58. DELAYED AGENCY WORKERS DIRECTIVE (Midland & East Coast Region)

TEMPORARY AND AGENCY WORKERS

Congress supports the principles stated in the stated in the EU Directive on Temporary Agency workers (Recital 15) that employment contracts of an indefinite duration are the general form of employment relationship. To support this principle and prevent the exploitation of agency workers it is vital that temporary agency workers receive equal treatment at work.

We are particularly concerned that agencies and their client employers will attempt to avoid the scope, spirit and intent of the regulations and the directive by fostering bogus self employment or enforcing workforce agreements to opt out. Agency workers are especially vulnerable during a recession and the regulations should include anti-avoidance measures to prevent unscrupulous agencies moving temps between jobs within the same workplaces, or rotating them on short-term assignments between different employers. Loopholes which permit the use of bogus self-employment should also be closed.

Moreover, Congress believes that equal treatment should include equal access to facilities, benefits and rights as provided for directly employed workers and should be applied on a term for term basis.

This Conference notes the progress made on the transposition of the European Union Temporary and Agency Workers Directive into UK Law.

Congress congratulates the role our European Office and the General Secretary in championing the rights of agency workers and calls for the campaign for full and equal treatment to be stepped up, not only in the run up to the General Election, but also beyond to ensure that workers are aware of their rights.

Conference condemns any Government delaying large planks of its employment protection legislation (Agency Workers Directive).

Congress therefore calls for the speedy implementation of the regulations and the closing of all loopholes which could simply permit avoidance. This Conference calls upon the Government to give early implementation of the Agency Workers Regulations to give agency workers real protection from exploitation and deliver genuine equal treatment on pay, holiday and hours

Finally, Congress pledges to campaign for a labour market in the UK which is fair, just and which provides long-term security of employment to working people. Congress also calls for a proper enforcement framework and an appropriate level of resourcing to back this up.

(Carried)

SIS. B. CARSON (GMB Scotland): Congress, I move Composite 4. President and delegates, this composite sets out what should be our position for the future implementation and enforcement of temporary and agency workers. Our concerns are set out in the composite and focus on agencies and their client/employers, who will exploit any loopholes they can in order to undermine the fair and equal treatment of agency workers.

Contrary to some of the rubbish peddled by some Conservative politicians and businesses, people don't want to work through agencies because they enjoy it. Most of them wish for full-time permanent jobs. We all now that many employers have used the lack of employment rights and insecurity to treat agency workers badly. They are calling for legislation to be applied rigorously across the UK, providing a fair deal for these vulnerable workers, ensuring their rights to equal treatment on pay, including basic bonuses and redundancy payments. Congress, please support.

BRO. P. SOPER (Midland & East Coast): President and Congress, I second Composite 4 – Temporary Agency Workers. First of all, I would like to say how proud we are of our MEPs for bringing this legislation in at EU level and their fight to bring its swift implementation into the UK. But the Labour Government left out large planks of this legislation until 2011, which is the last possible commence date under EU law. This has now made it very difficult for us to protect temporary workers and agency workers. Hopefully, when the legislation is fully implemented, it will also protect part-time workers and full-time workers being undercut by cheap agency staff.

One of the other benefits ensures that employers keep temporary workers informed of any permanent vacancies. An agency will no longer be able to prevent a temporary worker from taking up permanent employment with the company they have been placed with. What I am worried about now, especially with this new Government in power, is people like Phil McCabe, who is a spokesperson for the Forum of Private Business, who said, and I quote: "We are glad the implementation of the Directive was postponed." He also said: "When the Directive is eventually implemented it will undermine the flexibility of temporary labour." So, Congress, we need to push the directive so it can be implemented at the earliest opportunity. I second.

BOGUS EMPLOYMENT/CASUALISATION MOTION 61

61. BOGUS EMPLOYMENT/CASUALISATION

This conference notes that there is clear evidence that many employers are using the current economic circumstances to attack workers pay and conditions. In particular through increased casualisation and bogus self employment.

Workers in casual and bogus self employment are denied basic employment rights, are subject to greater risk and are less likely to be organized.

Conference calls for immediate legislation to ensure that workers are not denied their rights through casualisation and bogus employment.

Conference calls for:

- (1) An end to the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS) and all other tax schemes which encourage bogus employments.
- (2) Legal action against employers who use bogus employment to deny workers rights.

SOUTH SHIELDS 2 BRANCH
Northern Region

(Carried)

BRO. A. FOSTER (Northern): Congress, I move Motion 61 on bogus employment and casualisation. Bogus self-employment, as we all know, is widespread across all industrial sectors and in every region of the UK. Even before the start of the current recession, a survey in the construction industry revealed that almost 50% of workers in this industry were, effectively, on bogus self-employment schemes. The report, colleagues, estimated that bogus self-employment in construction alone was costing the Exchequer over £5 billion every year in lost taxes. That is equivalent to 20 brand new hospitals.

Congress, as our new Conservative/Lib-Dem Government prepares its Budget to cut £6 billion out of the UK economy this year I wonder if they will give any consideration to outlawing bogus employment? No, colleagues. We all know what they will do. They will cut benefits, they will cut public sector pay and they will destroy public sector pensions. It will be the poor who pay for the bankers' recession whilst the so-called 'captains of industry' will be allowed to continue to avoid paying tax and National Insurance. This situation will be allowed to continue to exploit working people.

Enough is enough. It's time to stop exploitation and tax avoidance. It's time properly to regulate self-employment. Congress, I urge you to support this motion.

BRO. M. EBDEN (Northern): Congress, I second Motion 61 on bogus employment. The recent cuts by the Lib-Con Alliance amounts to £6.2 billion. This will affect the lives of many UK working families. The casual vindictiveness of ending Child Trust Funds by a Lib-Dem Chief Secretary of the Treasury, David Laws, who ----

THE PRESIDENT: I can hear a mobile phone ringing! Hang on, colleague. Whose ever phone that is, you have got to pay £20. You bring him back. Catch him on the way back, Lena. Ian Lowes, you must pay £20 in the pot for your phone going off. *(Applause and cheers)* You shouldn't have gone out of the hall. Michael, start again.

BRO. EBDEN: Right. I will start again. Congress, recent cuts by the Lib-Dem/Con Alliance amount to £6.2 billion. This will affect many lives of hardworking families in the UK. The casual vindictiveness in ending the Child Trusts by the Lib-Dem Chief Secretary to the Treasury, David Laws, who incidentally made millions out of the City, demonstrates that the Lib-Dem/Con Alliance is far removed from helping the working people. The Government prefers to favour employers rather than the hardworking families. We know the Tories and their Lib-Dem Alliance partners show, when they run local councils, that they place the workers and their families and last and place

employers first. If we have learnt anything from the last recession this recession could become a double-dip event with this new Government's proposed cuts. We know that regulation is vitally needed to avoid exploitation of workers by unscrupulous employers. We need employers to realise their corporate social responsibility. Good employers are part of the wider community. Bad employers seek to avoid paying tax and National Insurance. Tackling bogus employers is a major part of tackling unfairness in the UK economy and putting the economy on a more sustainable footing. We must end exploitation. Thank you. I urge your support, Congress.

**CLIENT-CONTRACTORS AND THE OUTSOURCING OF LABOUR
COMPOSITE 5
(Covering Motions 62 and 63)**

C5. COVERING MOTIONS:

- 62. CLIENT – CONTRACTORS - DISMISSALS (Midland & East Coast Region)
- 63. THE OUTSOURCING OF LABOUR (Midland & East Coast Region)

CLIENT-CONTRACTORS AND THE OUTSOURCING OF LABOUR

This Conference condemns the long held Tory practice of outsourcing labour to so called contract employment, where by definition and practice the employees find themselves discriminated against by what should be their own employers.

This draconian 18th century practice by the land barons inflicts clauses in employment contracts stipulated by the client upon the contractor to the effect that removal through the disciplinary procedure is effected by the agent of the land owner acting to impress the same.

This Conference calls on the Government to investigate and put right contracted employees who are dismissed by the client without any justification and any recourse to an Employment Tribunal.

This motion seeks the condemnation of this Congress and action by the GMB to prevent such practices accordingly.

(Carried)

BRO. D. LASCELLES (Midland & East Coast Region): Congress, I move Composite 5 on the Outsourcing of Labour. We ask that this Congress condemns the Tory practice of outsourcing labour to so called contract employment, where the contract is long-term over a period of years and which should, in terms of the work carried out, be carried out in-house by the main site owner. The simple result of this practice is that so often our members find themselves discriminated against by what should be their own employers.

Get your head round this one. I will use here but one example of why this employment standard fails the employer. So although there are many examples of why this Draconian practice is wrong, the experience that I have had over the years in representing our

members has brought the realisation that what seems like an 18th Century tradition by the land barons inflicts clauses in employment contracts, stipulated by the client of the contractor, at the outset to the effect that if your face doesn't fit, you're out of work.

But in Corus, the steelmaker in Scunthorpe, they call it "contract clause 10". Other employers may describe it differently. On the way to putting this motion together, from branch to region and to this great Congress, we found other examples of it. You will probably hear more about that when the seconder speaks from Hull No. 1 Branch, who has the same kind of problem but with different employers and different contractors.

Whole disciplinary procedures that gives people's courts standards of stature to a workplace disciplinary process, originally agreed by the trade union, fail to give the right to employees to redress the actions taken in matters of discipline by a company which does not even employ them. In other words, it is the contractors who are supplying a service to Corus in this case, but it is Corus themselves who interfere in the process of discipline. Such totalitarian other world standards which are not acceptable in the 21st Century have been permitted to go unnoticed in English law for far too many years. I urge Congress on behalf of the members in my branch and others, it seems, and I suspect throughout this country and this great Congress, to support this composite motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, David. It's great to have you back. Secunder.

SIS. J. MOULAVASSILIS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Composite 5. President and Congress, this motion is somewhat of a challenge to the delegates in getting our heads around employment practice which has existed in this country since Margaret Thatcher's time as Prime Minister commenced in 1979. Within weeks of her Government coming to power the British Steel Corporation, as Corus then was, announced the decision to outsource labour. The mover's example is one of the worst practices that were signed up to by unsuspecting union officials. The appalling contract clause 10 is one of the many injustices our GMB members have had to suffer over the years. Given that this practice has been condemned by today's contract managers more than once and, as you might expect, other differentials cover rates of pay, hours, holiday entitlements and so on, I want to make it clear that it is this flagrant breach of the disciplinary procedure while someone who does not even employ you can, at their preference and fancy, interfere in the due process. Nowhere does it state within the disciplinary procedure that the client has the right to dismiss the contract employee. It is, however, stated that the employee must meet the client's requirements, but the interference here is about the ability to do the job of work being offered and not that the client can interfere in a process of discipline.

Congress, like the mover, I urge you to support this motion so that the Human Rights Act can be invoked and justice for our members delivered by this Congress. Thank you for your support.

BANK HOLIDAYS
MOTION 80

80. BANK HOLIDAYS

This Conference calls upon the TUC to protect and maintain designated bank holidays, i.e. Christmas Day, Boxing Day falling on Saturday and Sunday.

HULL RETAIL & DISTRIBUTION BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. K. GUEST (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am a first-time delegate. *(Applause)* I move Motion 80 – Bank Holidays.

President and Congress, bank holidays are something our forefathers fought for. In the calendar year there are eight bank holidays. Since the law changed to give a minimum of 28 days holidays to employees, employers, for example, Asda, are using a loophole to exploit entitlement. For instance, if Christmas Day and Boxing Day fell on Saturday and Sunday, the designated bank holidays would be Monday and Tuesday. They propose to open on these days stating that it is voluntary, but Mondays and Tuesdays will not be a designated bank holiday, but they will be paid as a normal working day. So how voluntary is that? Companies are continually eroding our terms and conditions and I do not think that we will get any help from the new Coalition government, but I ask the GMB, along with the wider trade union Movement, the TUC, to work with our Labour Party members to protect our bank holidays. Thank you.

SIS. L. PETERS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I second Motion 80 – Bank Holidays. I am a first-time delegate. *(Applause)* President, I work at Asda where they divided the workforce over Christmas. If you work at an Asda store on a retail park you are going to be open on Boxing Day, but you will not get Tuesday as a designated day off, but up the road in an Asda store you will be paid for both Saturday and Sunday as the store will be shut. You will then get the designated days of Monday and Tuesday as bank holidays and the same for New Year's Day. Yes, Asda will divide and conquer our members but, believe you me, today may be some stores but going forward it will be all stores. That is Asda's way. But across all employers, they are seeking to abuse our holiday entitlement. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Conference, just on that particular issue, there are many anomalies in the bank holiday legislation. I want to say to our Congress and delegates, we have the same issue with those who only work 39 weeks a year. It is how the legislation was framed by adding it to the annual leave instead of being specific about bank holidays. I did raise this matter with the last government and we will keep raising it until that law is amended and workers get their rights like everybody else. *(Applause)*

EMPLOYMENT POLICY: MIGRANT WORKERS

MIGRANT LABOUR RECOGNITION MOTION 83

83. MIGRANT LABOUR RECOGNITION

This Conference calls upon the Government to place more responsibility upon recruitment agencies and employers who recruit cheap labour from outside of the UK, with regards to Pay and Conditions and, in particular, when they become unemployed. This needs to be enshrined in law.

GOOLE BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. R. WHILDING (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Motion 83 – Migrant Workers. President, migrant workers from eastern Europe don't jump on a plane and come to the UK seeking employment. What happens is that employers use agencies or their own managers visit eastern Europe and recruit these workers to work in the factories, farms, greenhouses and on construction sites. They pay their air fares and, in some cases, provide accommodation. In many cases the accommodation is overcrowded and poor. Should they lose their jobs for whatever reason, they then lose their home also. If they have been in the UK for less than 12 months they cannot apply for social housing. These workers are left homeless, living on the streets or in tents. There is no obligation upon these companies to pay for their return airfare or house them.

In the recent hard winter several migrant families were living in tents in Goole, Yorkshire, in freezing conditions. This cannot be right in a so-called civilised country. Many employers recruit migrant workers to undercut nationally or locally negotiated rates of pay and other terms and conditions, not to mention poor health and safety standards. Those companies, in competing for business, are at risk of going out of business. It also has an effect on local economies. The law requires being tightened up to stop these abuses of greedy employers who are overseeing a new 21st Century pool of growing slave labour. Thank you.

BRO. S. ALLINSON (Midland & East Coast): President, I second Motion 83 – Migrant Workers. President, Congress and visitors, to bring workers into this country our Government allow agencies to bid for this work. The bigger the agency the bigger the contracts. These agencies, on the face of things, portray a professional service of work, accommodation and workers' welfare, but only as long as you stay with them. If you are seasonally laid off or sacked, these agencies have no duty of care to these workers. These people are now left with no work, no money and usually no accommodation. They slip into the ever-widening black hole that get called "Those bloody lazy immigrants". There must be laws in place to make sure that these agencies just cannot wash their hands of these workers and leave them as a statistic. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the debate? *(No response)* In that case, I call Lena Sharp on behalf of the CEC on Composite 5.

SIS. L. SHARP (CEC, Commercial Services): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC. The CEC is supporting Composite 4 and Motions 61, 77, 80 and 83. We are supporting Composite 5 on Client-Contractors and the Outsourcing of Labour with a qualification.

Composite 5 raises the issue of an employer who dismisses an employee because of third party pressure; for instance, by a client who threatens to withdraw their contract unless an employee is dismissed, or from a third party who wields influence over the employer. In simple terms, this means that if a customer takes against a contracted employee for any reason they can ask to have him or her sacked. In such cases the employer argues that they had some other substantial reason which justifies the dismissal. Case law in this area has upheld the employers' ability to do this in some circumstances, and it is sometimes the case that an employee's own contract will contain a clause which warns that a third party may intervene to have him or her removed. These are matters of concern which the composite rightly addresses and is much in line with broad GMB policy of the law of unfair dismissal. However, the qualification is that it would be very difficult to bring the third party in as a second respondent to any unfair dismissal claim because there is no employment relationship with the third party.

Please support Composite 4, Motions 61, 77, 80 and 83 and support Composite 5 with this qualification. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Lena. Leaving out Motion 77, does the region accept the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you. I now put Composite 4, Motion 61, Composite 5, Motion 80 and Motion 83 to the vote. All those in favour, please show. Anyone against? (+++ ring Steve Short on Motion 77)

Composite 4 was carried.

Motion 61 was carried.

Composite 5 was carried.

Motion 80 was carried.

Motion 83 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: I move now to Political and the Labour Party. This involves Composite 9, Remploy, covering Motions 113 and 114. I will also call Motion 116, Engineering Minister.

POLITICAL: Labour Party

REMPLOY

COMPOSITE 9

(Covering Motions 113 & 114)

C9. COVERING MOTIONS:

113. REMPLOY (Yorkshire & N. Derbyshire Region)

114. REMPLOY WORKERS (MORE SUPPORT) (Midland & East Coast Region)

REMPLOY

This Conference calls on the CEC to lobby the Government to provide more sheltered employment in the form of Remploi factories for workers with disabilities. It also calls for more support for those disabled workers who are unable to find employment until jobs can be provided in Remploi factories.

We call upon to raise a vote of no confidence in the Remploi board and call on the Ministers of disabled people to sack the Remploi board. We need a board that will promote disabled people, a board that will promote Remploi, that will promote public procurement and that have the capabilities in the business world to support disabled people and find them work to do when they come to work and they are treated like a human being and not a overhead cost to the business.

We really need to tell this Government how we really feel on how Remploi have been treated by a Labour Government. We need the current board sacking and a correct board put in place, one that will work with the trade unions. Some of us have been that disillusioned and disgusted that we have ended up leaving the Labour Party.

(Carried)

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I move Composite 9 on behalf of Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region. I have been coming to this rostrum now for about eleven years and, guess what, nothing's changed!

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you've changed, James, quite a lot from the first day you came to this platform.

BRO J. STRIBLEY: We call upon the CEC to raise a vote of no confidence in the Remploi board and call on the Ministers of disabled to sack the Remploi board. I have no trust in this bunch of no-hopers. They couldn't run a burger bar on a Saturday night. We need a board that will promote disabled people with disabled people on the Remploi board, and not use the board to promote themselves. We need a board that will promote public procurement and that have the capabilities in the business world to support disabled people. But this management team is failing disabled people miserably.

We have, approximately, 27 sites with no work or very little work, where the company does not find the sites work.

Last year £1.75 million was paid in bonuses to what is a failing business. We have an HR director who does not negotiate, but just tells us what is happening and then walks out. Two directors were appointed without proper advertising and Remploi has an HR department with 49 staff. If they thought more about running the business and not attacking our members, the trade unions and trying to sack our members, things might be better. But this company's management is top heavy. Since modernisation two years ago the management has increased the management jobs. If they fail, they are moved

sideways to lucrative positions. We really need to tell this Government how we feel now. Remploi management is top heavy. The Labour Party did little to help us. We really need to tell this Government how Remploi have been treated by a Labour government. Some of us have been that disillusioned with the Labour Party and have ended up leaving the Labour Party. We need the current board sacking and a correct board put in place. This current management act like footballers and WAGS. It is a status symbol: big car, laptop, a Blackberry, mobile phone and they have hours to suit. Anybody who thinks we are jealous is wrong. We are angry! Our management does not promote Remploi where we can find work. We are angry at the taxpayers' money being misused and subsidising these freeloaders, which have put our members' jobs at risk.

I can tell you a lot of stories about Remploi. In fact I could write a book. When you talk to your mates outside of Remploi, they think we are mad. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, I wish to raise an amendment. I think it is only right that we called a full debate on Remploi. I ask those delegates waiting in front of the stage not to come to the rostrum just now.

SIS. D. MILLS (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I am speaking in support of Composite 9. One of our members could only get a morning job as a cleaner at B&Q. After a while he then got an afternoon job at Boots packing for the Christmas trade. This job he did enjoy and found he could manage to hold down the two jobs. After a few months, Boots decided to relocate and the distance would have been too far for him to travel. After being in a safe environment like Remploi, he feels so let down. He keeps going for interviews and other jobs in the afternoon, but he gets knocked back. This makes him feel very insecure and vulnerable. This must be what is happening across the country with lots of Remploi people. What a crime! Please support this composite. I thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: I call GMB Scotland.

BRO. J. HILLS (GMB Scotland): President and delegates, this November coming I celebrate 40 years in Remploi. I have worked a long time in Remploi, and I will say just now that I am proud to be a Remploi employee, most definitely. (*Applause*) Remploi is a wonderful place to work. I can certainly say that. In the past 40 years I have seen many changes and a lot of things happen. Should I be celebrating it? Yes. But I can't do that because two years ago 29 factories closed with tears in the eyes of many of the workforce. Those people will find it hard to get a job elsewhere. It is hard enough for a non-disabled to get a job. It is not the case that Remploi is expensive. What has happened just now is the wastage of the directors who are getting consultative fees and all the other millions of pounds wasted in Remploi.

If money was not wasted in Remploi, there would be no need to close its factories. The Union put forward a plan to save Remploi and the company just threw it out. The so-called Labour government did not want Remploi to survive. It is not a case that

Remploy is too expensive. It is just a case that the money they are wasting could be spent on the disabled. I ask you to pass this motion. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, I have just a slight amendment to proceedings. I call Phil Davies to give his Report. Then I will call Emergency Motion 4 – Remploy Non Disabled Trainees.

MANUFACTURING SECTION REPORT

MANUFACTURING SECTION

MANUFACTURING SECTION NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Martin Shaw	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
John Dolan	GMB Scotland
Ann McLaren	GMB Scotland
Brenda Fraser	London Region
Audrey Harry	Midlands & East Coast Region
Paul Wheatley	Midlands & East Coast Region
Mark Bartlett	Midlands & East Coast Region
Edward Marnell	North West & Irish Region
John McDonnell	North West & Irish Region
Andy McGivern	North West & Irish Region
Ron Waugh	North West & Irish Region (Section President)
Gerry Ferguson	Northern Region
Mary Hutchinson	Northern Region
Bernard Taylor	Northern Region
Sheila Bearcroft	South Western Region
Brian Farr	South Western Region
Don McGregor	South Western Region
Ann Leader	South Western Region
Brian Burton	Southern Region (Section Vice President)
Michael Laws	Southern Region
Tommy Hall	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

MANUFACTURING SECTION NATIONAL OFFICERS

Phil Davies - National Secretary
Keith Hazlewood - National Secretary
Allan Black - National Officer

PHIL DAVIES, NATIONAL SECRETARY

Introduction

The Manufacturing Section continues to bear the brunt of the deepest recession for over 50 years. Steelworkers, construction workers, furniture workers and many more have lost their jobs or are on short time working. Those people who are in work have had to endure a prolonged pay freeze.

During the last year members within the Manufacturing Section have had to accept cuts in pay and conditions which were fought for over many years and which are now being put under threat or drastically reduced. The employers have taken full advantage of the current economic situation. National collective

bargaining has suffered as a consequence and workers' basic rights have been taken away. Throughout the economic crisis the government has poured billions of pounds into the banks and financial systems but little or no finance has been put into the British manufacturing industry. Even the mighty arms industry has struggled to see new investment.

UK manufacturing workers are the most skilled and productive in the world and of course quite rightly they demand decent pay and conditions.

The obscene rush to exploit the poor of the world has resulted in a race to the bottom. China, India and many other parts of Asia have become the new slave countries of the 21st Century. High investment in low wage economies keeping the workers in conditions that are only fit for the 1850s and keeping trade unions out of the workplace is totally unacceptable.

It will end one day. The world is going to change in the next 20 years. Low pay and slave conditions will eventually disappear. The world trade unions will see to that. When it does change what will the position of UK manufacturing be. Will the skills still be available and what else will we lose over the next 20 years?

At present there is still time to preserve the UK skill base. The UK manufacturing workers can still make jet engines and can still produce the best furniture. We are still capable of building and designing the best ships. The UK manufacturing workforce can produce products from paper clips to major power stations and oil refinery projects.

Our UK strengths are in the fact that British women and men have the ability to use by hand and brain to build the future wealth of the UK. Senior bankers never make anything but a financial mess and the Government needs to rethink its policy. National industries do work; UK commuters want to travel to work on trains, buses and cars made in UK factory sites.

Finally I would like to thank the Officers, Section Committee, Shop Stewards, Activists and Members for all their hard work over the last difficult 12 months and of course the CEC, the Senior Management Team and our National Office Staff.

CONSTRUCTION

Over the last 10 years we have always received above inflation increases. The three main trade unions: UCATT, TGWU (now Unite) and GMB have managed to secure better pay for their members. What has not been achieved over those years is any reduction in the working week. Holidays have remained static and health and safety has continued to be a major concern.

The industry is said to employ over 1.8 million workers. The contradiction in this is the interpretation of the word 'employ'. Bogus employment, fraud and tax avoidance still dominate the industry. Dubious arrangements with some employers have led to the exclusion of some workers based on their choice of union membership. The ultimate sanction by the employer to keep a secret list of those union members who they no longer want to employ was recently uncovered and major construction companies were found to have used the Kerr blacklists. The reaction of the Courts was only to impose a small fine.

The national Working Rule Agreement is weak and does not stop the exploitation of workers. The Employers Association chose to turn a blind eye to false employment and the Government refused to police or introduce legislation to stop false employment. The joint trade unions have been unable to stop this.

The real figures behind employment on the Olympics need to come under real examination. For instance it is commonly thought that large numbers of local labour have already come from around the world but have been registered as local residents.

Pay

The fact that the trade unions have done reasonably well over the last 10 years on national pay has made it much harder for the members to accept the 12 month pay freeze which the employers imposed in June

2009. This year's pay negotiations have only just started and another pay freeze for the industry may be on the cards.

Olympics

We have been involved with the monitoring group which is formally known as the Programme Review Group and is comprised of National Officers from UCATT, GMB, Unite (TGWU) and Unite (Amicus). Meetings have been few and far between and recently obstacles have been put in place to make it difficult for GMB to send a substitute to these meetings. Visits around the site are a poor substitute for real involvement.

We are very concerned about the real number of trainees and apprentices on the site and GMB is suspicious of the figures being quoted.

The legacy of the Games is also questionable. What will be left?

On a positive side accidents of a serious nature have been low and productivity seems to be high. There is no doubt that the ODA will produce a Games that we will all be proud of but the question of best employment practice and equal opportunity for local UK workers still remains unanswered. It would be very negative if we found that local UK skilled workers were overworked and replaced by cheap labour.

ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION

National responsibility for the engineering construction industry was transferred to me in August 2010; my thanks to Keith Hazlewood who had previous responsibility.

At the time I took over responsibility the industry had major problems and there were regular unofficial actions being taken at several power stations and oil refinery sites across the UK. Pay talks were about to start. The TU Side consisted of GMB, Unite (TGWU) and Unite (Amicus). Traditionally a Unite National Officer had led the TU Side and was responsible for all correspondence. It is fair to say that Unite has dominated relationships with the ECIA (the employers body).

Changes needed to be made. A national office staff member was given responsibility to set up an engineering construction database of GMB Officers and Shop Stewards. GMB National Office took over control and responsibility for correspondence with our stewards. The GMB General Secretary became involved and our stewards were called to a meeting in London one Sunday before the National Joint Shop Stewards met in Eastbourne. It is also fair to say that GMB took control of the Lindsey Oil dispute and it was only settled by the determination of our shop stewards and the tremendous support shown by GMB General Secretary, Paul Kenny.

The final negotiation took 12 hours to complete and at 1am in the morning the company signed an agreement reinstating over 600 sacked workers. There were a number of commitments agreed during the negotiations and unfortunately it was less than forty-eight hours before the main contractors breached the agreement. Nevertheless we were able to get our members back on site. Over the next few months we undertook to negotiate alterations to the national agreement.

GMB carried out a successful industrial action ballot and those people who doubted that this could be achieved were proved wrong. I have no doubt that the threat of industrial action from the workers within the industry led to an honourable pay settlement and put a marker down to the employers that GMB will not be treated as a second class trade union.

Following negotiations we achieved a 2% pay increase; full details of the offer can be found at www.njceci.org.uk (Go to 'Downloads' > Categories: Communiqués 2009).

The main issue for all our members within this industry is continuous employment and the right for any worker to be employed and to enjoy the pay and benefits of the national agreement. GMB has now uncovered several employers flouting these rights and discriminating against UK workers. This was never more so than the events at Staythorpe power station.

In August 2009 redundancies were announced amongst the UK workforce. No consultation with the trade unions and no consideration was given to the fact that there was a large volume of non UK labour on the site who had been excluded from any redundancy selection. In December 2009 it was discovered that some of the non UK workers were being underpaid by up to £1300 per month and it now became very clear why the contractors wanted non UK labour.

A strike ballot was called for and a panel hearing under the NAECI agreement took place. The results were that all our members who had money stopped out of their wages were reimbursed. The non UK labour was paid back thousands of pounds for the underpayment. The redundancies were withdrawn to enable a fair and proper procedure to be implemented. This was a major win for GMB which was due mainly to the hard work of the Midlands & East Coast Regional Officer, Andy Fletcher.

We have now moved more resources into the engineering construction industry and we are confident that our membership will increase.

BRITISH FURNITURE INDUSTRY

BFM

The annual pay negotiations started in October 2010 and so far have produced not a single penny increase in pay rates. The employers' representatives have hidden behind the economic situation.

It is true to say that a very large part of the industry is suffering short time working. Some companies have introduced two and three day working so our members are suffering massive pay cuts. It is now time that the Government introduced a proper guaranteed week and invest in our members when companies have no work. A pay freeze is now in place.

Furniture Survey

With the help of our Manufacturing Section PAs work is progressing on a GMB workplace member survey. For the first time we have identified 100 companies across all Regions that employ our members. The intention will be to introduce a national database for furniture workers showing how many members we have in each company, whether we have formal recognition arrangements, rates of pay and other terms. The survey will also show our strengths and weaknesses.

The industry employs around 130,000 workers. GMB which is the largest union has around 5,000 members so recruitment opportunities are real.

BFC

We continue to play a role and the work is both valuable and important not only to those that work in the industry but to the general public. The fact that around 70% of all imported furniture tested from outside the European Community fails the UK flammability test is a real threat to the UK public.

We must pay tribute to the hard work that Don McGregor has done over the years in representing GMB on the BFC. Since his resignation due to ill health we have found it difficult to replace Don with an experienced furniture person. At the time of writing we are seeking a nomination to sit on the BFC.

Furniture Fire Safety

Some years ago GMB organised a short film to show the dangers of non flammable imported furniture. This in our opinion started a debate which the British Furniture Confederation (BFC) and the Furniture Industry Research Association (FIRA) have taken up. In Spring 2009 FIRA produced a guide to the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) Safety Regulations:

"FIRA's flammability specialists have compiled the guide supported by invaluable input from BFC members (NBF BCFA, BFM and AMUSF) and other industry experts. The guide covers the flammability requirements for all upholstered domestic products including sofas, armchairs, beds, mattresses, mattress toppers and some outdoor furniture. The guide provides advice on the requirements for manufacturers of fabrics and

foams as well as the manufacturer/retailer of the final product. Essential for all manufacturers, importers and retailers the guide will be freely available either as a limited edition document or as a download. Government research estimates that the regulations have saved between 710 and 1860 lives and countless more injuries”.

The industry was at one time 30% organised. The membership was formidable and very skilled. Currently we are probably looking at 4% organised but with some hard work there is no reason why this industry cannot be reorganised.

BRITISH SAWMILLING INDUSTRY

The industry has been badly affected by the downturn in the construction industry. The employers have gone through closure programmes and short time working.

The 2009 pay negotiations resulted in a pay freeze and the 2010 pay negotiations have been delayed.

The future for the whole industry looks bleak and the national agreement which has been around since 1946 looks in danger of being terminated. Membership has reduced to an all time low and the small membership that is affected by the agreement will now have to look at local collective bargaining.

FINNFOREST UK LIMITED

Finnforest is one of the better sawmilling and timber importers. Our members took a pay freeze in 2009. The company was able to do this because national company bargaining in previous years have resulted in well above inflation increases. The membership being amongst the highest paid in the sawmilling industry.

The recession has taken its toll on Finnforest. Several mills in Finland and Germany have been closed so it should have been no surprise when in November 2009 the company announced the possible closure of the Tilbury site with the loss of 116 GMB members' jobs. Several months of negotiating by me and the Tilbury shop stewards has resulted in a massive redundancy settlement; a delay in the first redundancies until July 2010 and the final redundancies in December 2010. We have also been able to create 80+ jobs at the plant in Boston, Lincolnshire.

The negotiations were helped tremendously by our European Officer, Kathleen Walker Shaw who contacted the Finns and their trade unions; the shop stewards in other plants in the UK also pitched in with messages of solidarity but most of all our shop stewards at Tilbury who are tremendous trade unionists and who never complained about burning the midnight hours to reach a settlement.

INSTITUTE OF ORGAN BUILDERS (IBO)

Despite the recession we were able to conclude a pay increase of 2% from 1st January 2010. The industry remains buoyant with at least two years work already secured.

REMPLOY LIMITED

The 6th/7th/8th March 2008 will always remain significant dates in the minds of 5600 disabled workers, their family members and their supporters including dozens of GMB Officers and staff. That three day period was the time that Remploy started to close 29 factory sites and put 2800 disabled and non disabled people on the scrapheap.

In years to come when historians look back at political regimes and assess what they did to lose power in my opinion the closing of a Remploy factory and the attack on disabled workers ranks as high as the worst mistakes over the economy and the dishonesty over Iraq and Afghanistan. The most vulnerable in our Society were allowed to be attacked and worst of all they were sacked because they were disabled. Since then we have carried out a survey of the people who were sacked and the findings are as follows:

General information

522 ex Remploi employees had taken voluntary redundancy and 56 of them decided to take early retirement after that.

112 were made compulsory redundant and 9 of these later took early retirement.

92 people took early retirement as their first choice after being made redundant.

9 out of 735 ex Remploi employees retired in the normal way.

This shows that nearly all of those who left now receive State Benefits.

Current employment situation

Only 190, which is 26% of those who returned the questionnaires, found a job, but only:

37 (5%) of them claimed that their new job is better paid,

44 (6%) have a pension in their new job,

3 (4.5%) have better holidays now than they used to have with Remploi,

62 (8.4%) have a sick pay scheme.

Support from Remploi

Out of 735 questionnaires processed only 104 (14.1%) people admitted receiving help from Remploi to find a new job, whilst 510 (69.4%) claimed there was no support offered/given to them at all.

121 did not answer the question or the question wasn't applicable (e.g. early/normal retirement).

Would you come back to Remploi?

353 of 735 (48%) would like to come back to Remploi factories if given the opportunity.

101 (13.7%) were not interested in coming back (e.g. happy with the current employer, retired etc.).

281 did not answer the question or the question was not applicable (e.g. unemployed, early/normal retirement).

The results were brought to the attention of the Minister and Secretary of State but so far nothing has happened.

Despite protests from the trade unions the company goes from bad to worse. Directors have been replaced with even worse directors, new senior managers have been taken on and those who are decent are quickly reduced to being non effective. Senior management is still the same as before with the number of senior managers staying the same but with half the factory workforce. At the last count there were over 470 senior managers. We have corresponded with the Minister but it is obvious in his replies that he does not care and always giving the same answer "I do not run the company".

The closure of the Remploi York factory has led to the loss of over 56 jobs. We have been trying to set up a workers' cooperative and have received tremendous encouragement from GMB Regional Secretary, Tim Roache and GMB General Secretary, Paul Kenny. At the time of writing this report the problem seems to be that of funding.

Pay and conditions

The new HR Director led the negotiations on behalf of the company and to say that her inexperience showed from day one is an understatement. The negotiations lasted nearly 8 months with the TU Side requesting that ACAS be brought in to help the management side. The company then decided to class all Remploi employees as civil servants in order to try to restrict them to a 1% increase. After a marathon forty-eight hour negotiation the trade unions were able to achieve a settlement of between 1% and 2.5% with the vast majority of shopfloor workers receiving the higher percentage.

A major part of this year's agreement is the increase to 42 days of pre-retirement leave which can be taken by members in their last year of employment and which will be paid at full pay. This is a massive improvement in their preparation towards retirement. There is still a great deal for us to do as a trade union. The systems and trade union organisation that we have within Remploy means we can do the important job of keeping factory sites open.

FUNERAL INDUSTRY

Co-op Funeralcare

We are now entering the third year of derecognition. The so called caring Co-op continues to discriminate our shop stewards and activist and attack GMB members solely for being GMB members. Several approaches through the General Secretary have been made over the last year but we are still being kept from representing GMB members.

We must congratulate George Shearman and his branch for the magnificent support they have given to GMB members and the determination they have shown in their defence of funeral workers.

London Association of Funeral Directors (LAFD)

We were able to achieve a 2.7% increase in the rates of pay for 2009/2010. Negotiations are now about to start for 2010/2011.

TEXTILES

The industry continues to decline its UK manufacturing base. Most of what is left within the UK is in the hands of some very dubious people; cash in hand, long hours and unsafe conditions are now back in fashion. Nowhere is it worse than in the backstreets of Manchester. Victorian mills have been turned into Victorian textile sweatshops. The area around Ancoates near the city centre and recently shown on TV has uncovered large factory sites employing mainly Asian women working in horrendous conditions. Urgent government action is needed to stop the spread of employment abuse.

The pay negotiations with the BCIA have been delayed due to the state of the UK economy. Early indications from the employers are that a pay freeze is on the cards. If this does happen then the BCIA agreement will be dead in the water.

INTERNATIONAL

We would like to start this section by thanking Kathleen Walker Shaw and our Brussels Office for the magnificent work they have done for the Manufacturing Section.

We attended the ITGLWF World Congress in Frankfurt accompanied by Brenda Fraser and Sheila Bearcroft. The textile conference was overshadowed by the sudden death 10 days before of the General Secretary, Neil Kearney. Neil was a tremendous advocate of cooperation between international trade union organisations and he worked tirelessly to bring trade unionism into new emerging economies such as Asia and Africa. For most of his life Neil worked to reduce the dependence that some families have on child labour. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him. The conference was further dominated by the proposed merger in July 2010 of the ITGLWF and two other international federations. Patrick Itschert was elected as the new General Secretary. We wish Patrick well for the future.

We also attended the BWI World Congress in Lille accompanied by two Lay Reps: Geoff Burch (Finnforest) and Paul Wheatley (CEC Member). The theme of the conference was cooperation between international trade unions and the exploitation of posted workers. The BWI General Secretary, Anita Normark retired and we wish Anita well in her retirement. Ambet Yuson was elected as the new General Secretary and we wish Ambet well in his new position.

The BWI remains a strong independent international who were able to help us during the last 12 months in a dispute we had over the closure of Finnforest Tilbury. We intend to take up seats on those committees that affect our members especially the health and safety committees and construction committee.

We increasingly deal with more multi national companies and are getting more and more legislation coming from Europe in a number of industries involved in manufacturing, so it is imperative that we keep a presence both European and internationally to have an input into these changes. It is very important that we have international standards across the world especially when it comes to competing for work globally where we are striving for a level playing field and not competing against countries like India whose working conditions must be one of the worst in the world who would benefit from common international standards.

We have direct access and input into European policies with our presence by having an office in Brussels which we utilize to the benefit of GMB members supported by Kathleen Walker Shaw and Sarah King who use their influence by having a local presence in Europe.

We represent GMB on a number of European and International bodies and attended a recent World Building Materials Conference held in Turkey and organised by the International Chemical Workers Federation. Allan Black has been elected Vice President of this sub Committee and thus GMB has regained its seat on the ICEM Executive Committee. Most of the sector is in the hands of a dozen or so world wide companies and this forum presents us with an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences with colleagues from across the world.

At European level the European Chemical Workers Federation has been extremely helpful to GMB in promoting the creation of European Works Councils and we are playing a full role in these efforts.

We also attend the European Food Workers Federation meetings and this year we have re-established GMB on its Executive Committee in the person of Margaret Boyd, GMB Scotland senior lay rep.

KEITH HAZLEWOOD, NATIONAL SECRETARY

Since last year's report very much the same message that we are experiencing with closures, job losses, pay cuts, pay freezes, closure of final salary pension schemes and announcement after announcement once again brought about by the current recession.

The Unions are working with employers to minimise the impact of the recession and look at ways of saving jobs, avoiding cutbacks and advising companies to hold their nerve rather than a knee jerk reaction resulting in closures and the worsening of our members' terms and conditions.

AEROSPACE

Since my last report there has been very little change within the Aerospace industry. Again we are constantly lobbying the UK Government to try and save this industry. We will continue lobbying to save jobs across the aerospace industry and the supply chain.

Bombardier in Belfast has secured the long awaited C series aircraft which in the short term has brought with it difficulties, although the long term for the site looks pretty good and the future going forward. The aerospace industries are global and all we have ever asked for is a level playing field when competing for orders which is difficult to achieve when some countries are subsidising the industry.

We have the sad story of some companies closing with work being sent to other locations of the UK; some work even being sent outside the UK. Companies like Airbus, Bombardier and BAE systems all have to fight hard to maintain current work and equally as difficult in trying to get new work. We will, however continue to lobby and do whatever we can to secure a presence in the UK for aerospace related industries and the supply chain.

THE OFFSHORE INDUSTRY

Last year I reported on the long standing issue with regards to the working time directive offshore and the interpretation of the holiday entitlements for people working in the offshore industry. I reported this issue had been resolved for the 2007 negotiations. I can now confirm that although the agreement was negotiated with the Offshore Contractors Association (OCA) and the resolve to the issue of the holiday entitlement offshore, we still have to date some companies that are not complying with the agreement by not paying the full holiday entitlement to its employees. In the last 6 months we have had 4 national reference failures to agree on the full implementation of the holiday entitlement that were negotiated and agreed by the OCA. These companies that are not complying with the Agreement are companies that are saying that the client is refusing to pay the contractor the full 4 week holiday entitlement. We are currently trying to get a meeting with the clients and the OCA with the national officials to see if we can find any common ground and persuade the clients to adhere to the agreed holiday entitlements.

In 2008 we achieved a 4.3% one year deal on the basic rate with improvements on the increments for example sickness benefit etc. We did not think it would be appropriate to go beyond a one year deal bearing in mind we still had some OCA member companies that were not complying with the agreement reached in 2007, so we thought it would be appropriate to give these companies the opportunity by just having a one year deal to honour the agreement.

I also informed you that we had submitted the 2009 pay claim. At the first meeting the employers offered us a pay freeze. Our initial response was to tell the employers to go back to the members and review their position and put forward a realistic offer. In the meantime, we should put negotiations on hold until such time as all the OCA member companies comply with the 2007 agreement regarding the working time holidays entitlement, and until the current recession buys a bit of time when things hopefully begin to improve.

In September of last year we met with the employers, the fourth meeting and they were still adamant that there would be a pay freeze and they could not afford to pay any increases this year. We then went to the members offshore with a consultative ballot. The response to this was very disappointing to say the least. We had no alternative but to go back to the OCA and tell them that our members had accepted the pay freeze for 2009 and would expect the employers to take this into consideration when we submitted the pay claim for 2010.

In January this year we submitted a nine point claim for the 2010 wage negotiations. The employers went away to consider the claim and at the time of submitting this report, negotiations were still ongoing.

The offshore industry, much the same as other industries is feeling the effect of the current skills shortage and the ageing workforce. To assist the issue in the short term we have negotiated an agreement with a couple of companies for them to use Filipino labour on a top up basis and not instead of UK labour. These agreements so far have worked and there has been no exploitation of these Filipinos because in the agreement we emphasised that these contractors would be paid the industry rate which we have watched very closely.

We are constantly trying to increase the membership offshore which so far we have been successful mainly at the heliports. We are still in the process of arranging other meetings with potential members when they go offshore, although we are experiencing issues with other unions encroaching on the construction maintenance side of the industry, which is predominantly the craft side of the offshore sector.

SHIPBUILDING

The UK shipbuilding industry continues to be one of mixed fortunes. On one hand we have the demise of commercial shipbuilding in the UK with only one yard still managing to operate and that is on the verge of closure which would be a sad day for commercial shipbuilding in the UK. On the other hand in the UK defence shipbuilding industry we have the biggest order book ever, we are currently building the last of 6 type 45 Destroyers which will be launched later this year then work will continue on the 2 super aircraft

carriers. The carriers are of such size that no one yard can accommodate the build of them. They are being built in 5 blocks in various yards up and down the country and then floated up to Rosyth in Scotland which is only one of two yards big enough to facilitate the assembling of the super aircraft carriers. Even then, the yard has had quite a lot of extension work done to it to be able to facilitate this assemble of the carriers.

Beyond the carrier programme we have a number of ships under the MARS programme. Once again, all ships for the Royal Navy and there are further orders being placed as I am writing this report. It is important that we secure orders like the future surface combatant ships.

The Industry's two major companies Vosper Thornycroft from Portsmouth and BAE Systems last year joined together calling themselves BVT Surface Fleet of which BAE Systems held 55% of the shares in the new company and VT 45%. I can now confirm that BAE Systems has bought VT's 45% of the shares and now solely owns the company which is called BAE Systems Surface Ships. It is working on an alliance between the UK yards in conjunction with the MOD under the UK Defence Industrial Strategy. This will hopefully stabilise the industry and eliminate the cut throat competition that has existed between the yards which has resulted in too many casualties in the past.

We are still building the astute submarines at Barrow in Furness yards which is now called BAE Systems Submarine Solutions. Recently the MOD have instructed BAE Systems to slow down the work on the submarines under the defence budget review. This will not only extend the length of the build of these submarines by as much as 9 month per boat, but will also mean there will be excess labour and could put them in a situation where they will have to shed labour. We are looking at ways of addressing the job losses at the Barrow facility and one of the avenues we are exploring is using the mobility agreement amongst all of the BAe Systems yards as a process of eliminating any compulsory job losses.

Within the last three months we have had meetings with the MOD Procurement Minister, Quentin Davies and also the Secretary of State for Defence, Bob Ainsworth and our concerns were about the recent media speculation of defence cuts and concerns as to what this impact would have on the two aircraft carriers and future orders. We got a categorical assurance from Bob Ainsworth that the carrier programme is now signed and will definitely go ahead but is still not sure what type of aircrafts will be used.

Our main concerns are that if we get a Tory government at the next general election that they have indicated there will be changes in the defence programme and spending, which sends a very serious message to the all defence programmes.

ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES

In general engineering things have got worse. The same sad stories of pay cuts, pay freezes, job losses and an attempt to keep industries afloat which this year has been accelerated by the current recession. The recession has had a substantial impact all across UK manufacturing. We need to continue to work together with UK employers the government and the employers federation in an attempt to stabilise UK manufacturing jobs and to formulate a strategy that will keep manufacturing based in the UK until we come out of the recession and going forward. At this moment in time it looks almost impossible. We still have to compete against countries like China, Japan and India who we are tendering for work that low that any UK company could not survive. We still have this culture of it being easier and quicker to close UK establishments rather than other countries in Europe and beyond with less impact.

Once again all we have ever asked for is a level playing field and at this moment in time we don't have it. As in other industries we are experiencing the ever increasing skill shortages and we need this addressing by investment in training and the reintroduction of apprenticeships for all engineering related industries to be able to survive and compete.

We still have the problem of the ageing workforce with people leaving the industry or retiring and not being replaced. Some companies are realising that they need to employ apprentices in order to survive but at the ratio that they can afford to employ apprentices.

There is an ever increasing use of companies employing non UK labour and in some cases exploiting our European colleagues by paying under the rate for the job, making them a cheaper alternative which we need to address to maintain our current terms and conditions and make sure our European colleagues are not being exploited by these ruthless employers.

UK CAR MANUFACTURING

This industry is mainly serviced by the Birmingham region of which I would like to thank Bert Hill and his colleagues for all the work they have done in the Industry.

The UK Automotive sector is vital for UK manufacturing that is currently very fragile. What has become even more apparent during the stressful times of the recent recession is that short term support for the industry is crucial. Once jobs in this sector are lost they are gone forever, as the car industry is a global commodity designed and produced in global industrial networks. This message has been stressed strongly to the present government.

However, this point has not been lost on our economic competitors who have moved swiftly to support their own industries. More backing and support in developing and transforming the car fleets around the world to lower carbon vehicles is very apparent. In UK car manufacturing we need a clear strategic planned and co ordinate approach to keep our industry afloat. There's an increasing trend for UK based manufacturers to source it from overseas which is having a major impact on our domestic supply chain.

As I am writing this report Jaguar and Landrover have submitted to their unions their strategic review. The plan identifies decisive measures that will see them through the next 12 to 18 months (short term) and as talks developed, there is a long term plan that includes new starter rates, changes to pension scheme arrangements, offshore purchasing in India and China, overseas manufacturing and the closure of one of the West Midlands plant. Jaguar/landrover state that these measures have been taken to sustain new product ranges, manufacturing costs and efficiency to support performance and technology excellence. There will be a cost because the new generation of lightweight sedans, sports cars and SUVs with hybrids and electrification technology aimed to significantly reduce fuel consumption and CO2 will be a major challenge in the UK.

Finally, the UK automotive manufacturing sector has moved further away from volume car productions. Over the last five years we have witnessed planned closures at companies like MG Rover at Longbridge, Peugeot, Ford at Dagenham, Jaguar and Aston Martin, plus the pending announcement of Jaguar Landrover to close.

The status of the component supply chain is another area of great concern. Experts state that further projective decline will happen at most firms. In a recent report from Peter Mandelson of the new automotive innovation and growth team, he states that the UK automotive industry remains a critical part of the UK's economy. We totally agree for once but it is too late.

CORUS

It is fair to say the last 12 months within the CORUS UK Steelmaking business has been horrendous. The Company went from very large profits to extremely large losses as soon as the recession kicked in. The Company gave the Unions the news we all dreaded in July 2009 that 5,000 jobs were likely to be lost across their UK business.

On top of that we had the threatened closure of Teesside Cast Products (TCP) with another 2,600 direct jobs and possibly double or even treble that number when the supply chain and contractors are taken into account.

The company also stopped all bonus payments which formed part of our member's terms and conditions. The GMB along with our other Union colleagues registered tribunals for breach of Contract/Unlawful Deduction cases and thankfully the Company backed off and paid the bonus owed to our members.

The Company also decided that it would close the Final Salary Pension scheme to new starters without even consulting with the trade unions.

The GMB and our union colleagues responded by threatening industrial action and once again the Company backed off and have been consulting with the Unions to find a sensible solution to the problems with the Company Pension Scheme.

At the time of writing this report, mid February 2010, there appears to be some signs of an upturn in the steel market.

TEESIDE CAST PRODUCTS

The Trade Unions and Corus formulated a Task Force to gather information and look at ways of keeping the Teeside plant open. To look at potential buyers, additional work, any other interested parties and ways at mitigating any compulsory job losses.

The plant was supposed to mothballed at the end of January 2010 but at the first meeting we negotiated an extension of one month to the end of February 2010 to give the opportunity for any interested parties to put together a realistic bid for the plant.

At the conclusion of the first meeting, we managed to move Corus which resulted in them keeping the Redcar South Bank Coke ovens open for the next three years saving 120 of the 1,700 jobs that would be affected. The Coke ovens will operate even if steel making ceases at TCP.

There were two serious potential buyers but Corus would not divulge who they were. There is a strong suspicion that Corus do not want any steel making competition in the UK. The National Steel Committee is trying to arrange a joint meeting with Corus and the Prime Minister with both parties present.

At the time of writing this report the steel committee is still optimistic that a customer or buyer will keep Teeside Steel works open.

I would like to put on record my thanks to Jimmy Skivington who has been constantly involved throughout the crisis.

ALLAN BLACK, NATIONAL OFFICER

Introduction

During the year since the last GMB Congress many of the industries on my sheet, particularly the building materials sector, have continued to suffer from the depths of the current recession brought about by the irresponsible activities of the major banks. For the construction (and therefore building materials sector) it is a double whammy!. The Industry is almost always first in to a recession of any kind as building projects are relatively easy to cancel or defer. In addition the DIY market tends to shrink as people put off housing repairs and maintenance, fearful of future employment prospects. However, as Congress and the Section Conference will be aware, in this recession the second part of the hit comes from the apparent reluctance of the banks (even those in theory owned in whole or in part by the taxpayer) and the building societies to advance mortgages, particularly to first time buyers. This reluctance is either represented by a point blank refusal or the imposition of such conditions regarding deposit levels that first time buyers are frozen out of the private sector housing market with the consequential disastrous effects on the private house building sector. In past generations this slack could be taken up by expanding the public sector needs to provide social housing. However, the systematic withdrawal from the provision of social housing inspired by successive Governments in the 80s and 90s means that this capacity is no longer available. The

alternatives that have been created are pale imitations of what existed and cannot remotely fill the gap. Housing replacement levels in the UK, particularly social housing, have never been satisfactory, but the levels of starts and completions in 2009 have plumbed new depths. This in turn is reflected in massive stocks of brick, plasterwood, cement, glass and the other materials the manufacture of which provides jobs for GMB members on my sheet. The employers in the sector have responded to falls in the demand of 30% or more in two ways. As is their tradition they have closed plants costing our member their jobs-

Accrington Brick
Westbury Cement
Stairport Brick
Steerpoint Brick
Parts of British Gypsum
Parts of Hanson Aggregates

Unfortunately, the list is endless and we have not, I fear, seen the last closure yet. The second response from the Employers has been to attack long established terms and conditions of employment of our members as part (sometimes the whole) of a "cost cutting" exercise. Shift allowances/patterns have been attacked, allowances of all sorts cut, overtime premia questioned (not that much overtime is currently being worked in the sector) and, above all, pension provision is being savaged. Companies in the sector like Lafarge and Pilkington have either negotiated changes to their pension schemes involving a reduction in employer costs or are in the process of doing so. I have obviously been involved in trying to defend our members' interests and engage in damage limitation

The collapse of demand in the UK for building materials is obvious and real. In this sector our members are understandably concerned first and foremost to protect their jobs. Thus when Employers propose cuts or reductions or lay offs designed allegedly to save jobs we have no real option but to listen and to consider. However, my sheet also covers Employers in other sectors who are not impacted or not impacted to anything like the building materials sector and in these a much more cynical game is being played.

My sheet also encompasses at national level the GMB membership in food manufacturing. To listen to some of the Employers in this area, you would believe that one of the responses of people to the recession is to stop eating.

Many of the largest food companies in the UK are subsidiaries of household names multi nationals. Unilever and Nestle for instance fall into this category. Others are owned by faceless equity capital companies which have no regard whatever for the social impact of decisions they take. There is no comprehension or concern for instance in the mind of its owners about the fact that most of the UK factories operated by United Biscuits are located in some of the areas of the highest social deprivation in the country.

The fact that buying food is not a matter of choice means that these companies are, to an extent protected from the worst effects of the recession. This economic reality has not stopped some of these companies attacking our members' basic terms and conditions – and of course, pension schemes yet again. This reality is dealt with in more detail later in my report.

I now want to deal with the specific rather than the general and use the rest of the report to update Congress and the Section Conference on the key changes impacting our members since we met last year.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Hanson Group

It now makes sense to deal with Hanson as a whole since although the Group – for whatever reason – continues to maintain the fiction of divisional bargaining the reality is that their stance is being centrally determined.

Thus in all three allegedly separate divisions in the UK:

Castle Cement

Hanson Aggregates

Hanson Building Products

The response to claims for improvements in terms and conditions in 2010 has been a pay freeze. In Building Products, this has been reluctantly accepted by our members in view of the number of closures by brickworks and concrete plants and the obviously catastrophic stock piles. In cement the proposed freeze is at the time of writing being considered by our members in Ribblesdale (North West region) and Padeswood (South Western region) and I will be able to update at Congress. In Aggregates our members enjoyed a relatively good pay rise in 2009 as the second leg of an RPI related 2 year deal and again the proposed freeze for 2010 is out for consideration as I write this report.

Lafarge Cement

The 2010 pay round at Lafarge Cement produced – not exactly to the surprise of our members – a proposal from the Company for a pay freeze. The reality of the loss of yet another plant – Westbury in the South of England and the threats hanging over others meant that our members took the view that this was the reality. The only point we really made was like in all other companies where a pay freeze is being applied and our members are not willing to resist is that should we detect market improvements in the pay year, we reserved the right to reopen the talks. I have to say that I think this is an unlikely prospect for 2010.

In late 2009 the Company asked the Unions – principally GMB to contemplate the introduction for the first time ever of a lay agreement. They put their proposal forward to avoid or at least postpone further plant closures with at least two of their remaining sites under threat. After consultation with the members a lay off agreement providing up to 75% of pay has been agreed. This, as Congress would expect, has caused controversy within our membership which I am dealing with. Finally, our small but loyal membership amongst Lafarge's directly employed HGV drivers were also faced with a 2010 pay freeze.

British Gypsum

I resumed national responsibility for British Gypsum during the period since the last Congress from the Midland & East Coast region. It is right to record my gratitude to the Region and to my colleague Colin Todd in particular, for looking after our members so ably for a significant number of years.

BG is now part of the St Gobain Empire (a French multi national). Again over the last 12 months we have seen significant job losses, notably at the Kirkby Thore plant in the Northern region and the imposition of a pay freeze in 2009. There are also rumblings from the Company about attacks on other terms and conditions and our members are on a high state of alert to defend the current position.

Solaglas

Again this is part of the UK Operations of St Gobain and conducts negotiations with the GMB on the basis of two separate operating divisions. Since last Congress I have taken responsibility at national level for the Glass Industry as a whole (including Solaglass) from my colleague Phil Davies to allow Phil to focus on other responsibilities in the Manufacturing Section.

Solaglas Windowcare

After our members had overwhelmingly rejected a 1% pay offer we succeed in obtaining a settlement of 1.6% increase operative from part way through the pay year. This marginal improvement does of course give us a higher start point for the 2010 negotiations but the prospects at present are not encouraging. I am determined to improve the GMB membership position amongst this Division's 500 or so employees.

Solaglas MSN

At the time of writing, we have had an initial stormy meeting with the Company. As part of the fallout from this a further meeting on pay for 2010 has been arranged and I will update the position at Conference.

Flat Glass Industry NJC (Green Book)

The above agreement covers most of the glass industry downstream companies – double glazed units, conservatories etc. In the current pay round the Employers imposed a pay freeze due to the 30% or so decline in demand. We are obviously monitoring the position.

Pilkington

Pilkington is now a subsidiary of NSG a Japanese multi national. The production sites in St Helens negotiate at plant level and are ably represented by Charlie Leonard and his excellent shop stewards team. At national level the Company has initiated talks on changes to its pension scheme aimed at cost reductions. We will of course, do all we can by participating in these discussions to protect our members' position.

Monier

This Company's name will be unfamiliar to Congress but it is the new name for what is left of the old Redland Rood Tile Company. In co-operation with the other recognised union we are attempting to re-establish a national agreement covering all six sites still operating.

Aggregate Industries

Again this is a UK subsidiary of a foreign (Swiss based) multi national. Our members are covered by two separate bargaining groups and are about to present pay claims at the time of writing this report. In the meantime, the Company has written to all staff (white collar) employees to the effect that in 2010 there will be a pay freeze. The position from our members' point of view is therefore, not encouraging.

Tarmac

Last year Tarmac indicated that it wanted to consult those unions it recognised at local level – there is no national agreement – on changes to its pension scheme. My colleague Richard Taylor from the Midland and East Coast region found himself involved in these discussions as we have a reasonable number of members in that region. It was quickly made clear that these "consultations" were a sham being put through to satisfy the letter of the law. We therefore, took the decision, with the support of the members, to withdraw from these so called talks and thus remove the veneer of respectability from the process.

I now want to turn to give a brief update covering my responsibilities in the Food Manufacturing Sector.

FOOD MANUFACTURING

United Biscuits

As an employer of around 2,500 GMB members, UB is the largest employer in this sector that I deal with. There is a bargaining group covering the four former McVities sites and the rest of the plants negotiate at local level. The Company has recently lurched in the direction of national consultation/negotiation on common issues and we now have a Joint Union National Committee. Several issues have been dealt with by this body although it is still pretty much in its infancy. At the time of writing we are in difficult talks about a new Attendance Management Systems the Company wants to introduce and about changes (cuts) it feels it can impose on the current redundancy terms. In the light of the aggressive stance taken by UB on these issues I anticipate that these talks might lead to a dispute in the next couple of months and I will bring Congress up to speed when we meet in Southport.

Nestle

Again bargaining on pay and conditions with multi national food giant Nestle is conducted at plant level. However, the Company has seen the merit of setting up a National Negotiating Forum (NNF) to try to increase harmonisation and promote consistent application of some important conditions of employment. The Company has also used an expanded version of this body to begin discussions on proposed pension changes.

Burtens

Since last Congress, Burton Cakes (GMB Scotland) has engaged with its recognised Unions on changes to the Company's existing pension scheme. Our shop stewards attended with me a couple of meetings at the St Albans HQ of Burtens. However, again it became clear that the consultation was intended only to give a veneer of respectability to decisions had already been taken. On this basis the Unions effectively, withdrew from talks.

Unilever

The GMB members in Unilever (Norwich and Warrington) are faced with pay freezes at their local bargaining procedures. Minor improvements have been secured but in all honesty the Company's pay freeze stance has for the most part prevailed.

CHEMICALS AND PAPER AND BOARD INDUSTRIES

Astrazeneca

In the last pay round (WEF 01/06/09) an increase of 3% covering a two year period (with other minor improvements) was accepted in a consultative ballot by our members. This settlement looks increasingly attractive in the light of the outcome of pay talks elsewhere. As ever, the bulk of the work done in representing our Astrazeneca membership, is shouldered by my colleague Neil Holden ably assisted by Ian Brocklehurst and his fellow reps. I am grateful for their help and support

BOC

I am not satisfied by the role we play in BOC - the liquid gas company – where we have a small but loyal membership. I do not consider that GMB is afforded the appropriate consideration as a recognised Union by the company and other colleagues. It is my intention to try to rectify these shortcomings this year.

Air Products

We have sole recognition for a small but clearly identified bargaining group in AP. This year we have been trying to negotiate the consolidation of an absurdly complex variable bonus into the basic rate. We have had ballots on the Company's last two final offers on the matter and it looks as though we may be on a collision course as it is the Company's declared position that they intend to impose the rejected consolidation on our members from April 2010.

Chemical Industries Association (CIA)

As all other bargaining in the industry is devolved to Company or plant level we try and on the whole, succeed in maintaining good relations with the CIA at national level. Since last Congress we have on a number of occasions made use of the CIA dispute resolution procedure to settle issues confronting our members in CIA affiliated companies. We have also been able to make common cause with CIA for lobbying purposes when the Employers position on issues accorded with that of the GMB.

Corrugated Paper & Board CPI)

The Union organises four plants in this industry covered by the National Agreement. We are therefore, in a minority position. However, we have a loyal membership which is feeling the effects of the recession like everyone else at Congress.

In the last pay round the Employer's Side split with one of the three large companies taking the view that at 1% increase which was on offer was more that they afford!!
The Majority Union voted to accept the 1%. The GMB members recorded a healthy vote to reject it. We are, after some false starts conducting a ballot for industrial action amongst our members.

Employment Agencies

I have retained responsibility at national level for the GMB's engagement with employment agencies. In co-operation with my colleagues Kathleen Walker Shaw and Barry Smith we have tried to influence the UK Government to fully and speedily implement in the UK the Employment Agencies Directive that we have from the European Union. The Directive itself is much weaker than we would like but at least it is a start point in protect ting some of the most exploited workers in the UK. It is therefore, with a real sense of despair and frustration that we have witnessed the Government put up with every possible argument for further weakening or further delaying implementation.

As far as the agencies are concerned, we a devising a recruitment strategy which, initially, at least will revive those agreements we had with some of the more responsible employment agencies a few years ago. This is very much work in progress at the time of writing this report.

European Works Councils

In the Manufacturing Section there has been a revival of interest amongst our members in the creation and working of EWCs. In part it is also due to the experience gained by many of our reps who sit on EWCs and recognise their shortcomings. Again in co-operation with Kathleen Walker Shaw and other colleagues we have been lending support to our reps to pursue this issue with their employers. In many cases we have been using the assistance of the various international and European Federations, the Union's affiliates in pursuit of this end. This international aspect of my sheet is dealt with in more detail elsewhere in the report.

Pensions

Finally, I think it is worth highlighting what I believe to be a key issue I confront at the present. The unremitting attack on our Employers on our members' pension schemes is devastating the morale of our members many of whom are the most long serving and loyal across a whole range of companies. One after another, Nestle, Pilkington, Astrazeneca, Lafarge, Tarmac, Burtons to name but a few have engaged with the Union with varying degrees of seriousness to propose cuts to our members' pension entitlement. This is, of course a retirement time bomb that is being set and the frustration is that apart from securing the old minor concession here or there almost powerless to stop the changes. In doing what we can protect our members I have had the utmost support from the GMB National Pensions Department. Their expertise has often confounded the actuaries, consultants and various other players that the Employers wheel out to justify their proposals but of course in the end the decisions are based on cost cutting and we are taken by the Employers not the actuaries. I am most grateful and I know the members are most appreciative of the efforts of the Pensions Department.

CONCLUSION

As the recession continues, albeit with a little light at the end of the tunnel, the Section is going to be faced with continuing challenges. With the help of our lay activist, our regional officers and many others, I believe we can grow the Section even in the current adverse climate. I will continue to play my part as required and I regard it as a privilege to do so.

Finally, I would like to record my personal thanks to Marilene Smith my P.A. and our relatively new colleague Kasia Odlin (who takes care of my diary as far as the Glass industry is concerned) and who carries a huge administrative load within the Manufacturing Section. They do so cheerfully and tirelessly on behalf our members.

I commend my report to Congress.

(Adopted)

BRO. P. DAVIES (National Secretary, Manufacturing): President and Congress, I am reporting back on the Manufacturing Section Conference and pages 68-81 in the General Secretary's Report.

There were 78 delegates at the section conference; 20 section committee members; 9 officers and 14 motions. Every single motion at the section conference was moved and seconded by delegates who had obviously taken time to make their own speeches.

Congress, our members are angry and concerned at the continued decline in manufacturing. The lack of support from the last Labour government has been criticised throughout the section conference. Our members in manufacturing can build the power stations, the schools and the hospitals that we need. Our members make the cars, trains and ships that we need. From paper clips to battleships, we can do it. What a disgrace that we now depend on Poland, Germany and, yes, China for the supply of steel and even coal! How would we have fought Fascism in 1939 if we had had no steel industry or no ships, or we had to import it from Germany or Poland? We would have lost that war and we would have had a different society in this world if we had have done.

We don't need Labour MPs fighting for manufacturing when they are in Opposition and saying all the right things. What we want is Labour MPs when they are returned to power to give a real commitment to manufacturing and our people who work in it. *(Applause)*

Congress, the York Disabled Workers' Co-op, because of what you have done this week, is now a reality. Just think! A factory for disabled people, run by disabled people for disabled people. I would like to thank a few people this week on behalf of the Remploy workers, on behalf of the disabled workers, in York. I would like to thank the Public Services for their collection, and especially Gary Nolan. A special thanks to the Commercial Services to Mick, Jude, Gary and Mick, for raising £3,000 at a section conference. What a tremendous, tremendous group of people! Also thanks to my own section, the Manufacturing Section, that collected £2,500. All in all, it has been reported to you that we collected £9,500. What a start for our people in York. And thanks to the Executive, Paul and Mary, for their continued support.

Congress, on 8th March 2008, 29 factories closed. I can tell you that it was the worst day of my working life, having to talk to people who did not understand that on Monday morning they wouldn't be in work. We have had a difficult two years – there is no doubt about that – but life is always difficult in Remploy. Our stewards are absolutely magnificent, and you have seen them here this week. We move on in Remploy. For the next few years we've got to change Remploy. There is no doubt about that. But let me make one promise to you. The York Workers' Disabled Co-operative will be a reality. It will start production this year and next year at Congress we will bring those disabled workers which you have given a chance to start a new life. I am talking about those

people who were thrown on the scrapheap and, yes, one of those people who we will bring to Brighton next year will be a young disabled apprentice. Thanks, Congress. Thanks to the delegates. Thanks to everybody who has donated this week. If you still want to make pledges, the guys are on the stall. You can bring IOUs. You can bring any currency you want because we will take it. I am sat at the back of the hall. Anyone who wants to make another donation we will thankfully accept. Thanks a lot, Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Phil. With the return of a Labour Government, Phil, we have no intentions of waiting six months or nine months. They can do what the Tories do, bring it in the following week as soon as they get into power. We want no more waiting. We are tired of those promises. *(Applause)*

Are there any questions on Phil's report? *(No response)* Do you agree to accept the report?

The Manufacturing Section Report was adopted.

REMPLOY NON DISABLED TRAINEES EMERGENCY MOTION 4

EMERGENCY MOTION 4 REMPLOY NON-DISABLED TRAINEES

THAT THIS CONFERENCE RECOGNISES THAT REMPLOY WAS SET UP TO EMPLOY PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AFTER WORLD WAR 2.

CONFERENCE VIEWS WITH DEEP CONCERN THE APPARENT USE OF REMPLOY RESOURCES TO OFFER TRAINING TO 'DISADVANTAGED' PEOPLE. THE 'DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE' ARE NOT NECESSARILY DISABLED AND AS SUCH, OFFERING THEM TRAINING IN REMPLOY WOULD POSSIBLY PUT REMPLOY'S STATUS UNDER ARTICLE 19 IN JEOPARDY. THE TRADE UNION CONSORTIUM WAS ONLY INFORMED AT THE END OF APRIL THAT OVER 500 TRAINEES WILL NOT HAVE A DISABILITY.

CONFERENCE CALLS ON THIS GOVERNMENT TO MAKE SURE THAT THE NECESSARY RISK ASSESSMENTS ARE CARRIED OUT BEFORE THE TRAINEE IS ALLOWED ONTO REMPLOY PREMISES. AGAIN IN MAY 2010 THE COMPANY DISCLOSED FIGURES ON THE NUMBER OF TRAINEES AND THE DURATION OF STAY IN A REMPLOY WORKPLACE.

FURTHER CONGRESS INSTRUCTS THE NATIONAL SECRETARY RESPONSIBLE FOR REMPLOY TO RAISE THIS ISSUE WITH THE MINISTER FOR THE DISABLED TO ENABLE:

1. CORRECT RISK ASSESSMENTS TO BE CARRIED OUT
2. MONITORING OF THE TRAINEE TO BE CARRIED OUT

3. BRING TO AN END THE PRACTICE OF COUNTING THESE TRAINEES AS PERMANENT EMPLOYEES UNLESS THE DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT IS AT LEAST 12 MONTHS
4. PUT IN MEASURES TO MAKE SURE THAT THE COMPANY DOES NOT PUT AT RISK THEIR STATUS UNDER ARTICLE 19 OF THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT DIRECTIVE
5. FOR THE GMB TO MEET THE TRAINEE AT INDUCTION FOR RECRUITMENT AND REGIONS TO SET THE RATE.

THE GMB TO REPORT BACK ON PROGRESS TO THE CONSORTIUM AND FOR THE REPS AND MEMBERS TO BE FULLY CONSULTED ON THIS SITUATION AND FOR THE NATIONAL OFFICER TO REPORT BACK TO THE CEC ON PROGRESS AND THIS IS A DELICATE SITUATION.

**BRIGHTSIDE BRANCH
YORKSHIRE & NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION**

(Carried)

BRO. J. STRIBLEY (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): President, I move Emergency Motion 4. Congress, this Conference recognises that Remploy was set up to employ people with disabilities after World War II. Conference views with deep concern the apparent use of Remploy resources to offer training to “disadvantaged” people as well as disabled people. The company haven’t as yet stated the definition of “disadvantaged people”.

The “disadvantaged people” are not necessarily disabled and as such, offering them training in Remploy would possibly put Remploy’s status under Article 19 in jeopardy. My business group is furniture. We understand that the company wants to bring through in the furniture group, which has three sites in Sheffield, Neath and Blackburn, approximately 300 disadvantaged people over a twelve month period. This would affect the 50% figure for Article 19. The Trade Union Consortium was only informed at the end of April that over 500 trainees would be coming into the factory network. A large number of these trainees will not have a disability. Only a few.

The company again only informed the Trade Union Consortium in early May 2010 that a number of the trainees were previously convicted criminals. Some may have served sentences for violence against women. This has a social impact on the Remploy worker where they could be bullied in the community if someone knows they work in a Remploy factory.

Conference calls on this Government to make sure that the necessary risk assessments are carried out before the trainees are allowed onto Remploy premises.

Again, in May 2010 the company disclosed figures on the number of trainees and the duration of their stay in a Remploy workplace.

Further, Congress instructs the National Secretary responsible for Remploy to raise this issue with the Minister for the Disabled because this goes against the principle of what

Remploy was set up for. Furthermore, the new Government has said that it won't sign off NFD2. I wrote to the DWP who said they were told by Remploy that the trade unions agreed to the 'disadvantaged' working in Remploy. This is untrue. I call on the National Secretary to report back. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, James. Secunder.

BRO. I. KEMP (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): Congress, I second Emergency Motion 4. President and Congress, the Lexicon of the Labour and Trade Union Movement is full of inspiring phrases, like "Unity is strength", "Workers of the World Unite" and the one phrase that encapsulates totally our philosophy, "To each according to need; from each according to ability". That is why this Union supports Remploy workers to help disabled workers lead a full and productive life, developing and using skills and contributing to society, not because they have got to but because they want to. In this same vein, there is nothing wrong in helping disadvantaged people to work and to develop skills themselves, but Remploy is not the place for them.

Congress, some people collect stamps, coins or whatever, but growing up with Watergate in America, I collect conspiracy theories. What I see in this move by Remploy is an attempt by the company to remove Article 19 status, jeopardising Remploy's economic viability, making it more easily to justify plant closures. These disadvantaged peoples are offenders and substance abusers.

I was brought up to believe that everyone is entitled to make a mistake, and that everyone deserves a second chance. So I have absolutely no problem with helping those who are willing to rehabilitate and reintegrate into society, but Remploy appear not to have carried out any risk assessment or any attempt to monitor those who will be working alongside the most vulnerable workers. No attempt has been made to protect Remploy employees who are at risk of exploitation by, call them what you will, "the veg of society" or "the Lumpenproletariat". However, that is not to say that all of them will be like this. We are not against rehabilitation and reintegration. We are all for it. That is why we call for genuine safeguards and protections both for Remploy employees and for those genuinely seeking rehabilitation. Congress, support Emergency Motion No. 4. Don't let vulnerable workers be at risk of exploitation and physical danger.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on the Remploy debate?

SIS. B. PLANT (Southern): I am speaking in support of Composite 9. President and Congress, I have a 19 year old son. This year he will be leaving college. I don't know when he will get a job, not because he is planning to go to university or travel in a gap year or even because he is a lazy workshy teenager. It is because he has a disability. I know that in this economic climate that the last people to be employed and the first people to be dismissed will be those with a disability.

At Congress 2008 I watched the GMB video about the closure of the Remploy factories called *Tracey's Story*. It moved me to tears because I recognised all the anguish these closures bring.

When my son leaves college he faces the prospect of being at home all day. That isolation affects not only him but also his whole family who care for him. This is not just about having a job and being employed but it is also about having a sense of independence, of value and of inclusion. This is why there is a need for sheltered employment. This is why these factories must stay open.

My son and those like him are not asking for charity. They just want a real job in a safe, supportive and secure workplace environment, like we all do. Please support Composite 9.

BRO. J. WOODWARD (South Western): Conference, before I begin, can I beg your indulgence and thank you all for your support for the York Disabled Workers' Co-operative. You have not only given us your hard earned cash but you have given us your hearts, minds and support. For that, from all of us who are involved, thank you very much. We are eternally grateful. (*Applause*)

I am now speaking on Composite 9 and Emergency Motion 4. Conference, we have got concrete proof that closing supported employment factories like Remploy does not work. All you have to do is to look at our survey of ex-Remployees who were left on the scrapheap back in 2008 when 29 of our Remploy factories closed. They were consigned to the dustbin. The wording of the Composite 9 infers that it was written with the return of a Labour Government in mind. It is still valid and an important motion for Remploy workers. Don't forget that Cleggie opposed the Remploy closures, but who knows what his boss, Compo, will do? We need the Remploy factories. We need good quality skills and we need good quality employment. What we don't need is the current board of directors who are playing the conspiracy to fail card as their predecessors did. Comrades, please support Composite 9.

On Emergency Motion 4, we don't want our members exposed to the risk of training non-disabled disadvantaged people. We want proper safeguards in place by the company. Many of us on the Consortium have already been CRB checked. Congress, please support the two motions. Thank you very much. Support the York Remploy Disabled workers. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: I will now put Composite 9 to the vote. All those in favour, please show?

Composite 9 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: I call Roy Dunnett.

BRO. R. DUNNETT (CEC, Commercial Services): I am speaking on behalf of the CEC in response to Emergency Motion 4. The CEC is supporting the emergency motion with this qualification. Congress, we know that Remploy was originally established to provide skilled work for disabled ex-service people following the last war. During the following decades Remploy established a network of factories across the UK making quality products providing employment for thousands of disabled people. We have lived through a period where governments of different persuasions have failed our manufacturing base. This effectively killed off so many of our Remploy factories and shifted Remploy’s focus to provide employment (services) – I have put the word “services” in brackets – to disabled people by outsourcing proud Remploy workers from their skilled work into unskilled work, as you heard earlier. For instance, they were employed sorting out clothes in charity shops. We fought hard and managed to keep 48 Remploy factories open and the fight goes on, but this attack against the very principle of providing supported employment continues.

Remploy has now become a prime sub-contractor for Welfare to Work. This puts at risk the special status of Remploy as a public body which provided supported employment for disabled people. The UK Government’s guidance is that every public body should reserve at least one contract for supported businesses. In this way, public bodies can fulfil their corporate social responsibility by helping more disabled people into work. To meet the definition of “supported employment”, more than 50% of employed workers must be disabled. If we support the safeguards set out in the motion to protect the health and safety of all Remploy trainees, we must do away with the smokescreen of counting trainees as permanent employees. However, we should qualify this by clearly stating that the CEC believes that disadvantaged young people should also have the opportunity of skilled work. They should not compete with disabled people for limited resources. By all means give them the opportunities they deserve but don’t allow this to threaten Remploy’s unique status as a provider of supported employment of disabled people. There should be no competition for limited resources. Thank you, Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Roy. Does Yorkshire & North Derbyshire accept the statement? (*Agreed*) I now put Emergency 4 to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Against?

Emergency Motion 4 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: I call on Tim Roache to move his Report, pages 152-167.

REGIONAL SECRETARY’S REPORT: YORKSHIRE & NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

YORKSHIRE AND NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	13,791
MANUFACTURING SECTION	13,692
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	30,757
Grade 1 members	33,456
Grade 2 members	16,221
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	8,563
Male Membership	29,323
Female Membership	28,917
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	8,021
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	1,077
Membership on Check-off	36,657
Membership on Direct Debit	14,062

THE REGION

2009 saw the continued growth and development of our region in a number of ways making it a very satisfactory year. Despite the deepest recession in the country for decades we set ourselves an ambitious task at the start of the year to grow by 1,000 members. In order to get anywhere achieving this it was important that we went pro-active and got out into workplaces and convinced people that, rather than try and save a few pounds by cancelling their union membership, there was never a more important time to stay in the union or join up if you were not already a member.

This achieved fantastic results on the membership front with the region growing by 1,077 (1.9%) from January to December 2009.

Such results can only be achieved through buy-in right across the region and with GMB@Work at the heart of everything we do, the Regional Management Team manage their teams of officers, staff, branches and activists to ensure first class delivery and support for our members.

The open, transparent, consistent and accountable style of management, now so firmly embedded across the region, has given people the confidence to use their strengths to make decisions and to take the occasional and justifiable risk that helped to deliver such a fine performance.

A huge amount of work has been done with branches to revitalise them and ensure they play their full part in the democracy of their union. The best indication of all, that our efforts had been worthwhile, was in November when we held a conference for branch champions.

110 activists gave up their weekend to come along to what was a fantastic event, combining work with fun. Those in attendance were inspired by Paul Kenny, our general secretary's speech and at the end they produced branch action plans which organisers are working through with the branches to full implementation.

The other key indicator is Congress with us receiving more nominations and motions than for many years and we are running a delegate election at the time of writing this report.

To support branches further we continue to provide them with computers on the proviso that these are used to communicate with their members in the production of newsletters, branch directories and even branch websites. The number of non-computerised branches is diminishing but for those our staff assist in the production and distribution of branch literature. This not only bridges the communication gap but also develops our staff towards the front line support of members. This was a central theme to our business plan for the year and we went a step further and actually democratically appointed 2 staff to organiser positions which sent a very positive message that we were serious in developing people who feel that have more to offer to members.

The regional website has become our main communication tool as it is kept up to date, fresh and relevant and receives numerous 'hits' and many positive comments and contributions. We even have hyperlinks from and to other organisations and the opportunities this brings us are endless.

Another major success story is on the training and education of our activists. In 2009 we not only appointed but actually trained 30% more representatives than we did the previous year despite that year being the best the region had ever performed. That is probably the most important and pleasing statistic of this whole report because again, in line with GMB@Work, it is them that, once trained, are best positioned to service, organise and recruit in the workplace so we are brilliantly placed going forward.

In line with Congress policy, we continue to do our bit on the green agenda and we have an eco friendly and recycling policy across the region that is strictly adhered to.

Congress also charged us with providing a better service to migrant workers, and I am delighted to report real progress in this area too. We have a project worker employed who is Polish, and he is working closely with our team in recruiting and organising migrant workers and the numbers are already in their hundreds. Added to that he has put on training on health and safety and being active in the union, obviously in their native languages and both were over subscribed.

Managing through clarity, consistency and compassion our agenda is here to stay. The regional team enjoy being part of something successful and are totally committed to the GMB@Work agenda to deliver even more opportunities and growth over the next 12 months.

ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

The catastrophic impact of the recession took some time to make itself felt in the section during 2010 but sure enough, by the end of the year job losses began to mount although these were felt much more by other trade unions rather than us thus evidencing the effect of the GMB@Work policy. Steady membership growth, effective retention and increased workplace organisation enabled the region to weather the storm by and large. For those who managed to stay in work, a year on reduced earnings through shorter working hours or lay offs, pay freezes or pay cuts has meant serious financial hardship.

The outlook for 2010 remains unclear with the green shoots of a recovery yet to be seen and only really expected in the second half of the year where economic growth is forecast. There will then be a lag as employers catch up before looking to recruit new staff. In the private sector there are warnings of austerity and in the public and third sector tough times are forecast, understood by most workers to mean the very real risk of budget cuts and subsequent job losses. Growing industrial tension is a very real prospect as our members rightly will look to do there own catching up.

Utilities Yorkshire Water annual salaries increased by 3%, plus non-consolidated merit bonuses in the final year of a five year deal effective 1st April 2009 based on the November 2008 all items RPI index.

Yorkshire Water: example basic annual salaries, 1 April 2009 ¹			
Band ²	Job example	Min, £pa	Max, £pa
1	Directors	Pay set by remuneration committee	
2	Function heads	50,291	86,753
3	Senior/middle managers	33,947	66,007
4	Management accountants; senior IT professionals	22,632	40,233
5	Process engineers, field	16,345	28,918

	technicians		
6	Meter readers, operators	11,522	21,374
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 37-hour week. 2. Each band has a lower- and upper-pay indicator, which are reviewed each year and adjusted in accordance with "company requirements or market factors". Yorkshire Water says the maximum pay indicator represents a salary that an individual in the band could achieve if the size of their role and individual contribution justifies it. It is not a target salary that everyone in the band will achieve. 			

This compares well with the median award in utilities which was reported as 2% which in itself is down on the previous year but ahead of the economy generally reflecting that they haven't been as hard hit as for example manufacturing. Talks for 2010 are at stalemate with the company offering a further five year deal linked to inflation which has been rejected. Reorganisation has also taken place but mainly amongst mid level management.

Britain's biggest coal miner, UK Coal, was expected to report hefty losses partly due to geological problems at Thoresby and Welbeck. Daw Mill was due to see significant investment to overcome difficult conditions underground. Regrettably there was a death at Kellingley following which the HSE ordered temporary suspension of mining. The company also faced ten charges over three deaths at two other deep mines in 2006 and 2007. Subsidiary company Monckton Coke & Chemicals at Royston, Barnsley had a 1% pay award imposed in June without agreement.

In November 2009 members at Northern Gas Network (United Utilities) were balloted for industrial action following the breakdown of pay talks which led to an improved offer being accepted.

Food and Drink Asda stores continued to be the focus for recruitment and organisation activity during the year based on the employer's continuing hostility towards GMB demonstrated locally by the dismissal of one of our workplace organisers. The regional aim to have at least one rep at each store across the region is well on the way to achieving. The night rate campaign and the four target store strategy continues with reps meeting quarterly to review progress. The 2009 Boxing Day redesignation campaign led to some success and all current workplace organisers have now received their GMB@Work training. We have been fully involved in the consultation process within the company concerning the new project, Leeds Home Shopping Store, which has no customers and is the first purpose built unit in the country. Organisers and reps have attended the new store opening at part of the best welcome at Bradford Living, Keighley and Morley home shopping store.

At Danish Bacon we have been successful in recruiting new members and discussions are ongoing regarding a formal recognition agreement.

Wilkinson Stores membership has remained steady with a concerted drive to recruit and organise. This with a background of short time, lay offs and redundancies within the sector although GMB has come out of it relatively unscathed.

The club stewards in this region were previously shared between numerous branches covering the different areas. Although this may have looked plausible in theory it did not represent a good structured branch and more importantly the members were getting different levels of representation dependent on the location of their club. Over the last 12 months we have been putting together one fully functioning club steward's branch complete with all relevant branch officials. The branch secretary is fully embracing the GMB@Work policy and in the New Year is committed to moving this forward into direct recruitment of a notoriously hard section to recruit in. All members now have a direct contact with the branch and any representation is done through the branch.

The ROT supported an initiative in South Yorkshire to get round all the pubs in the area targeting pub managers as part of the Pubco campaign reported on by the general secretary at Congress 2009. A number of pub meetings were held in association with the 'Sheffield Rebels' and 'Pub Revolution' with mixed results. The eviction of one of our members from his pub led to a high profile in the local press and regional television.

Reports on the sectional membership at Nestle, Haribo and Trebor Bassett (now Tangerine) are covered off within the Manufacturing Section report with Terry Suchard and British Sugar now closed.

Security There have been a number of difficulties in the smaller private security companies during the last year. The recession has presented a number of issues for this type of company particularly where those contracts they have are within the building industry. Where the building industry has found times hard this has had a knock on effect on the security industry too. Over the past year the main issue has been trying to maintain members' terms and conditions within their contracts of employment and in the main we have been successful in doing this. However, this has highlighted that these companies do tend to target non union members when looking at changing contracts or issuing redundancy notices giving rise to issues to campaign around on recruitment.

Amongst the larger organised employers, ie G4S, Securitas, Loomis and Security Plus, which are covered by national agreements, times are hard as ever with competition fierce. The induction sessions at G4S have reduced dramatically resulting in less new members being recruited. At Securitas GMB nationally signed off a recognition and bargaining structure agreement and following long discussions, reluctantly conceded on the payment of the SIA license fee for our members. Induction sessions are attended at Wakefield. The Sheffield branch of Loomis closed with some members redeploying to the Leeds branch.

Airports They also suffered the effects of the recession with fewer flights resulting in redundancies at Doncaster amongst Penaulle Servicaire members. Contracted hours were also reduced in some cases amongst G4S. On the plus side new workplace organisers were elected at Peel Airports, Penaulle and G4S.

Omniserve won the contract to provide security at Leeds/Bradford airport with all members TUPE transferred from G4S. The Aviance membership transferred to Servisair and as a result of ETO seventeen employees took voluntary redundancy.

Road Transport 2009 was a challenging year throughout all parts of the DHL business where the strategy of pay deferral for the 08/09 award secured members' employment with no large scale redundancies taking place. Reps are currently in discussion with the company for the 2010 claim.

DHL Express Domestic UK was put on notice that if it didn't turn the business around there would be no future in the UK domestic market. Despite a much improved performance in 2009, DHL announced the sale of their Express Domestic business to Home Delivery Network (HDM). TUPE consultation is ongoing.

Generally, and reflecting the DHL experience, pay has been frozen throughout the industry, a massive drop from the previous year's median award of 4%.

Action Housing and Support Membership continues to grow steadily with four new workplace organisers elected giving each office base its own rep. Joint quarterly meetings take place with the company and monthly workplace organiser meetings have been negotiated to progress the GMB@Work policy.

Legal Services Profits at Yorkshire law firms have plunged faster than the UK average during the recession according to the Yorkshire Post (26/11/09). Firms saw an average decline in profit per partner of 39% to £326,000 compared to an average fall of 30% for the top one hundred firms nationwide. The figures cap an unhappy year for law firms which have slashed jobs and put staff on part time hours. In September up to

one thousand three hundred and fifty jobs had gone in Leeds alone over the previous twelve months. Two thirds of Yorkshire firms said they were 'not very confident' about revenue growth prospects. In line with other forecasts, the latter part of 2010 looked better. The Jackson report also casts a shadow on the personal injury industry with the prospect of trade union funding being severely hit.

Thompsons Solicitors

There is an evolving but none the less apparent deterioration in the working relationship with Thompson's Solicitors. During recent pay negotiations with management and the Thompsons National Committee a request was made for information to be provided to allow the committee to formulate a pay claim. The result was a refusal. The reason given was that financial information should not be shared. Following long and at times extremely difficult negotiations, it had now been agreed that this information will be shared with the negotiating committee members, however they have to sign a document to say it will remain confidential and will not be used by anyone or for purposes other than collation of pay claims.

Legal Services Commission

It is anticipated that the closure of many offices, and in particular that of the LSC office in Leeds will commence roll out this year with the loss of many jobs, and the service being transferred to 3 main offices.

MANUFACTURING SECTION

Manufacturing continues to suffer job losses throughout the region. PPG (formerly Kalon Paints) has lost over 50 jobs due to the economic climate. Many manufacturers are losing jobs but at a slower rate.

Wages have been subdued due to the recession with some firms holding pay freezes and in some cases reductions in wages. The future looks uncertain and there is no clear sign to the recession ending. More investment at Government and regional level is urgently required to slow down this decline.

Manufacturing in the region is at an all time low with little change on the horizon, 2009 has been a year to forget. 2010 looks very likely to continue in the same vein.

Arla Foods Within the last year we have had major issues with the company regarding pay negotiations. As this report is finalised we still do not have an agreement on the 2009 pay talks between the company and the joint trade unions. The company wished to impose a pay freeze for this financial year for both transport and process members. As the two sets of negotiations are held separately this in itself is becoming very problematic. The transport section has agreed to settle with the company regarding the pay freeze where as the process side have rejected this by a large majority. The company offered the members a one off payment of £150 for this financial year but once again this was unanimously rejected. The joint trade unions have now had to seek permission to formally ballot the membership on industrial action. The company have not helped the negotiations by firstly trying to impose a pay freeze sighting the financial times we are living in; then announcing a new super dairy to be built in the south of England. This dairy will cost approx £250 million pounds and will be the biggest in Europe. As we stand at the moment the company do wish to meet in early January to continue negotiations. Once this meeting is concluded a decision will be made by the joint trade unions side on whether to accept if and what the company offer, or to move straight to a formal strike ballot.

Trebor Bassetts 20 redundancies in 2009. Stabilised until the announcement of the takeover by Kraft.

David S Smith A steady ship but change to working practices to ensure customer needs and profits.

Lafarge Production down. Around 9 redundancies through early retirements and volunteers.

Joseph Ash Production down.

Jeldwen Production down. Site closing in Devon and production to come to Sheffield site in 2010.

Vesuvius Production down.

Robinsons Production down. 11 redundancies staff and supervisors. Changes proposed to working practices.

Fusion Early part of 2009 two batches of 35 redundancies. Production down.

K M Furniture Production down. Company looking at downsizing size of site.

Brunton Shaw 4 redundancies in February 2010.

Phoenix Brick Closed in December 2008. Re-opened in September 2009. 16 redundancies,

Remploy We continue to lobby for the establishment of a Remploy factory in the York area. We have also established a Remploy branch and have held joint shop stewards' sessions based around GMB@Work.

Symphony The above company have now opened a factory in Barnsley. We have established recognition arrangements at the new site and appointed new shop stewards. Further talks are scheduled for January which will be the first pay review for the Barnsley employees.

Haworth Scouring The above company reports that they are hitting their production targets, which is excellent news in the current economic climate.

Treves/Arcadia Limited redundancies have occurred at the above companies. All were made following the appropriate consultation with the GMB so that members' interests were properly protected.

Burberrys The Rotherham site closed in the spring and there were large scale cut backs in employee numbers at Castleford. During the negotiations we were able to secure redundancy terms that were substantial improvements to the normal Burberry's scheme.

Since the redundancies their order book has been above target and members are taking part in flexible working arrangements to ensure that orders remain in the UK.

Dalkia Industry & Healthcare 2% pay increase from 1st April further 1% from 1st November

Whitby& Chandler Ltd Peniston Pay freeze

Ronseal Ltd, Thorncliffe Sheffield. Pay freeze, union considering taking industrial action; The company is proposing changes in the annual working rota for production staff.

Multi Serve Group Ltd , Rotherham Some operations taken back in house by Outo Kumpu & Corus pay freeze

Marshalls, Stainton , Rotherham No pay increase offered at this point, union still in talks with management. Two site closure.

Balfour Beatty Rail Projects Sheffield Redundancies through 2009, 1 week unpaid leave taken due to poor orders. Company currently consulting on closing the Sheffield site.

Clarkson Osborn Sheffield. Site closed GMB members redundant.

Ross & Catherall, Killamarsh nr Sheffield. Redundancies reduced order book. 2 Year deal accepted for pay 0% 2009 2% +guaranteed £480 bonus for 2010.

Premdor Barnsley Redundancies.

Members of the ECIA and who work under NAECI agreement

Motherwell Bridge	C & D Insulations
Doosan Babcock	C.G.B. Humbertherm
John Young & Co	Ebor
TEI Ltd	J.S. Miller & Co
F.L.S. Milo	Jilland Engineering
Hertel UK	Powertherm
Norec	Alstom Power
Cleveland Bridge	Vange
Howden Power	Deborah
Shaw Group	

A number of the above companies who are members of the Engineering Construction Industry Association (ECIA) and who work under the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI) have undertaken contracts during the outage periods on the power stations within the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region (Drax, Eggborough & Ferrybridge). GMB members within the NAECI voted to accept a new 2 year offer.

2010 - 2% plus uplift on allowances

2011 – RPI on base and allowances subject to a minimum 1% maximum 5%

The offer also dealt with issues around site representation, auditing, skills & competencies and an unemployment register.

Membership and workplace organisers are increasing and a national database has been set up to assist with future contracts and our unemployed members.

Denso Marston Retention and consolidation continues following 142 redundancies.

Ellbee Retention and consolidation continues following 60 redundancies.

PPG Architectural Coatings Retention and consolidation continues following 83 redundancies.

Dolux Beds I have to report that the work that John Fazackerley (workplace rep) has done in implementing GMB@Work into the workplace has had a significant impact on recruitment and retention.

Abn - Sherburn in Elmet The company has held up well throughout 2009 including a pay increase. The company have maintained all jobs but are going through reorganisation to increase productivity.

Allied Glass The glass container industry has suffered badly during 2009 with lines being closed, no wage increase and energy prices still are a serious concern. The overall manning is down and will be throughout 2010.

Ardagh Glass Due to the recession 77 jobs were lost at the beginning of 2009 and a pay freeze for 2010 has been agreed together with other cost cutting measures to retain jobs as a result of this we have been able to renegotiate an increase in 75 jobs from January 2010.

Cargill Cocoa Due to high increases in commodity prices the company announced a worldwide pay freeze to protect its business. The York site has maintained its staffing levels.

Emmerson Doors Went into liquidation and ceased to trade from October.

Ebor Concretes The company has suffered due to the downturn in the building industry and has suffered heavy job losses with no upturn foreseeable in the near future.

Kingspan Another supplier to the building industry which has seen a 50% reduction in its workforce throughout 2009 with no upturn as yet.

Mckechnies Vehicles Significant job losses were incurred during the early part of 2009 with the remainder of the workforce going to a 4 day week due to car manufactures closing production for 5 months. 5 day working will return in 2010 during the early part of the year.

Mckechnies Plastics Once again badly hit by the recession with the workforce reverting to a 4 day week to protect jobs. No upturn is seen for 2010.

Nestle - (York factory and distribution) Following restructuring in 2008 the company has had a very good year, output and quality up and employment prospects very good for the future and the overall workforce has increased. However, the company are jumping on the economic bandwagon seeking a worldwide pay freeze for 2010 when the York site has record outputs and profits.

Haribo The company remains competitive but is always reducing its costs but employment levels remain stable. Terms and conditions have come under attack with the company reducing breaks and increasing the working hours with no increase in pay.

Stolze Flaconnage Another glass manufacturer who has come under severe financial pressures but the good news is that the furnace which provides all production is being rebuilt which will secure, hopefully, the sites for the future.

Pilkington Glass Closed production in May and transferred work to St Helens.

Tangerine (formerly monkhill confectionery) York and Pontefract Changes of ownership has seen severe cost cutting and imposition of pay awards albeit very small across all sites. Employment levels have reduced overall and peaks have been met with temporary labour.

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

Membership of the public services section within the region stands at 30,757 this is an increase of 1,752 on last year. Of these 21,614 are women, an increase of 1,083 on last year.

The last 12 months have been some of the toughest yet for our membership, who have faced pay cuts, job losses, outsourcing and disinterest from their employers Overall our members have responded with vigour to these challenges. We saw the appointment of more new reps in public services than ever before within the region, particularly across local government. Existing reps became engaged in GMB@Work activity through the roll out of consolidation training and we began to see public service branches becoming more

closely involved in the campaigns and activity generated in the public service workplaces throughout the region.

Local Government

The 11-week Leeds street scene dispute was without doubt the defining event of 2009 across the region within public services and beyond. The strike, which involved around 200 members employed by Leeds city council in refuse street cleansing and related jobs, came to epitomise the worst of a local authority employer and the best of trade union solidarity and resolve.

The strike action started on 7 September 2009 over Leeds City Council's proposals to implement single status "in reverse" by cutting pay rather than by equalling up. GMB and Unison members faced pay cuts of up to £5,500 and the threat of privatisation if the pay cuts were resisted. For the first four weeks of the strike the Liberal/Tory led council refused to meet with the union negotiators unless we called off the strike action. Instead the Liberal leader of the council concentrated on publicly attacking the strikers and their unions. Agency staff were brought in and contactors hired. By week five it was clear that even though one contractor alone was costing over £150,000 per week, the rubbish was piling up and the city was a mess. We used the strike breaking rules to attack the agencies and four were stopped by the BIS from providing labour.

When negotiations restarted they quickly broke down when the council made it's 'final offer' which sought to close the pay gap for some but not all of the striking workers, which did so only if unachievable productivity targets were met and which even then left almost half the workforce facing pay cuts of £1,280.

On the 21 October 2009, week seven, 92% of the joint union membership rejected the proposals. Negotiations finally resumed in week nine, November, when the council leaders agreed to meet union negotiators. On Monday 23 November 2009 GMB and Unison members voted to accept a negotiated settlement which saw the removal of the pay cuts, jointly designed and achievable productivity arrangements, the removal of the privatisation threat and a commitment from the council to introduce productivity arrangements for women workers across the council.

Our members were applauded back to work marching behind a lone piper on Wednesday 25 November 2009. For 11 weeks they had held strong, kept a continuous picket line, retained the support of the Leeds' public, received the support and solidarity of the trade union and labour movement from across the UK and won.

Our members and their reps were an inspiration and as a region we are proud. Our thanks to all those across the GMB who supported the striking workers financially and otherwise.

Single Status

The root cause of the Leeds' dispute exists elsewhere across every other local authority in the region. Although most councils have now fully or partially implemented single status, we have had some notable problems in areas such as Sheffield City Council, where GMB members rejected the proposals and we continue to be in dispute with the council. GMB reps and our officer in Sheffield have worked tirelessly to inform, advise and lead our membership through this challenging time. At the time of writing this report all indicators are that Sheffield will seek to impose the new pay and grading structure and GMB members will be balloted on industrial action. Negotiations on single status implementation continue in Leeds (phase two), Bradford, Derbyshire Council and Bassetlaw District Council.

Equal Pay Campaign

GMB has just short of 10,000 equal pay claims lodged on behalf of mainly women members in local government. Claims are 'live' in the following authorities: Barnsley, Doncaster, Kirklees, Leeds, Sheffield, (on appeal). Settlement terms have been agreed in Wakefield, Bradford, Calderdale, Rotherham, Harrogate and York. We continue to campaign for pay equality and to organise and recruit on this key issue.

Contracted-out Branch

In recognition of the continuing pace of outsourcing, particularly as it affects school based staff such as cleaners and kitchen staff, we have piloted a new branch within Leeds which has been created especially for those members who used to work for Leeds City Council but who now, post transfer, work in the private sector for a contractor. With nearly a thousand members we hope to grow our reps and membership in this area and share their experience and common purpose within the branch. The co-operation of our existing Leeds local government branches was crucial to the success of this exercise, transferring their existing members into the new branch.

Local Authority Core Group

The region's local authority core group continued to meet and campaign throughout the year. The group brings together all senior local authority lay reps and local government officers to discuss strategy and organisation. The group has been an invaluable source of support and direction for all involved in these difficult times. The group has continued to receive reports and advice on equal pay from our legal advisors and to determine GMB@Work activity in the councils in the region. Co-tutor training was provided to those involved to ensure our senior lay reps are supporting officers in the roll out of consolidation training in local authorities.

In April 2009, John Healy, MP, Local Government Minister attended the core group and set out government thinking on the future of local government. He heard first hand what our members and reps were facing on the ground.

Schools Support Staff

We have continued our ROT led campaign of recruitment and organisation within schools, recruiting 1104 during the academic year 2008/2009 and appointing a records number of reps and contacts.

On the 27 March 2009 we held an inaugural meeting of our regional support staff forum. Over 30 school based reps attended and delegates expressed concerns regarding their second class status in many schools. Despite working in different local authorities, they reported the same problems, the passing on of teachers' duties, job titles that do not reflect duties and problems with head teachers. The SSSNB was discussed and our national delegates elected. A further three meetings were held during 2009 and our school based membership and activity goes from strength to strength. Our membership density in schools is now at 32%.

National Health Service

The National Health Service continues to be an important sector of membership within the region. Workplace organisation across the NHS is improving and 2009 has seen the appointment of more new workplace organisers in the NHS than ever before. Recruitment activity has begun to show a steady increase as a result of GMB@Work training for new workplace organisers and as a result of consolidation training for existing reps which took place on 17, 18 and 19 August 2009. 500 members have been recruited to the GMB within the health service during the past year. Progress has been made with regards to recognition at York hospital following the support for the GMB campaign provided by the regional TUC. Unfortunately our attempts to achieve recognition within Sheffield Teaching hospitals has continued to be rebuffed by the Trust, although we continue to recruit and have 200 members across the three sites. We continue to meet with resistance from the staff side unions towards GMB achieving recognition.

Health service branches within the region have been steadily making progress on organising plans and branches such as Barnsley Health Service branch continues to be held up as an exemplary lesson in branch and workplace activity, combining to build membership and to raise the GMB profile within the NHS.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service

On 28 October 2009 we received formal and final confirmation from Yorkshire Ambulance Service that the Trust's recognition of the GMB which had been suspended in July 2008 had now been terminated. Despite many meetings and months of negotiations between officers, reps and the chairman and chief executive of Yorkshire Ambulance Service during 2008 and 2009, the Trust, we were informed, were of the view that 'recognition at this time would seriously disrupt the positive working relationships we have been able to develop with our recognised unions and that this would be to the detriment of patients/staff'.

This leaves 500 members of the GMB across the Yorkshire region and Midland and East Coast region without a formal collective voice and with the management team determined to tell our members which union they should join. Within the region and in conjunction with Midland and East Coast region we have committed to using every campaigning means at our disposal to restore GMB recognition within Yorkshire Ambulance Service. As this report is compiled our members are voting in an indicative ballot for industrial action with the aim of restoring their trade union rights.

Southern Cross

We have 63 Southern Cross homes within the region and 888 members which represents 44% of the workforce within the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region. Southern Cross continues to be a key organising target within the region and throughout 2009 we recruited 369 new members. Crucially we have been able to relocate all our Southern Cross members into an active branch and the support of the branch secretary, Harry Griffiths, has allowed us to establish a new regional committee for Southern Cross staff. The committee brings together reps from homes across the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region and aims to ensure that our Southern Cross membership leads the organising activities we put in place.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	
Regional Organisers	15
Organising Officers	5
No. of Branches	106
New Branches	5
Branch Equality Officers	40
Branch Youth Officers	20

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	332,964.78
Total Disablement	
Working Accident	3,137.25
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	
Funeral	39,010.00

4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The 'new look Pulse magazine has been well received by members and from feedback received we seem to have hit the right note with the brighter, bolder colours. The magazine has proved to be invaluable in terms of highlighting GMB campaigns and success stories. It is used extensively across the region as a recruitment and organising tool and we actively encourage members to contribute to the magazine at every opportunity.

The regional website also received a revamp during 2009, which added additional content and functionality. Again, from feedback, both members and GMB reps have found the site to be a valuable resource, with lots of downloadable documents, including the Workplace Organisers' Toolkit and the Health and Safety Reps' Handbook. Each branch now has its own page on the site and is encouraged to advertise branch meetings and events.

On publicity we have had a very good year securing a high profile across all parts of the media. As organisers fight and campaign for fairness and justice for our members, notably during the Leeds City Council dispute, through the recession the disgrace involving banks and bonuses and recently Cadbury. The GMB in this region is now the first calling point from media contacts when they want a quote.

The region continued to sponsor charities and organisations during 2009 and these were:

- Action for Sick Children
- Brainwave
- Remploy Fighting Fund
- The Prince of Wales Hospice
- Yorkshire Air Ambulance
- The Chernobyl Children's Project
- Bretton Boys' Football Team (not REC)
- Queensbury Celtic Football Club
- Whirlow Hall Farm Trust
- Dr Jackson Cancer Fund
- Morley Rugby Club
- Cancer Research
- SADACCA
- Circus Starr – Wheatfield's Hospice
- Bosom Friends & Bradford Cancer Support Fashion Show
- Brinsworth Whitehall JFC

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS AND DISEASES (including criminal injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
863	863

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
787	280	0	507 £3,566,155.96	-	£3,566,155.96
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009			1352		

b) EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	188
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Rejected	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
158	29	30	1	96 £187,559.71	2 £178,630.00	£366,189.71
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009			200			

c) OTHER EMPLOYMENT LAW CASES

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
-	-	-	-

(d) SOCIAL SECURITY CASES

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
22	7	34

The Legal Department is responsible for overseeing the region's comprehensive legal services. Much of the region's legal services are provided by Thompsons Solicitors. The biggest requirement for legal assistance continues to be in the area of personal injury and disease. The Legal Assistance Scheme also includes free legal assistance on work related criminal matters; a road traffic accident scheme; a free will preparation service; discounted rates for family law, probate and conveyancing. Members can access a free 30 minute legal advice session on any other legal question.

Most of the region's employment law work is conducted by the regional GMB legal department, with 'overspill' and, for example, public sector equal pay cases, referred to Thompsons as required. The regional legal department operates a professional and efficient Employment Tribunal casework management system and provides a first class successful service to members. Unfair dismissal claims made up the largest proportion of cases taken in 2009 with other cases taken under a variety of causes including equal pay, race discrimination and age discrimination. Over £200,000 was recovered in compensation for GMB members from Employment Tribunal claims during the course of 2009.

'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 for lay representatives and activists. Empowering workplace representatives is aided by the department providing or arranging a wide range of employment law training. There is a monthly introduction to GMB legal services and a basic employment rights course as part of the induction of new representatives. Training is also provided in a range of employment law topics such as discrimination law, redundancy; and dispute resolution procedures (including the affect of the Employment Act 2009 on handling grievance and disciplinary issues). The region's full time officers are also kept abreast of new developments in employment law through the use of bulletins and briefings.

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

I am delighted to report that the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region now has in place an Equality & Inclusion Forum. Following our regional conference, Yorkshire delegates attended the National Equality & Inclusion Conference. I am proud of our delegates who presented motions which were carried and also supported motions from other regions. Delegates for the region attended the Black Workers' Conference and the TUC Women's Conference.

We have in place a Community Participation Project in Sheffield; working with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities is well under way. Originally, we had agreed to work with the TUC; However, GMB Yorkshire will now champion the project. We are building links within the relevant communities and will roll this project out across the region in the coming year. The work that Nikki Sharpe of Thompsons has contributed is exceptional and, I wish to thank her on behalf of myself and the region for her continued invaluable contribution.

We have held Equality & Inclusion workshops at our Sheffield and Wakefield offices. We have also facilitated equality reps' training and will have in place stage 2, equality champions training sessions commencing in 2010.

The Regional Equality & Inclusion Forum is now in place and we will offer all GMB work place organisers the opportunity to be involved in the forum.

We have in place a regional action plan for the coming year which includes the following:

- Dignity & Respect @ Work campaign which will be rolled out across the region. This campaign will be launched in January.
- To hold a Dignity & Respect day within the region.
- To ensure that we have a GMB Dignity & Respect ambassador in every work place.
- Dignity & Respect campaign in schools. This campaign will contribute to the recruitment and organising activities in the local authorities and work on this is underway.
- The Yorkshire Regional Equality & Inclusion Forum will produce a leaflet.
- A member of the Forum will contribute to ensuring the website is continually updated.

7 YOUNG MEMBERS

During the first six months of last year, young member activity focussed mostly on anti fascist and anti racist campaigning - including the sponsorship of two Love Music Hate Racism events - and on fund raising for such campaigns via volunteer work at one of the largest music festivals in the world, courtesy of the Workers' Beer Company.

Despite what has probably been our quietest period since the re launch of the Regional Young Members' Activist Committee (RYMAC) in late 2007, our key young activists have remained consistent in their commitment and resolve to build the GMB and essential work is ongoing.

The bar worker campaign switched direction to focus on Sheffield Hallam Students' Union when access to staff and recognition was promised, but hit a major stumbling block when SHSU management denied us access to staff because of existing recognition agreements with Unite and Unison – despite initial feedback that there was scope for us to organise alongside such agreements. However another door has since been opened with respect to Sheffield University Union. Management there have been receptive to our approach so far and plans are in progress to launch a campaign to organise young workers in the months ahead.

We participated in TUC Youth Conference in March – Piotr Plonka attended on behalf of the region and as one of 9 GMB national delegates. Unfortunately, something had been amiss for much of 2009 with respect to the channels of communication between national and local TUC and in this region local TUC involvement in youth activity has all but disappeared. One of our key activists, Gareth Hartley, has been involved in trying to get the forum up and functioning in recent months. Consequently we hope to have more to report in 2010 regarding our involvement in regional and cross union initiatives. In the past we have been very much a leading light on this forum and no doubt will be so again.

New steward and activist Sinead Donnolly (Leeds City Council) attended her first GMB Congress as Young Members' observer and was both impressed and inspired by her experience. Sinead also joined our team of ten volunteers at Glastonbury in June. Our team raised £1495.00 for their work at the festival which has since been used for a number of campaigns and profile raising initiatives amongst young workers and students. These funds were further enhanced by our participation at the Leeds Festival in late August when

13 volunteers served behind one of the event's many bars raising again just short of £1,500.00. Many thanks to all of those who volunteered their time throughout the festival season.

A number of our young activists took part in anti BNP actions organised by Hope Not Hate, Unite Against Fascism and local groups in the run up to the European elections and assisted in the mass leafleting exercises that were undertaken – sadly not enough to prevent the election of Andrew Brons – but tremendous thanks to all those who got stuck in and supported the various campaigns. We also worked with Wakefield TUC to stage a Love Music Hate Racism event in the city - RYMAC were one of the sponsors which meant that GMB logo featured on all tickets and publicity information for the event – see also the summer 2009 edition of Pulse magazine for Gareth Hartley's article. GMB Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Young Members' were also one of the sponsors of the huge LMHR event held in Stoke.

During the second half of 2009, despite the depletion in numbers amongst our leading young activists, we continued to play a significant part in a number of campaigns both inside and outside of the region and our involvement in anti fascist and anti racist activities remained prominent throughout the rest of the year. The Regional Young Members' Committee elected to donate further from our Workers' Beer funds to both Unite Against Fascism events, Hope Not Hate campaigning materials and to sponsor the mobilisation against the BNP's Red White & Blue Festival, held in August in Codnor – with a number of our young members attending.

Ever determined to make links with workers' in struggle, the committee also voted to give £500 of their funds in support of those involved in the Vestas dispute. Our very own Daniel Randall took time out to visit the occupying workers in order to write an article for our regional magazine but also to pass on our messages of support for the inspiring stand that was being taken.

Closer to home, from September until pretty much the end of the year, the Leeds Refuse and Street Cleansing Dispute raged. Our young activists declared their overwhelming support by agreeing to donate £1000 of their money to the strike fund. David Kirkham, on behalf of the Regional Young Members' Committee presented the cheque to a number of our strikers on one of the main picket lines. Key young activists were also instrumental in making links with the universities in order to raise the profile of the dispute amongst the Leeds Student population and to publicise the Refuse To Be Beat Benefit gig. Thanks also to John Clark and John Manson – two of our shop stewards involved in the strike - who spent time visiting the universities to talk to students about the dispute.

In previous reports I have stated our intention to produce young member specific materials and whilst resources have been devised for a number of workplace campaigns, our intention is still to produce a booklet that can be used generally. We are nearly there – again thanks to Daniel Randall – and will be presenting a draft to regional management shortly for approval.

Whilst our young activists have been visible in a number of campaigns – thus raising our profile and our relevance further, I am conscious that there is still much to be done in terms of building young member activity and involvement in each of our branches and workplaces. Unfortunately the number of meetings and attendance at the meetings tailed off considerably in the last six months of the year – which essentially meant we could not get involved in as much as we had hoped to and to the extent that we had hoped to - but a meeting planned early in the New Year intends to address these problems and look at ways we can become more creative in attracting younger people into our movement. We are confident that we will take significant steps in cracking this conundrum in 2010.

8 EDUCATION TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses - Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB@Work	9	81	60	141	282

Introduction to GMB (2 days) inc. on-site 2 day	9	74	47	121	242
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	7	n/a	n/a	131	655
Branch Officers	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

(b) On Site Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Safety Reps & Right to Inspect	4	14	10	24	24
Redundancy	2	11	6	17	17
Constructive Dismissal Law	1	6	2	8	8
Grievance Procedures Best Practice	5	26	10	36	36
Steps to a Greener Workplace	2	9	4	13	13
Mangmt Regs & Risk Assessment	3	14	5	19	19
Go Green at Work	1	2	1	3	3
Discp & Grvnce procedures	2	16	8	24	24
Job Evaluation	1	3	5	8	8
DDA Disability	2	10	1	11	11
Age Discrimination	2	6	4	10	10
Disciplinary Procedures Best Practice	3	18	8	26	26
ULR (3 day)	3	n/a	n/a	68	204
Dispute Resolution Update	1	8	4	12	12
Vrtion of Contacts & C/A	1	8	4	12	12
TUPE	1	5	5	7	7
Unfair Dismissal	1	6	6	12	12
Equality Reps 2 days	3	25	16	41	41
Equality Reps 3 days	2	17	4	21	21
Discrimination Law	1	7	3	10	10
Understanding	1	11	3	14	28

Environment Issues in the Workplace 2 days					
Co-Tutor Training	1	13	4	17	34

(c) Health & Safety Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
H&S 3 day	7	n/a	n/a	92	276

(d) Other Courses					
GFTU	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Total Courses	50	82	60	142	n/a
Northern College (5 days)					
Practical Employment Law	1	3	2	5	25
Specialist H&S and Environmental Impact	1	5	1	6	30
Understanding Pensions	1	1		4	20
Advanced Health & Safety	4	2	2	4	20
Understanding the DDA	11	6	5	11	55

(e) TUC Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Diploma in Employment Law	1	3		3	108
Union Reps Stage 1	1	1		1	5
Health & Safety Stage 1	1	4	2	6	72
Health & Safety Stage II	1	2		2	10
Union Learning Reps	1	1		1	5
Disability Champions at work	1	1	3	4	20
Diploma in Occupational Health & Safety	1	2		2	72

Attendance figures for 2009 have increased for the third year running in respect of post-holding activists attending the regional training programme, in particular newly appointed representatives consistently undertake a short initial support training delivered by their organiser. The 2 Day GMB@Work course and the regional 2 day Induction course as part of the region's consistent approach towards all new post-holders undertaking the same training as their first step onto the educational progressional route. There has also

been a trend of long standing post-holders returning to the educational pathway to refresh on previous training undertaken probably some years ago.

New developments within the programme, such as the environmental green courses have proved interesting for some activists who wish to pursue that goal. The introduction of short sessions surrounding employment law has also attracted convenors branch secretaries and accompanying reps to brush up on their previous knowledge in these areas.

Finally, I am pleased to say that yet again the regions education programme booklet went out on time to all the regions post holding activists via a mail out or electronically to their email address. It is also available on the regional website.

9 HEALTH & SAFETY

Running alongside education the department also has responsibility for health and safety in respect of safety reps' queries and members' enquiries. An assessment of the work undertaken by safety reps on behalf of GMB members has yet again shown that back in the work place we have well trained dedicated activists who truly understand the benefit of keeping GMB members safe within their workplace. This is reflected by the amount of telephone calls and enquiries sent direct to the H&S department is very minimalistic and quite often is nothing more than the safety reps needing guidance to support their original instinct. Since the region introduced the twice per year H&S forums attendance at these have increased each time and the dates will soon be available for 2010.

10 POLITICAL

Fortunes for the Labour Party have been difficult over the last 6 to 12 months and Labour are still significantly behind in the opinion polls.

Regionally it's been very tough, the loss of Richard Corbett's seat to the BNP was a very low point indeed.

The Euro Elections coincided with the expenses scandal with devastating consequences. It is totally unacceptable for MP's to show such disloyalty at election time and this clearly caused a major dip in the Labour vote.

Ironically the BNP vote barely rose at all it was Labour voters not turning out that caused the problem.

Richard Corbett, a GMB member and strong supporter of the region is a tremendous loss and we all wish him well and hope that he will make a speedy return to politics.

The region has been and continues to be heavily involved in campaigning. Several MP's including Colin Burgon, Linda Riordan and Mike Wood have been especially supportive in regional and national campaigns including the constant fight to support the Remploy workers.

In Leeds we have been involved in the longest strike since the miners strike in 1984. The Leeds Refuse Workers were on strike for 12 weeks eventually winning a great victory in a dispute regarding equal pay. The council significantly lowered the grades of men and women to levels that were totally unacceptable, some loosing up to £500 per month, eventually 99% of the members were satisfied and the dispute was settled.

Many thanks go to Keith Wakefield, GMB Councillor's and the rest of the Labour group in Leeds for their support during the dispute. Many Leeds MP's including Hilary Benn attended the picket line in support of our members.

Colin Burgon played a key role, not only on the picket lines on occasions, too many to mention, but as a motivator at the weekly rally's. His many funny, poignant, moving and down right brilliant speeches will live in my memory for the rest of my days.

Tony Benn once said there are two kinds of politician, conviction and ideological types and weather veins who will blow in any direction that is popular at the time. Colin is and always will be a socialist by conviction, his retirement will be Parliament's loss and the institution will be a poorer place without him.

Colin's former seat of Elmet will be contested by Cllr James Lewis who is a GMB member and was also very supportive to our members during the refuse dispute.

As the election draws closer the region is now involved with the other unions in Yorkshire in a battle to stop the Conservatives winning the election. The region has in place a regional strategy to keep its key seats and also a General Election page on the website so its members can be kept up to date with what campaigning is taking place.

We cannot predict the result but we will fight all the way as a return to a Conservative Government would have disastrous consequences for our members.

(Adopted)

BRO. T. ROACHE (Regional Secretary, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire): I formally move my report.

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any questions on Tim's report? *(No response)* Does Congress agree that report? *(Agreed)*

The Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Regional Secretary's Report was adopted.

THE PRESIDENT: Motion 116 – Engineering Minister. We are supporting this motion. If you do not need to come up as seconder, please feel free to say “Formally”.

ENGINEERING MINISTER MOTION 116

116. ENGINEERING MINISTER

This Conference calls on the Government to reverse its decision not to create a Chief Engineering Advisor, or a Minister for Engineering, or any new Government to create one, which has been strongly advocated by the House of Commons Select Science and Technology Committee.

NOTTINGHAM TEC BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. P. SOPER (Midland & East Coast): Congress, in moving Motion 116 we are asking for a Minister of Engineering. I hope the Engineering Section will bear with me because they have heard me speak about the decline in engineering. The reason why I have come to this conclusion is as follows. I joined the Boilermakers in 1965, I became a shop steward, I went on district committees for the Boilermakers, I called strikes, I went on regional council and I have been on training bodies. So in 46 years in the trade I have a good idea of what went on. When you look back, and I think Mary said it in her Address to Congress, recent governments have killed the industrial heart of our land. They have annihilated the shipbuilding industry, the dockers were sent to prison for

fighting for their rights, they have annihilated the steel industry, the railways, the coalmines as well as the motor cycle industry. After a bit, you would think, “Hang on, Phil, have I got this wrong? Am I doing something wrong?” So I think the best way to proceed now is having an an Engineering Minister. We have got to get people inside. Mary is one of the advocates that we don’t parachute MPs into these places. Can you imagine that we would have with industry if six hundred MPs were involved in this trade? It would be fabulous. But we are not on our own. We have got people on our side.

After a fringe meeting last year at the Labour Party Lord Drayson, the Minister of Science and Innovation, called for the equivalent to be set up for technology and engineering. But he was not simply for advice but for expert representation. We could implement new engineering technologies and projects. Philip Greenish, the Chief Executive of the Engineering Academy, also agreed with Lord Drayson’s acknowledgement. The Government’s departments have been advocating this in recent months by evidence given to the House of Commons’ Select Committee. But what was the answer from our friend, Mr. Mandelson? He said: “We do not accept that there is a case for a chief engineering adviser.” Well, what a surprise. I am sorry, but there is an urgent need for a better understanding in Government on new technology. This is essential to our economic growth and maintaining our quality of life as we tackle major changes like climate change. We cannot build a future without world class engineers. I move.

BRO. D. BREARLEY (Midland & East Coast): I second Motion 116. President and Congress, the need for a Minister of Engineering has been obvious for a long time. The decline in this industry in recent years needs to be reversed, hopefully by using our sponsored MPs and the GMB *Working Together* to this end. Engineers are always the pace setters for this country in conditions, wages and holiday hours. Who can remember the talk of the ‘white heat of technology’ in the 1960s that would give us more holidays, shorter hours and better conditions? But it never happened. We have had to fight for what we have got and still do to keep it. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Does anyone wish to come in on debate? (*No response*) Thank you. I put it to the vote. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against?

Motion 116 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: I now call Emergency Motion 5 – Government Funding of Regional Development Agencies – Save our Steel.

**GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES –
SAVE OUR STEEL
EMERGENCY MOTION 5**

**EMERGENCY MOTION NO 5
GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES – SAVE OUR STEEL**

CONGRESS UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE ARE HIGHLY SENSITIVE NEGOTIATIONS CURRENTLY TAKING PLACE BETWEEN CORUS AND TWO POTENTIAL PURCHASERS OF THIS PLANT. ALSO INVOLVED IN THIS PROCESS IS GOVERNMENT OFFICE ONE NORTH EAST.

CONGRESS NOTES THAT THE COST OF FIRING UP THE BLAST FURNACE RUNS INTO MILLIONS OF POUNDS AND RECOGNISES THE PART OF ONE NORTH EAST IN PROVIDING TO BROKER A DEAL.

CONGRESS IS, THEREFORE, ALARMED AT THE CON-DEM GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS TO REIN BACK ON POWERS OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND FUNDING STREAMS.

CONGRESS, THEREFORE, CALLS UPON GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN THE FUNDING AND SUPPORT ONE NORTH EAST IN THE EFFORTS TO SAVE THOUSANDS OF JOBS ON TEESSIDE.

STOCKTON 3 ENGINEERING BRANCH
NORTHERN REGION

BRO. P. SAWDON (Northern): I move Emergency Motion 5: Government funding of the Regional Development Agencies – Save our Steel.

Congress, in May 2009 steel maker Corus announced that 150 years of production at the Redcar plant would come to an end. In December the company said the plant would be mothballed. As we know, after a desperate struggle by the workforce and community, steel production on Teesside has now ceased. At the time of the announcement by Corus, the then Business Secretary, Lord Mandelson, said: "This will be a very difficult time for the workforce." Well, colleagues, Peter Mandelson, the master of under-estimation, as we know, the effect on the workforce was not difficult but devastating. The impact on the wider Teesside and the north-east economy has now equal devastation. One thousand, seven hundred jobs have been lost at the Redcar plant, and a further 10,000, perhaps even 15,000 jobs will be lost in the wider economy.

Colleagues, as we all know, there were three further casualties of the closure. Both Gary Taylor, MP for Stockton South, and Vera Bird, MP for Redcar, lost their seats in the General Election. As Labour lost the election, Peter Mandelson also lost his job. In the cases of Vera Bird and Gary Taylor, who were both extremely hardworking MPs, they paid the price for the Government's inaction. To make matters worse, the new Con-Lib Coalition Government has announced more than £6 billion worth of cuts, and there will be more to come in the Budget later this month. The new Government cuts will run down the very regional development agencies One North East, which we need in the Northern Region to help retain jobs in the steelmaking industry. On Teesside we need the full resources of One North East to help our members and communities in their hour of need.

Congress, as the emergency motion makes clear, manufacturing and, in particular, the production of steel is the very heart of the national economy. Traditionally, the strength and wealth of the nation was measured not by the number of bankers it employed but by the millions of tonnes of steel it produced. By that measure, Congress, the UK now has an economy of a Third World nation. Colleagues, let's turn the tide and put the pride back into Teesside. Let's press the Government to help the funding of One North East. I urge you to support this emergency motion.

THE PRESIDENT: Conference, from now on, I will not be able to call in other speakers other than the movers and seconders to motions as we are getting short of time. I am sorry about that. Is that agreed? (*Agreed*)

BRO. R. SPEAKMAN (GMB Northern): I second the emergency motion on Save Our Steel. Congress, in the 1980s and the 1990s we, in the Northern Region, grew used to the callous indifference of the Tories. They closed our pits, they closed our shipyards and they closed our steel plants. Literally, hundreds of thousands of workers lost their jobs in response to the devastating crisis caused to our economy. The reaction was "If it's not hurting, it's not working and unemployment is a price worth paying." Colleagues, we got used to the Tories in the Northern Region and we know what to expect from them. However, when Tony Blair greeted a new dawn on the morning of 2nd May 1997, we had real hopes that our then Government, a Labour Government, would treat our region better.

Congress, unfortunately, those hopes were unfulfilled and, of course, our expectations were high, but when the crunch came and our Government had the opportunity to step in and save 1,700 jobs at Corus Teesside, they stood back and did nothing. There is now a new Government that is already showing how unfriendly it is to workers across the country. Their first announcement was to make cuts of more than £6 billion. These cuts will devastate the One North East Regional Development Agency.

Congress, steel creates wealth. It provides high quality employment. The Government needs to ensure that no stone is left unturned to ensure that steel production returns to Teesside. That includes giving our region the tools to keep the plant open. Colleagues, I urge you to support this motion.

THE PRESIDENT: I call Tommy Brennan, 'Mr. Newcastle'.

BRO. T. BRENNAN (Regional Secretary, Northern): Congress, I am speaking on behalf of the CEC and its support of Emergency Motion No. 5 on Government Funding of Regional Development Agencies – Save our Steel.

Congress, we are standing on the threshold of another industrial revolution with a potential of 1.5 million to 2 million jobs directly associated with the green agenda, and probably more. I use the word "potential" in the context of jobs for our communities, our people, our youngsters and the work is not 'whether or not', 'perhaps' or 'maybe' but an absolutely stone wall certainty. From wave to wind to nuclear and other renewables, as sure as night follows day, it is about warmth or cold, light or dark. But the real question

of these jobs, which are highly skilled, with added value and sustainable employment is where? Where will the new industries which are using the traditional skills emerge? Will it be in the United Kingdom or abroad and how? If we do not have the steel industry on Teesside and other parts of the UK, then how on earth shall we cope with the growing demand for steel? On wind power alone, just one giant windmill, taller than the Blackpool Tower, with a 250 feet blade span, sitting on a massive tubular structure on the seat bed, supporting a 350 tonnes generator, the mind just boggles when you think of the tens of thousands of these monsters around our shores! With the UK having the biggest shoreline in Europe, therefore it has the biggest potential. It is estimated that the steel required for these monsters will alone exceed the demands of the shipbuilding industry at its very peak. Think about it! Yet at the very same time the new Coalition, this new Government, is threatening to choke off the lifeline to the Corus plant on Teesside with threats to abolish the regional development agencies. This is at the very time when One North East is working tirelessly to save the Teesside plant and the jobs at stake. Yet the only body that has the financial resource and brief to assist in brokering a deal is under threat. Is that not absolute madness, particularly when the declaration of the newly found love for manufacturing was made by the new Morecambe & Wise, not Ant and Dec, those two fine upstanding Geordies who are Newcastle United supporters, without Cameron apologising for the murder of our steel, mining and shipbuilding industries in the '80s under Thatcher?

On Thatcher, and I say this with respect to John McDonnell, life and living requires a heart. I put it to Congress, has Margaret Thatcher got a heart? (*Calls of "No"*) Enough said. My serious and overriding concern is that if we do not produce the steel in UK plants then fabrication, manufacturing of engineering components and offshore installations will also go abroad and the jobs with it.

Congress, One North East should be unfettered. Give them the resources and the finances in an attempt to rescue the Corus Teesside plant is in our best interests -- negotiations are going on with two potential purchasers -- for the sake of our new jobs and our manufacturing future. Whilst we are not naturally fond of or support quangos, we see this as the only way forward to save our steel and to secure our future jobs in manufacturing for our children and grandchildren. Please support.

THE PRESIDENT: I will put Emergency 5. Does Northern Region accept the Statement? (*Agreed*) All those in favour, please show. Anyone against?

Emergency Motion 5 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: I want to say a thank you from me personally, and from Ava Knapp and the Jimmy Knapp Cancer Fund. The bucket collection raised £2,235. Thank you very much. (*Applause*) I know personally that Ava, who is not very well herself, has been ill for some time. She is now recovering. I know that when I take this bag to her, the first person she will write to is the General Secretary to thank you, the delegates, for your total support of the cancer fund. Thank you on her behalf. (*Applause*)

I call Gary Smith to move his report, pages 56-67.

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION REPORT

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

Section National Committee

Kevin Flanagan (President)	North West & Irish Region
Malcom Sage (Vice President)	Midlands & East Coast Region
Brian Adams	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Dave Clements	Southern Region
Kevin Crummey	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Elaine Daley	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Roy Dunnett	London Region
Gwyn Evans	South Western Region
Jean Foster	Southern Region
Peter Kane	Northern Region
Kath Manning	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Cathleen Murphy	GMB Scotland
Benjamin Rankin	GMB Scotland
Lena Sharp	London Region
Kathleen Slater	Midlands & East Coast Region

Section National Officers

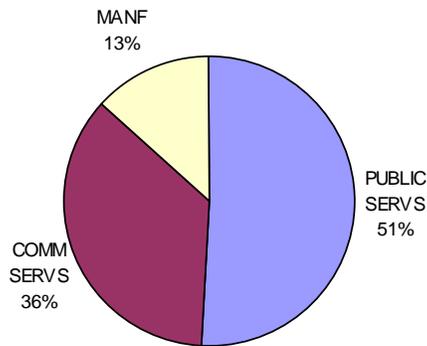
Gary Smith (National Secretary)
Jude Brimble
Mick Rix

Introduction

During 2009, the focus of the Commercial Services Section's work has been firmly based upon the GMB@work organising agenda. Workplace organisers in DHL, G4S, ASDA and British Gas staff have undertaken GMB@work initial training or follow-up courses. Progress reports have been provided to the Senior Management Team which have identified the measures needed at national, regional and workplace level to ensure the Union successfully pursues our organising and recruitment objectives within these companies.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the activists who have undertaken the training find GMB@work an essential tool, in terms of both developing workplace organisation and gaining a better understanding of the cultural changes that are taking place within the Union. Training courses are also being planned for key workplace organisers in a number of other target companies, as the Section further embraces the need to employ the GMB@Work approach to develop the strength of our workplace organisation and build membership within a wide variety of companies.

The Commercial Services Section membership stood at 162,333 in December 2008 and had risen to 164,925 by December 2009. This net increase of 2,592 members represented a membership growth of 1.6% for the Section during the year. The rate of overall GMB growth during the year was 0.1%. A total of 28,062 new members were recruited to the Section in the 12 months ending in December 2009, from a total of 78,375 new GMB members recruited during this period. The graph below shows that this represented 36% of the total number of new members recruited by GMB.



Sectional Recruitment for 12 months ending December 2009

2009 was a particularly difficult year for many working people, as the UK economy suffered from the effects of a recession caused by the greedy, reckless and selfish behaviour of senior bankers. Much of the Section's work was therefore focused on mitigating the effect of this economic turmoil upon GMB members. Many employers sought to impose pay freezes on our members as a result of the recession, regardless of whether their company's financial situation justified this. Where there was no justification for such a course of action, GMB negotiators resisted these management attempts to exploit the recession in order to attack the terms and conditions of our members, and some very successful pay deals were negotiated throughout the year.

Most of the year was also spent fighting to protect members' security of employment. In view of the recession, a very significant achievement was that compulsory redundancies were not an issue in many of the industries within the Commercial Services Section. Particularly in aviation, and the road transport, logistics and distribution sector, the hard work of officers and shop stewards ensured that there were relatively few job losses, and those that did occur were achieved through voluntary means.

ASDA Distribution

The campaign to gain recognition at ASDA distribution depots had some very notable successes throughout the year. In the autumn of 2009 we successfully undertook a further recognition ballot at the Wakefield distribution site. As referred to at last year's Congress, but which occurred too late for mention in the written report, GMB also secured recognition at the Bedford site in the spring of 2009. The success of these recognition campaigns is a tribute to all those who worked so hard to build GMB organisation within these workplaces. At the time of writing this report, we are about to commence the recognition process at IDC Lutterworth in the Midland & East Coast Region.

The progress that has been made over recognition in the last 2 years, along with the collective discipline shown by the shop stewards at site, NSSF and NJC level, has had a significant impact on our relations with ASDA distribution management. The NJC is functioning as a far more cohesive body and in the past year we have seen the establishment of a National Health and Safety Committee, which in ASDA terms does represent a significant breakthrough.

In line with the policy and approach developed by the distribution shop stewards, we have continued to push for national bargaining in ASDA Distribution. We undertook a consultative ballot of all our members in distribution on whether members would support national as opposed to site bargaining. The campaign exercise that the shop stewards undertook on national bargaining was welcomed by the membership and we had a resounding 95% vote in favour of the move to national pay bargaining.

At the time of writing this report, we have submitted a national pay claim for the first time in ASDA distribution. After protracted discussions, the company has agreed to move forward on national bargaining.

In Wal-Mart terms, this represents an almost revolutionary development. Progressing national pay talks will be very challenging and it will take time. However, the fact that the company has finally agreed to open talks is testament to all the hard work of the shop stewards and officers over many years.

ASDA Stores

At ASDA stores, the recruitment figures for 2009 suggest that, in particular, we are continuing to see the benefits of GMB@work training. Great credit goes to the stores shop stewards, who despite the lack of proper access under the current agreements, continue to build the membership throughout stores. It is also heartening to see a new layer of activists starting to come through in some regions as a result of our campaigning work. There is no doubt the direct mailings which have been distributed to members centrally have had a significant impact on recruitment too.

The theme of the ASDA stores conference was organising around safety. As in distribution, health and safety remains an area of significant concern. In 2009 we saw the establishment of a new National Forum for stores. Under the new structures the National Forum has been up-weighted from the company side, and the Operations Director now attends the forum, which was not the case previously. GMB now has an additional seat on the forum too. The efforts of the shop stewards on the National Forum have ensured that the level of consultation, whilst far from perfect, has improved.

A major campaign for ASDA stores in late 2009 was around the issue of how the Boxing Day bank holiday was designated by the company. After a high profile campaign, through which we recruited members, the company changed its position on the Boxing Day bank holiday issue, which resulted in members receiving premium pay for that day which would otherwise have been denied to them. At the time of writing, we are continuing to progress the night pay campaign. The company unilaterally changed night pay provision. A national grievance will be submitted and progressed on behalf of ASDA stores night workers, who are due to lose out significantly over the next few years as a result of the changes to how they are paid.

Energy

Energy continues to be a major issue facing the country. There is a real and growing threat of energy shortages, and the debate about the country's energy needs is likely to intensify over the coming year. The Commercial Services Section makes a strong and influential contribution to the energy debate, through political lobbying, correspondence and meetings with Ministers and the regulator (Ofgem), through the press, and in response to the consultation documents that are regularly published. The Union has persistently called for action to be taken, in accordance with Congress policy, to curb excess profits, regulate the energy market more effectively, and control prices for energy consumers.

Unfortunately, the slavish adherence to a laissez-faire approach to energy has placed energy companies into a very strong bargaining position with Government - the threat being that if Government interferes in the profits enjoyed by energy companies, they will take their money elsewhere and refuse to invest in the UK's energy infrastructure.

Smart metering and the development of the smart grid pose huge opportunities for the development of so called green jobs. GMB is supporting the investment in smart metering and the electricity infrastructure. The Union has made strong representations to the Government and Ofgem, which will oversee the smart metering programme. However the full implications for electricity prices from the planned investment, as well as subsidies for renewables, have yet to be fully explained. There remains a risk that the full planned investment and subsidies could be jeopardised by soaring price increases to consumers.

GMB has been consistently and particularly critical of the lack of a strategic plan for gas. The vast majority of homes in the UK use gas for both heating and cooking. We have been critical in public of the obsession by some Government officials about "clean electricity" whilst failing to properly consider the future role of

gas. A delegation of gas distribution shop stewards met with the Energy Minister to press the case for gas. The lack of storage capacity combined with our increasing dependency on imported gas means the country is in desperate need of a strategic plan for gas.

Whilst GMB has consistently argued for the development of clean coal technology, there is now a chance for a serious debate about the use of the country's indigenous coal reserves to again produce gas.

Ofgem

Members in the regulated energy sector will be aware of GMB's high profile campaign, in accordance with Motion 79 of Congress 2009, concerning Ofgem (the energy regulator) enquiring into pension provision across the industry. As part of our campaign, every GMB Member of Parliament was contacted and we also met with all the Ministers at the Department of Energy and Climate Change. GMB moved motions on the issue of Ofgem and pensions at both TUC Congress and Labour Party Conference. GMB also made a presentation at an Ofgem seminar on pensions, submitted robust responses to all the consultation documents that Ofgem issued on pensions, and took up the issues directly in meetings and correspondence with the Ofgem Chief Executive.

In compliance with Composite Motion 5 and Motions 80, 81, 82, 83, 84 and 86 of Congress 2009, GMB has continued to be very outspoken in our criticisms of Ofgem in relation to energy prices and the regulator's failure to take effective action to protect energy consumers. After years of dismissing GMB's concerns and claiming the market was working well, early 2010 saw an incredible about-turn by Ofgem, as the regulator published a report that finally admitted that the liberalisation and the privatised energy market has not delivered, either in terms of price or security of supply. Ofgem also opened up the prospect of a state-owned company being used to purchase gas from abroad. Ofgem has tacitly accepted the position put forward for very many years by the Union and has opened up the opportunity for a radically different debate about how we meet the country's future energy needs.

British Gas

In the past year we have seen the announcement of the creation of One British Gas. This represents the coming together of British Gas Business, Energy and Services, which will have profound implications for jobs. There have been several hundred redundancies at the time of writing, but we believe that many more are planned. The company has rubbished GMB claims that massive redundancies and site closures are in the pipeline. However, senior management have failed to respond to the Union's demands to rule out any compulsory redundancies or site closures.

As a result of a GMB@Work course for British Gas staff workplace organisers, it was decided to carry out a questionnaire survey of members' opinions and views. The company has always made great play of the fact that their own employee engagement surveys say that British Gas is great place to work, but GMB workplace organisers believed that the company's survey did not reflect the reality of working for the company. The questionnaire was subsequently extended to cover the industrial membership too.

The response to GMB's survey was massive, with almost 3,000 British Gas employees returning questionnaires. The survey clearly identified a problem with the growing bullying management culture within British Gas which is in line with the Managing Director's style. Nearly 300 respondents also expressed an interest in becoming workplace organisers. The survey gave the Union a very clear indication of the depth of feeling amongst engineers about the way that the British Gas performance management process, and other changes to working practices, were putting the engineer workforce under intolerable pressure.

At the time of preparing this report, we are about to ballot our engineer membership for industrial action. It is clear that the Managing Director of One British Gas is vehemently anti-union and anti-GMB in particular. He does not like the type of challenge an independent union poses. We have produced a number of direct

mailings to our membership seeking support for a campaign against the management culture introduced by the Managing Director, Phil Bentley. The campaign is high profile, with a specific GMB website launched for gas engineers and meetings taking place around the country.

Our campaigning activity has meant that GMB has seldom had a higher profile amongst British Gas employees, and amongst staff in particular. We are making good progress on developing the membership and workplace organisation both on the staff and industrial side.

The pay talks for British Gas Industrials are due following the 2 year deal reported on at the last Congress. The formula for staff delivered a 1.8% pay increase, although the company has unilaterally sought to change the anniversary date which would diminish the value of the deal. GMB is opposing the company's attempt to make this change.

Gas Distribution: National Grid

The gas distribution industry has had a difficult year, due to the Ofgem funding formula of RPI minus, as well as the costs of servicing debt and borrowing for investment. United Utilities have signalled their intent to pull out of the industry altogether. United Utilities did have a significant stake in Northern Gas Networks.

The most significant campaign with National Grid was in relation to their planned changes to their Shared Services operations. The company announced its intention to offshore hundreds of jobs with the greatest impact being felt at Newcastle. In accordance with Emergency Motion 2 (National Grid Greed) at Congress 2009, GMB launched a high profile campaign in defence of the Newcastle site which employs around 189 workers. Motions under the slogan "National Greed" were moved at TUC and Labour Party Conferences in defence of the Newcastle workforce and a website was launched in support of the campaign.

The campaign received local and national media attention. A half-day of strike action and a demonstration was held in Newcastle city centre. The Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA), which represents National Grid workers in Massachusetts, also offered the campaign terrific support. Unfortunately, despite all our efforts the closure is to go ahead. However, we did manage to negotiate significantly enhanced terms for the Newcastle workforce. The fight that GMB put up was well received by the members involved.

GMB has also submitted a formal complaint to the Information Commissioner about Ofgem's failure to respond to our request, made under the Freedom Of Information Act, to provide the Union with copies of correspondence between Ofgem and the Chief Executive of National Grid regarding the future of the Newcastle site. The result of this complaint is currently awaited.

The Transmission side of the business, which includes our staff membership, PMC and electrical industrials, settled for a 1.3% pay increase.

On the gas operations side of the company we have continued to bed in the GO21 agreement which has been in place for a few years. Whilst the winter period has been exceptionally busy we have ongoing worries about workloads. The loss of meterwork is a major concern. There were significant periods of time throughout the summer when our members had no work. The focus in our negotiations continues to be protecting direct labour and the enhanced pension provision enjoyed by many of our gas industrial members.

The membership in gas operations settled for a 1.25% increase for each of the next 3 years. If inflation is a significant issue moving into 2010 there is an opportunity to re-open talks. There are also improvements to payments for those who are required to work in higher uplift areas. Very significantly, a number of long-term contractors were given permanent contracts of employment under the deal. There will be a fundamental review of the position with long-term contractors involving GMB in the spring of this year.

The Nuclear Industry

Throughout the last year, GMB has continued to make the case for a balanced energy policy that includes nuclear power as a low-carbon source of energy supply. In addition to supporting the need for nuclear new build in our responses to consultations on the UK's future energy needs, Ministers were specifically lobbied on the need to ensure for a future role for Sellafield.

Wilkinson stores

Responsibility for negotiations at Wilkinson stores passed to national level during 2009. This is testament to the success of the activists and officers in building the union membership throughout Wilkinsons. There have been some radical changes to the way the business operates, bringing the company into line with how most other retailers now operate. This change had significant implications for jobs, but due to the hard work and influence of our workplace organisers, the vast majority of the potential job losses were avoided.

A pay rise of 3.6% was negotiated for members in Wilkinson. This was one of the best pay deals of 2009, not only in retail, but across the whole economy. As we move forward and build membership throughout Wilkinsons, our goal during 2010 is to strengthen our current agreements and deepen our workplace organisation. At the time of writing, industrial relations with the company are positive. Given the ongoing tough economic environment, and the challenges that will no doubt emerge in a very competitive retail sector, a commitment from the company to working together will be important.

The Security Industry

The security industry remains a high priority for GMB, with massive membership potential, despite the fact that over the last six months we have seen companies in the industry not taking on new starters. This has meant refocusing our organising work to consolidate the existing workforce. Work is ongoing to secure new recognition agreements, and discussions are well developed in two major 'blue chip' companies, each employing some 3,500 security officers. Securing new agreements will not only increase potential membership but will also ensure GMB broadens our influence within the industry and retains our position as the lead union within security.

Across the whole security sector we have seen significant contracts being won and lost as customers pursue aggressive price reductions. A number of companies are clearly engaged in a price 'war' in an effort to win and keep contracts. Whilst we have not yet seen significant job losses, there are signs that this will start to impact during 2010. Many members have already been affected by a reduction in working hours and changes to working practices, and whilst this has ensured job retention it has also meant significant loss of income for many members.

At the time of writing, a new GMB national campaign is due to be launched at the House of Commons called SafeGuard. Initiated by activists in the security industry, the focus of the campaign will be to reduce attacks against security officers undertaking traditional guarding roles. The campaign is a result of the sharp increase in the level of abuse and violent attacks taking place against security officers in public buildings.

The campaign is very much member-led and has been developed by a number of reps from the new National Negotiating Committees within G4S and Securitas. Members are calling for employers to improve their employment and welfare practices in static guarding as, unlike the CVIT sector, such provisions are woefully inadequate. Many GMB members, having been hurt in violent attacks, all too often find themselves abandoned by their employer and incurring financial hardship whilst unable to work, with little support or counselling to deal with their physical injuries and trauma.

New organising materials have been launched for the security industry, and at the time of writing a new national security website is in the final stages of development. The website will be a major improvement in

how we communicate with security members, who often work in isolation. 60% of our membership also work nights, and therefore we need a 24/7 communication base. The majority of security officers work electronically and many will have easy access to the internet; so we must harness the use of electronic communication to maximum effect within all areas of security.

In line with Motion 173 of Congress 2009, a new GMB 'pocket' guide on the issue of police cautions and contacts for legal advice is currently being developed for all security workers. As the SIA consider cautions as part of the licensing process, members may inadvertently exclude themselves from passing the vetting process by accepting a police caution without being fully aware of the possible consequences.

The issue of exploitation of EEC workers within the security industry has been looked at within GMB organised companies (in line with Motion 56 of Congress 2009). Although we have not found any specific evidence that workers from EEC countries are being employed on lower pay or terms and conditions, we remain vigilant over any attempts to exploit such workers and undermine existing agreements.

G4S Secure Solutions

Secure Solutions remains the largest sector of G4S, currently employing some 20,000 security officers across eight divisions. The workforces are spread across some 5,000+ sites. After two years of consistently focusing on the collective bargaining structures within the company, these are now all established. Some are more developed than others, but all are now underway. Importantly, many more of our members are now having a real say about their pay and conditions. However, challenges still exist on achieving this in the small regional contracts, where the majority of pay is still linked to uplifts in the contract price mechanism.

National negotiations continue on implementing sick pay and injury on duty schemes, with some contract areas achieving this during 2009 as part of various pay deals. As negotiations develop on these two areas of work they will be a central part of the organising strategy, along with the SafeGuard campaign, and present a significant opportunity to grow the membership as some 70% of the workforce would benefit. The organising strategy here needs to ensure the success of our negotiations will be matched by the success of membership growth.

In regard to national pay negotiations for the Trillium contract, which is the largest and covers security at job centre plus sites, the two-year pay deal secured early in 2009 was pulled by the company, after a change of ownership and massive price reductions being demanded by the new owners, Telereal. Following a number of disputes hearings, a new deal was secured which delivered a 2% increase for 2009 plus a further 0.5% in 2010, and the opening of pay talks. A sick pay scheme was also agreed. The new offer was overwhelming accepted by the membership.

Other national pay negotiations resulted in the following outcomes: in Monitoring and Response, a one-year deal for 2010 resulted in a pay increase of 1.8% and improvements to the Injury on Duty Scheme, which were overwhelming accepted by members in a ballot; RBS received the second year on a long-term deal which resulted in a 2% increase for 2010; The Olympics site was balloted on and accepted a 1.5% increase.

Within Aviation we have seen significant loss of contracts, with G4S losing Bristol, Norwich, and London City airports, and some work at Manchester airport. This division of G4S is still currently in a loss-making situation and members are under extreme pressure to change working practices and deliver greater flexibility, in a very demanding area of airport security. Aviation Services are due to move back to airport contract-level negotiations on pay for 2010. Within G4S events, discussions are underway to address the issue of zero hours contracts. GMB has also registered opposition to plans within G4S Aviation Services to introduce zero hours contracts. At the time of writing, letters were also going to the BSIA to open talks on this issue (in line with Motion 89 of Congress 2009).

The network of shop stewards within G4S Secure Solutions continues to grow, and we are now represented in every division with over 130 workplace organisers. The NOT team also continues to support the organising agenda with a GMB@Work course and follow-on training now completed by 30 senior workplace organisers. New recruitment materials for the security industry have been developed, and national and regional organising strategies are now in place.

A new monthly GMB@Work organisers briefing has now been set up and is run by the National Negotiating Committee. This briefing is circulated to all workplace organisers and is designed to share best practice, promote organising and keep the divisions informed on negotiations across the company.

At the time of writing a national briefing was also being developed, with the aim to having a quarterly mailshot direct to members during 2010. All mailshots will include a membership form, to encourage existing members to sign up a work colleague.

G4S Care and Justice

GMB continues to be the lead union in this division following the acquisition of GSL, currently represented in prisons, court services, inter-prison transport, police custody suites and electronic monitoring.

In court services and inter-prison transport a pay freeze was implemented during 2009. However, the NJCC were able to secure a one-off lump sum payment and improvements to the linked sick pay scheme.

Specific recruitment materials for this division of G4S were being developed at the time of writing, as a significant opportunity exists for membership growth through consolidation. A GMB@Work course is also planned for workplace organisers in this division. GMB does have access to induction sessions, but no significant numbers of new starters are being taken on. When they have been, sign-up rates through induction sessions have remained high.

Within the private prisons, the second year of a three-year deal has been honoured. This delivers a 4% pay award in 2010 and a further 3% will follow in 2011.

In line with Congress policy, we have continued to work on the issue of Section 127 of the Criminal Justice Act. There has been a series of meetings with the Justice Secretary and Special Advisors. We are also now looking at the recent developments in the European Court of Human Rights, where there have been some favourable decisions on the right to strike. We are also currently looking at the ILO recommendations for Governments to establish compensatory measures for workers covered by Section 127, to see if this offers some movement to our members bound by the constraints.

G4S Cash and Valuables in Transit (CVIT)

GMB continues to take the lead on the high profile campaign about attacks on security personnel in the CVIT Sector. The overall level of attacks remains too high but, as a direct result of our campaign and the political pressure brought to bear on police forces, some of the specific areas with a history of high attacks have seen a reduction in the number of attacks. Due to the economic downturn, the overall number of attacks rose again in the last quarter of 2009, but in recent months we have seen those figures fluctuate quite dramatically. GMB continues to participate in the Home Office roundtable meetings, which are chaired by the Minister, as part of the strategy to deal with attacks, and play an active part in the sub-groups that link into those talks.

Through these groups GMB has continued to make representations on parking restrictions for CVIT vehicles (in line with Motion 87 of Congress 2009). As a result of our work, the Home Office Minister and the Transport Minister have written to every local authority reminding them of their obligations relating to parking

for CVIT Vehicles. Memorandums of Agreement have now been signed with Transport for London, City of London, and Westminster Council. Draft agreements are in place with Camden and Newham Councils. Work is ongoing on this issue and GMB has recently sent out a further joint letter with the BSIA to all local authorities nationwide to ensure the focus on this issue spreads outside of the London Boroughs. GMB also submitted a document to the Government calling for better consideration of the need to protect CVIT workers from attack when planning the location of ATMs.

A further successful CVIT Conference was held on 12/13 January 2010. This was attended by 76 delegates, senior police officers, industrial speakers and Under Secretary of State from the Home Office, Alan Campbell, MP. This was the first year that all the key companies in the sector attended, and is a reflection on how GMB is now getting wider engagement and commitment from employers within the industry on this issue.

The first compensation/welfare scheme set up in G4S continues to go from strength to strength and is well supported by members, who contribute directly to the scheme. The rules governing the scheme have recently been changed to allow for more members to benefit following attacks, which may still result in serious injury, but may not in themselves be life-changing. At the time of writing, the scheme had funds of just over £1.4 million, which is money that will go directly to members injured in CVIT attacks.

National pay negotiations in 2009 delivered a 2% pay increase with new agreements on flexibility, and redundancy mitigation. At the time of writing pay talks were just about to open for 2010.

Despite the redundancy mitigation process, we are now seeing job losses in CVIT. A further 300+ crew are currently at risk as a result of HBOS taking some elements of work in house, as part of their own cost-cutting exercise. In addition to this, G4S has already imposed a pay freeze across all admin, clerical and managerial grades within cash services for 2010.

Securitas

The national dispute in relation to the payment of SIA licenses was finally resolved with all GMB members having their money reimbursed and Securitas now agreeing to fund all SIA licenses and training. Despite this important win, this did not deliver as many new members as it should have done, and we still need to develop GMB@Work within this company.

On a positive note, the National Negotiating Committee has now been established, with local committees in the process of being set up, and discussions are now taking place on how we develop pay negotiations across the various contracts.

At the time of writing 3,500 GMB recruitment letters were being distributed as a direct mailshot to every employee, via the companies mailing house. GMB continued to have access to the company induction sessions. Although the number of new recruits has reduced significantly, again where inductions are taking place our sign-up rate remains high.

The focus during 2010 will be to develop the shop stewards network, map out the workforce and develop the negotiating and organising strategy, and deliver GMB@work to key activists. We will be using best practice established in G4S to ensure strong focus is maintained here via the workplace organiser network.

Loomis

Loomis remains the second largest CVIT Company in the UK. The business environment for Loomis remains very challenging. As a result, there have been job losses and the Company has restructured further, with the loss of a cash centre and supervisory grades within the depots. Despite the company looking to withdraw the last part of a long-term pay deal in 2009, this was eventually secured with crew operatives now on £10 per hour.

The company is currently trialling new ways of working in ATM areas, which they believe will deliver greater safety for workers, but are seen as controversial in the industry. GMB members are involved in two depots; a ballot will take place on the new working practices in April 2010.

Loomis has responded favourably to GMB's request to establish an attacks fund, similar to that operated in G4S, and talks are due to start later this year.

Our membership penetration needs to be drastically improved and the opportunity to consolidate from the existing workforce needs to be realised. The company has agreed to support a national GMB@Work course for all GMB workplace organisers and we are aiming to deliver this later this year.

Security Plus

Security Plus remains a family owned business, but is now the third largest operator within the industry employing some six hundred people, whilst growing its business in Scotland and South West. The economic impact on the retail industry continues to take its toll, as this is the main focus of the company's cash in transit work. 2009 saw a pay freeze imposed and our members reduced to core contract hours, as a way to ensure job security.

At the time of writing, pay talks were in the early stages, with a long-term deal being looked at. Negotiations were also taking place on drastically improving conditions of employment, to bring them into line with the industry 'norm'. Security Plus are about 25% behind the rest of the industry in terms of pay rates and their employment conditions are poor. Again, any success we achieve in these negotiations needs to be linked to the organising strategy, so that it is GMB members who gain and not the vast majority who have still yet to join the Union.

Skills for Security

GMB continues to maintain a high profile on the skills body, and has actively engaged with the SIA through this avenue. We have attended a number of national conferences and have ensured that the GMB agenda of raising standards, training and pay has been repeatedly brought to the attention of employers within the industry.

Road Transport and Logistics Sector

The newly formed Road Transport & Logistics national committee has met and agreed its work and organising programme for the next year. Issues of concern to the membership across the different companies in the sector include the increase in casual and owner-driver status within the industry, amendments to the Working Time Directive for road transport employees, CPC training, health and safety and issues of sleep deprivation and driver fatigue, VOSA medical conditions, along with the way that companies are resisting unionisation and representation. A work programme has been agreed by the committee to help our members and stewards.

It is further intended to undertake a mapping exercise of our members employers. This will help to identify and formulate future organising activity in this sector.

DHL Express Domestic & Hubs (HDNL – DHL Domestic Parcelpoint)

The company has a cumulative deficit of around a quarter of a billion euros. In 2008/09 a further 86m euro deficit was recorded. The company still faces an uphill struggle in the domestic market, due in part to massive competition (the UK market is the most competitive in Europe, and the fourth largest market globally). Also, the vast increase in internet shopping has brought a huge increase in small home delivered volumes, as opposed to bulk business delivery volumes to the high street. This is leading towards further

casualisation of employment for the last mile drop, as small, single, light packages delivered to homes are very costly, as opposed to bulk delivery to the high street, retail parks or homes.

In early 2010, DHL Express decided to sell its UK domestic business to HDNL. Which is part of the private equity owned portfolio of businesses of the reclusive Barclay Brothers. This will mean the transfer of 71 service centres and 5 hubs and a call centre. Around 5,500 employees in total are affected. Full consultation has taken place.

Protecting member's employment has been a priority in this company. Due to company restructurings, around 350 posts have been reduced. These were dealt with in a number of ways. Some members did take advantage of the voluntary severance terms. We created a new agreement for reduced hours, which paid employees 1.5 times weeks per year, plus 15% of their salary, if they cut their hours, or changed shifts, allowing the company not to make redundancies and retaining skills and jobs in the right place for the business.

After seeking approval from members, the 2009 pay and conditions agreement was only part implemented. The 2.5% basic pay increase element of the package was deferred until 1st January 2010. All other allowances and scheduled increases were paid. At the time of this report being prepared the membership were being consulted on the 2.5% increase in allowances for 2010, a 1% cash bonus by way of a thank you for their efforts in 2009, and increases in sick pay periods for those with qualifying service for a further 26 weeks.

The review and regrading process of Managerial, Admin and Clerical grades is now under way. Along with the review of the PRS bonus agreement for couriers, aimed at bringing increases in payments to drop rates for our members.

DHL Freight

During the latter part of 2007, DHL Freight was created as a delineated company from DHL Express, which transferred two of our national bargaining units, DHL Domestic ECO and DHL Connect into this sector. The coupling of the DHL ECO sector with the DHL ECO international sector brought new groups of LGV drivers for the other parcel distribution networks of DHL International division. As previously reported to Congress 2007, the main focus was to tap into these new growth areas of DHL business. As a result we have just secured recognition in one of these areas, and we are now also near to securing recognition in DHL ECO International, which is the distribution network for DHL Express International in the UK.

At the time of compiling this report, pay negotiations for DHL Freight ECO and DHL Freight Connect were underway.

DHL Express International

It remains the case that we would like to be the union of choice for those that work in the whole of DHL Express International. However, until we have properly consolidated the membership levels in the Express Domestic and Freight businesses, our priority must remain the union-recognised parts of the business.

GMB@Work in DHL

The early part of 2009 saw membership levels increase, due in part to a new stewards network. However, due to a variety of reasons, membership then fell during the third and fourth quarters of 2009. This was very disappointing, and undermined the splendid work of the first and second quarters of 2009. Since then we have undertaken various measures to rectify this disappointment. At present, a new robust organising plan has been agreed with our senior stewards. The main targets of this plan are the domestic hubs and call centre operations.

Wincanton AP contracts

Conditions for both the cylinder and bulk contracts were affected in 2009. Although it was clear that the company was having problems with its contracts due to the downturn, its management started to display some characteristics that were quite unpleasant. Some of our Reps, we believe, were targeted by some of the management team.

The company could not agree how and what it wanted to do for the future, in respect of the 2009 pay negotiations. This resulted in the Union withdrawing our claims, and refusing to discuss the company's proposals. The company also acted in bad faith by placing an incorrect interpretation onto the national agreement on redundancy pay. This resulted in various applications to employment tribunals. As a result of various incidents of industrial unrest taking place, we held a consultative ballot of our members. There was a 100% turnout, with 98% voting in favour to take industrial action. This brought the company back to the negotiating table, where the company reintroduced the correct payments, and paid those individuals correctly, but also agreed to some valuable changes to other important national agreements with the company.

At the time of writing this report, the arrangements for the 2010 pay and conditions were still being finalised and subject to member and steward consultation.

3663

Changes to the national agreement were agreed by the company in 2009. We now have a proper stewards national negotiating committee, with a defined agenda for meetings. However the private equity owned company had started to cut its number of depots due to a downturn in demand for its goods. The company also announced its intention to re-open the agreed pay deal of 3.25%, stating it could not afford to pay. This has resulted in a number of meetings, which resulted in the company putting forward alternatives. At the time of writing this report a consultative ballot of the members was underway.

The Aviation Sector

Aviation has become a soft target for those who are misguided enough to believe that a complete end to flying will solve the global warming crisis. This has included various extreme groupings, from both ends of the political spectrum, having an alliance with the Tories, and so-called greens forming direct action groups against the planned new runways for Heathrow Airport and Stanstead. Both of these projects are fully supported by GMB, and the thousands of GMB and other trade unions' members that earn their living at these locations.

We clearly recognise that there are issues with CO2 emissions and noise pollution. However, the better companies (usually unionised) in the industry are working towards meeting international and national targets to reduce emissions. One example of this is British Airways placing orders for the Airbus A380 which has greatly reduced CO2 emissions, and lower engine noise. Recently, companies have run test flights which are powered using biofuels, which could lead to further reductions and cleaner flights.

The industry, working in conjunction with our stewards, has introduced new methods of ground transportation for employees that help reduce the carbon footprint of the company. We continue to meet with industry and the Government on these matters, and we also meet with those that are politically opposed to aviation and modernisation of our airports' infrastructure. We do see the sense in Government taking the initiative to ensure the development and use of public transport to airports to further reduce carbon emissions from excessive road usage at the airports. This will improve the environment surrounding airports, notably Heathrow, and help to create cleaner air quality for those local communities. To enable these initiatives to become a reality, we believe that sustained investment is needed in public transport, to create new public transport links to our airports, most notably high speed rail, and other heavy and light rail developments.

GMB@Work in Aviation

At the time of writing this report, an Aviation Sector national committee is at last being created. This committee will concentrate on working to a defined national work programme for improving conditions for our members, as well as campaigning against the race to bottom and the neo-liberal conditions of cut-throat competition causing contract changes and continuous TUPE transfers. The national committee will also be concentrating on creating "airport workplace stewards organising committees" to map out membership growth potential and identify organising opportunities. Despite recent redundancies in the aviation sector, a huge potential for membership growth still exists.

Identity Cards

In accordance with Emergency Motion 5 of Congress 2009, GMB continued to oppose the Government's plans to introduce compulsory ID cards for aviation workers. Several meetings were held with Ministers and Home Office officials to successfully put our views forward. As a result, although the Government is pressing ahead with the roll-out of ID cards, these will no longer be a compulsory requirement for airside aviation workers.

From 30 November 2009, identity cards became available, purely on a voluntary basis, to all airside workers at Manchester and London City airports. The Government and industry in partnership will assess the benefits of these through an 18 month evaluation period. During the evaluation period airside worker identity cards will be issued at no charge and a fund has been made available to support pre-employment checking and airside pass issuing infrastructure and process improvements.

Ground Handling

In recent years low-cost ground handling companies (prompted by the carriers) have created a race to the bottom approach which is bringing about major potential issues of conflict, and job insecurity, for our members. Contracts negotiated by these companies based on lowest price, and undercutting, have resulted in ground handlers negotiating contracts that are huge loss-makers, thus attacking our members terms and conditions. The price wars have caused major problems for unionised companies such as Aviance and Servisair.

Towards the end of 2009, Aviance announced that it was selling two-thirds of its business to Servisair. This involved contracts at regional airports and Heathrow (except T1). This has caused worry and anxiety to our members in the former Aviance. However, due to our national recognition agreement and long standing relationship with Servisair, we have worked hard to try and dispel those worries.

Servisair

At the time of writing this report, meetings of our stewards were being convened to begin preparing the 2010 pay claim. Meetings with the company on the further integration of the former Aviance members into the national agreements are to continue.

British Airways

BA has continued to receive high profile news coverage, much for the wrong reasons. BA is a much loved iconic and UK flag-flying institution. However, it has lurched from financial crisis to financial crisis in the last twelve months. As a premium airline, the downturn in the economy and the reduction of premium paying flyers and business travellers has resulted in cumulative losses close to £1 billion.

The company's cash-burn situation resulted in many scaremongering stories, and resulted in concerns being expressed by GMB that the company was talking itself down. We had a very successful lobby of the shareholders meeting, and produced a very good letter which was handed to shareholders. So successful was the handout to shareholders that many of them raised our concerns in the meeting, which resulted in

the Chairman of BA publicly agreeing with many of the points we raised. Our shareholders event received very high publicity here in the UK and globally, due to the efforts of GMB's communications department to acquire some lemmings as part of the publicity stunt.

The company wants to introduce drastic cuts in staffing levels at terminals, and amongst cabin crew. Cuts and reorganisations have already taken place in its head office. New orders for aircraft have been deferred, along with thousands of contracts being looked at to introduce reductions in price and charges. The company pensions deficit has grown, with its pension schemes having a £3.5bn deficit. At the time of writing this report, negotiations were continuing on the pension scheme deficits. Negotiations, which have now lasted for over 12 months on staffing levels and reductions (including T&C's), were still ongoing with the company. A few mass meetings of members have taken place, with one particular meeting attracting over a thousand terminals based staff to the meeting.

The proposed merger with Spain's major airline, Iberia, may pose some challenges for the future. In particular, over £400m of synergies have been studied. Although this may cause further worry and uncertainty to our members, the fact that BA is being strangled by cut-throat competition, and the "open skies" agreement, plus the downturn in the economy and the shift from premium travel to lower-cost forms of travel should help secure its future as a company for the next 20 years.

Our stewards continue to self-organise themselves to a high standard. We have had increases in new stewards at both the terminals in Heathrow and Gatwick. Our terminals branch now has a very good website, twitter and more traditional communications process for our members. By increasing our levels of representation and communication, we will hopefully create new increases in membership.

BMI

BMI, the UK's second-largest premium carrier, has also suffered many problems. Early in 2009 the airline withdrew from many UK regional airports.

In 2009, we agreed to defer the pay rise until 2010 due to the severe economic problems of the company. This helped the company parade itself for takeover, which resulted in Lufthansa taking full control of the struggling airline. The airline's new owners agreed to an immediate cash injection of £95m, if a restructuring plan was introduced, to save the airline from going under. This meant that 500 redundancies were sought, with many coming from the engineering, flight deck and aircrew communities, with some reductions in the terminals, offices and operations communities. Our stewards worked very hard to ensure no compulsory redundancies took place. As a result of the companies finances the final salary pension scheme was closed to new accrual. Negotiations did take place on the creation of a DC scheme.

The GMB regions have increased our organisational capability in the company. We now have reps at both of Scotland's principal airports, along with new stewards at Heathrow. The company are continuing to develop a closer relationship nationally with GMB.

British Energy / EDF

Despite efforts by the company to undermine the unions in British Energy, we sought the views of our members in a ballot, who voted overwhelmingly to undertake industrial action. As a result, the company came back to the negotiating table, and eventually, in conjunction along with the other unions, we concluded a one-year pay deal with no strings which included 3% on base pay and all flow throughs.

To enable better organisation to be developed, a meeting took place early in 2010 with all the senior stewards from the different companies within EDF. A future programme of GMB inter-union activity and meetings has now been agreed.

Water

The water industry continues to attract huge profits. In 2009, the companies collectively made operating profits of over £3 billion. Yet when the industry regulator (Ofwat) proposed to look at consumer interests and bring bills down, the howls of protest signalled a break-down in the traditional consensus between Ofwat and the water companies, with the industry as a whole publicly criticising the regulator. The industry also claimed that if it were to put in place the regulators proposals this would entail companies outsourcing and downsizing.

GMB secured meetings with the Secretary of State, Hillary Benn, where we put forward our views. We also took the Government to task for its support for the recommendations of the Cave Report for increasing competition in the water industry, which was being consulted on by DEFRA. GMB is the only trade union operating in the water industry which consistently calls for the return of the industry to public ownership, in line with GMB policy.

A very successful water conference was held for shop stewards. The first day of the conference was held in Parliament. The Minister for Water was the keynote speaker, and there were other speakers from Ofwat, the Parliamentary All-Party Group on Water, CC Water (representing consumers) and Greenwich University. The second day focused on identifying the organising and industrial priorities for the water industry and included an introduction to the GMB@Work organising agenda.

Our stewards helped to create an enthusiastic conference. As a result of such a successful conference, a national water shop stewards combine was created. A work programme has been looked at, with an emphasis on mapping the industry and looking at infill opportunities.

(Adopted)

BRO. G. SMITH (National Secretary, Commercial Services): Congress, I move pages 56-67 in the General Secretary's Report and, under pressure from Standing Orders, I will give you a very brief review of what happened at yesterday's Commercial Services Conference.

Congress, the Section Committee resolved that the Conference would be a lay member event focused on *GMB@Work* and campaigning in the workplace. The tone for the day was set by the numerous activists who came to the rostrum to tell us about their stories and experiences when campaigning, organising and using *GMB@Work*. In the time that I have to speak, I will reserve my comments to one of those campaigns, and that is the SafeGuard campaign amongst static security guards. It is a tremendous campaign, colleagues. It is an activist initiated and led campaign, and I was absolutely delighted that the section committee had agreed that the Inaugural Dave Lyons Memorial Award for Outstanding Work on Behalf of the Union will go to Simon Forrester, one of the key activists who established the SafeGuard campaign. *(Applause)*

President, eighty delegates attended the Conference. We were delighted, as ever, to see old comrades but also pleased to see so many new faces. Particularly pleasing was the fact that 44 delegates spoke from the floor. That was more than half the delegates who were in attendance. Fifteen motions were debated, the debate was carried out in good spirits and without rancour. I can assure Congress that the motions will guide the work

of the section and, as in previous years, regions will get feedback on the motions that were passed.

In finishing Congress, could I thank the various departments of the Union nationally, the regions who have supported the work of the section, the staff who organised the Conference and the section committee, which oversees and scrutinise the work of the paid officials in the Commercial Services Section.

I would also like to thank Kevin Flanagan, who did an excellent job in presiding over the conference. But, above all, I pay tribute to all the activists in the Commercial Services Section who have done an outstanding job on behalf of the Union since we last met.

Moving forward, President, we will continue to use *GMB@Work* to organise and campaign around on behalf of and with our membership. President, the Commercial Services Section, I am pleased to report, is in fine fettle as we face up to the challenge of the Tory Government. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Are there any questions to Gary on his report? *(No response)* Do you agree to accept the report? *(Agreed)*

The Commercial Services Section Report was adopted.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, we now go to item 11, which is Social Policy. We will start with Composite 15.

SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL

ENERGY AND UTILITY CHARGES COMPOSITE 15

(Covering Motions 157 and 157)

C15. COVERING MOTIONS:

- 156. ENERGY PRICES (Midland & East Coast Region)
- 157. UTILITY CHARGES (London Region)

ENERGY AND UTILITY CHARGES

This Conference condemns the excessive and extortionate price rises by energy utility companies who achieve excessive profits at the expense of our members' terms and conditions and the most vulnerable in our society and demands that the GMB lobby the Government to end the practice of charging higher rates for pre-paid or key customers.

(Carried)

BRO. M. WRIGHT (Midland & East Coast): Congress, I move Composite 15 – Energy and Utility Charges. Wait a minute! My wife gave me a bag here which has a shopping list in it. Oh, the gas bill's gone up. The electric bill's gone up. The water bill's gone up. Oh, and the profits have gone up, but the pensions have come down. Today the energy and utility companies, which are mostly foreign owned, make massive profits, and these profits go to the shareholders and then out of the country, because that's where the money is kept. We, as a Union, must lobby this new Government to make sure that these companies keep their prices in line with the raw materials. As we all know, when raw materials go up, the bills go up, but when the raw materials come down, our bills don't come down.

We must also get on to this Government to end the high prices that they charge for people who use pre-paid or cards. These prices are exorbitant. Just because some poor person doesn't have a bank account and can't do a direct debit, these companies make massive profits on even more than they make out of us with a debit card.

We, as a Union, must show that we are here to help the people who need a voice to speak; old age pensioners, the disabled and ones who live on a very tight budget. We also, as a Union, must look after our members and people in society who need our protection because if we don't help these people they will get, in the words of the great Yorkshire prophet, "screwed yet again". Thank you. I hope you will vote for this motion.

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): I cannot make sense of this one. Why put people on low income on a meter when everyone knows that meter payments are higher? They do not even get a rebate from time to time like they used to years ago. The energy companies should spend some of their vast profits in helping these people to take advantage of the direct debit system as most of us know it is a cheaper way of paying for your fuel. They must be encouraged to help these people. If that is not bad enough, should you go on to emergency power, guess what, yes, it costs even more. I urge Congress to lobby the Government to talk to the fuel companies to stop this ridiculous practice. I second.
(Applause)

FUEL COSTS MOTION 158

158. FUEL COSTS

The recent bad weather and the demand for domestic heating fuels has seen the pattern emerging once again, of fuel companies increasing costs. When temperatures decrease, prices increase, and when temperatures increase the costs decrease.

Pressure of power and gas companies reached peaks as customers tried their best to heat their homes. In Northern Ireland, the average price for 900 litres of oil rose by around £25 in the period 30 December 2009 – 25 January 2010.

We call on this conference to deplore this practise and urge the CEC to call on the Government to look at a method, for example, fuel champion to ensure cash strapped consumers and people vulnerable to fuel poverty, get an open and transparent fair pricing policy.

X07 BRANCH
North West and Irish Region

(Carried)

SIS. M. GREGG (North West & Irish): Vice President, Congress, what is fuel poverty? The usual definition is when one needs to spend more than 10% of income. It is exacerbated by poor household energy efficiency, low income, and expensive fuel costs. The effects of fuel poverty have implications on health and wellbeing, especially on vulnerable groups such as the elderly and people living with disabilities.

In the winter months high fuel costs exacerbate these conditions and increase the death rate. The payment introduced by the Labour Government does help but we hope this current Con-Dem Government will continue with it. What about the companies that supply the fuel? They do not seem to be so caring in winter when there is a high demand for heating. Domestic fuel costs are increased and this is especially true on the cost of oil.

In a region like Northern Ireland which has the lowest levels of income they spend more income on energy than other regions in the UK. Northern Ireland also differs from other regions as to the structure of the energy market. Over 70% of households are reliant on oil for heating rather than natural gas and generally heating oil is more expensive and less efficient than natural gas. Usually the price gets lower in summer when it is warmer, although this year the month of May was one of the coldest for a long time. Although the price of oil bought by the suppliers has reduced over the last three months, it has not been passed on to the domestic consumer.

There is lack of an open, transparent, and fair pricing policy which leaves the companies being able to set unfair high prices; even if they have bought fuel at low price they still set high charges. Families strapped for cash, stretching their income, having to prioritise their essential needs, deserve better than this.

Ofgem, the industrial regulator, showed that of five of the biggest energy companies the average profit they earn per household leapt 40%, the highest level in five years. They left the prices they charged from last year whilst the wholesale prices they paid plummeted in the recession. By the end of 2009 the wholesale price of gas had fallen to below 40p per therm, down more than 100p per therm during mid-2008.

Britain's energy markets are inherently flawed and anti-competitive. Politicians have talked about big changes but all we are seeing is big bills, as before.

There is a need to ensure heating oil consumers are paying a fair price and to examine whether the regulation of the home heating oil industry could provide consumers with a new level of support and price safeguards that will help those who are in fuel poverty.

What is the difference between power companies making a profit and charging what they want for their product, and other companies? The weather patterns in the UK we now experience means that householders will need to have affordable fuel. Adequate heating ensures better health prospects and reduces medical costs, thus reducing pressure on our hospitals and health service. This motion, if passed, will help to ensure in this economic climate that our families can afford to heat and eat. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The motion was formally seconded.

PROTECTION OF SUPPLIERS TO THE BIG FOUR SUPERMARKETS MOTION 162

162. PROTECTION OF SUPPLIERS TO THE BIG FOUR SUPERMARKETS

This Conference calls upon the GMB to actively campaign to protect the interests of the suppliers of the big four supermarkets, as they are being squeezed out of business by the unrealistic demands put upon them by the supermarkets for profit margins.

HULL RETAIL & DISTRIBUTION BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

SIS. L. PETERS (Midland & East Coast): The big four supermarkets are battling for low prices. Yes, there is a war on but the casualties in this war are the producers, our food factories, manufacturers of hard goods, and farmers. By forcing prices down the big four are putting companies out of business. Factories in the North East of our region have been forced to close because they lose an order when they cannot compete at the prices dictated by the supermarket, while others have to employ foreign workers at much lower wages, undercutting and undermining our members' pay and conditions. We all want low prices but not at the expense of our jobs. The profit margins of the supermarkets have not gone down. They are still making a massive profit.

So, what am I asking from this Congress? I am asking that the GMB, together with the TUC, actively campaign to redress the balance and force the big four to pay a fair price to their suppliers to allow them to at least make a living. Consider this. Every business that goes under, every job that is lost is to the detriment of all of us. We need to support each other. Remember, nobody wins unless everyone wins. In the world of the big four when I say nobody that means all of us, the workers. I move. Thank you. *(Applause)*

SIS. K. GUEST (Midland & East Coast): President, Congress, in the recession the smaller suppliers are going under but why is that? Is it because they do not do a good job, because they do not produce good quality products or produce? No, it is because the big four supermarkets will not pay a fair price for a fair day's work. Not only do the supermarkets want to cut the price to the bone, they want the suppliers to store the product until such time that it will go on to the shop floor, with no payment until it is delivered. They are even charging suppliers for space on the shop floor. We can no longer allow such bullying of our suppliers through threats of pulling orders and closing companies down. Something must be done. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. We now go on to section 12, Social Policy: Transport. I call the speaker of Motion 195, London Region.

SOCIAL POLICY: TRANSPORT

LARGE CHANGE SUPERMARKETS MONOPOLY ON FUEL MOTION 195

195. LARGE CHANGE SUPERMARKETS, MONOPOLY ON FUEL

This Conference is called upon to lobby the powers that be to restrict the large supermarket chains charging what they want for fuel up and down the country i.e. in a large town a supermarket's fuel can be 6 pence or more a litre cheaper than in a small town where it has less competition. There should be a blanket cost across the country.

BRAINTREE & BOCKING BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. RIGBY (London): Large change supermarkets monopoly on fuel. This Congress is called upon to lobby the powers that be to restrict the larger supermarket chains up and down the country charging what they want for fuel. In a large town supermarket fuel can be 6 pence or more per litre cheaper than in a small town where it has less competition, but if another supermarket moves in then there is healthy competition. There should be a blanket cost as to a fairer system of fuel charges across the whole of the country. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. S. GAGLANI (London): Supermarkets monopoly on fuel prices. Congress, you all see different fuel prices in different areas from dominating fuel industries, and they are charging what they like. When supermarkets buy fuel they buy at one price, and that is for all areas. Fuel prices should not be different in different areas. This is daylight robbery. The Government should look into how much profit margin they are making. Congress, please support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Colleagues, the CEC is supporting all those motions but with a statement for 158 and a qualification for 195. I now call on Anne Leader from the CEC to give the statement and qualification.

SIS. A. LEADER (CEC, Manufacturing): President, Congress, the CEC is supporting Motions 158, 162 and Composite 15. We are supporting Motion 195 with a qualification. Congress, the CEC would like to emphasise the strength of our support for Motion 158 on fuel costs. For too long the energy companies have had it both ways: they increase household fuel prices without delay when wholesale prices rise but when those wholesale prices fall they are slow to reduce the price to consumers. They use their market power to make a handsome profit by buying fuel cheap and selling it dear. We have just had the coldest winter for decades when hard-pressed customers paid the price for the energy companies' greed. It is time for decisive action to stop this profiteering by the big energy companies.

GMB has been one of Ofgem's harshest critics for the simple reason it has proved weak and ineffective. Ofgem has stood by obsessed with defending the free market, peddling the lie that the energy market is working while the energy companies exploit their customers. The case for intervention has never been clearer. Ofgem needs to stand up for consumers, regulate properly, and implement a process that forces energy companies to reduce prices when wholesale prices fall. Energy companies must be penalised financially if they fail to do this and give the proceeds back to the customers they have ripped off.

On Motion 195, the CEC's qualification is that, although supermarket fuel prices do vary across the country, this is not necessarily a result of malpractice by supermarket chains. Price variations also exist between smaller filling stations depending on their location. Prices are higher in areas where there is a lack of competition between retailers. So, although the principle of seeking consistent prices is sound, these factors make it difficult to achieve the motion's aim for a compulsory blanket price.

Congress, please support Motion 195 with the qualifications I have just outlined, and please also support Motions 158, 162, and Composite C15. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Thank you, colleague. Does the North West & Irish Region accept the statement? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

Does the London Region agree with the qualification? (*Agreed*) Thank you.

Colleagues, that means the CEC is now supporting Composite 15, Motion 158, Motion 162, and Motion 195. All those in favour? Thank you. Anyone against? That is carried.

Composite 15 was carried.

Motion 158 was carried.

Motion 162 was carried.

Motion 195 was carried.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We will now go on to section 13, which is Social Policy: Justice, Motion 140, London Region.

SOCIAL POLICY: JUSTICE

SAFEGUARDING LIST & MANDATORY TRAINING MOTION 140

140. SAFEGUARDING LIST & MANDATORY TRAINING

This Conference is concerned over the current working of the Safeguarding list and asks the CEC to campaign for the following:-

- i) A review of the current situation
- ii) The production of clear and explicit guidance as to what/who is covered

- iii) The training be mandatory for all staff working with vulnerable children and adults in safeguarding issues.

ESSEX PUBLIC SERVICES BRANCH
London Region

(Lost)

SIS. C. HOLLAND (London): This year while doing my job helping people it has come to my attention that whether you are a paedophile or school support staff in a day-to-day situation trying to care for young people there is an inherent problem with the new safeguarding situation. I have a supporter at midday who although commended by the police for stopping a riot in a playground, her crime, she touched the collar of a young person to halt his progress across the playground. She is now on the list. It will be on her file.

Why should this be a reason for her to be put on the same list as a paedophile? Training is vitally important to make sure people are able to differentiate between the two. We now have a list and a CRB file. We all know vulnerable people must be kept safe but sense must prevail. I move. *(Applause)*

A DELEGATE: Following my colleague's experiences, I would like to highlight the following points: a review of how the list is going to be compiled and once on the list can or how does an individual appeal against their inclusion; absolute clear guidelines as to who and what type of offences are going to be on this list; and finally, mandatory awareness of what the list covers for all staff working with children and vulnerable adults. Please support this motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: Congress, that is a first-time speaker and delegate at Congress. Can I call Dave Clements on behalf of the CEC on Motion 140? He is sailing!

BRO. D. CLEMENTS (CEC, Commercial Services): President, Congress, the CEC is sympathetic to the intention of Motion 140. This is concerned with the impact of the introduction of the Safeguarding List on individuals working with children and vulnerable adults. The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) was created as part of the Labour Government's vetting and barring scheme to help prevent unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. The scheme was one of the Government's key responses to the Bichard Inquiry which followed the Soham murders.

The ISA's list will potentially impact on a huge number of employees in a wide range of positions, including the NHS, the prison service, education, and childcare. Many of those potentially affected will undoubtedly be GMB members. Employees working with children or vulnerable adults will have to apply for registration with the ISA. However, we cannot support the call for a review of something that has not yet been introduced.

The safeguarding list will not be mandatory until November of this year. To date it is unclear how the system will be operated in practice. It is also unclear whether the Tory-Lib Dem coalition government will either alter or scrap the proposed system. The CEC

therefore asks for Motion 140 to be withdrawn on these grounds, or if the motion is not withdrawn then we must ask you to oppose it. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dave. Does the mover want the right to reply? No. OK. You heard what Dave said, we are asking for the region to withdraw. Are they prepared? No. OK, I put it to the vote. We are asking you to oppose. All those in favour of 140, please show? All those against? That is lost. Thank you.

Motion 140 was lost.

THE PRESIDENT: Colleagues, before I move on, I think I should read you this. I have just received a letter. It says: "Dear Mary, My name is John Hopper and I am the technical supervisor at the Southport Theatre and Convention Centre. I would just like to say what a fantastic union the GMB is. On the opening ceremony when they put the picture up of your conference here in 1977 it brought back such memories. I was working here as a technician at that very conference. Your union is so full of love. What you did for lovely George left me with a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye. If only you were a political party everything in this world would be as one. Power to the GMB. Lots of love. John." I think that is a terrific letter. (*Applause*)

Before we leave here I hope to meet this young man who was here in 1977. Thank you. Can I now call Motion 185, Motion 188, and Composite 19?

SOCIAL POLICY: TRANSPORT

FREEDOM PASSES MOTION 185

185. FREEDOM PASSES

This Conference calls on the GMB to campaign for the retention of Freedom Passes which have proved to be a major success in allowing older people the freedom to travel throughout the country. Congress calls on all sections of the GMB to defend any attacks that seek to reduce the current provisions of the Freedom Passes.

ISLINGTON APEX BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. V. WEST (London): I will keep this very brief as we are up against the clock but suffice to say that freedom passes have provided freedom to thousands of our retired members, and others, freedom to visit family and friends, not to be trapped at home due to the cost of public transport. The message to the new government is that we will stand by our retired members, and others, to defend those freedoms. I move. (*Applause*)

BRO. J. ANDERSON (London): President, Congress, I am a proud freedom pass holder. Freedom passes have been such a success giving us elderly the chance to move around the country at little or no cost. We as a union must defend any attacks that seek to reduce

the current provisions of the freedom passes. I ask you to support the motion. I second. *(Applause)*

THE PRESIDENT: As a new delegate, first-time speaker, well done. *(Applause)* Just think if we were all as disciplined as him!

THE COST OF TRAVELLING ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT MOTION 188

188. THE COST OF TRAVELLING ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

This Conference is called upon to lobby the government regarding the vast differences occurred by travelling on public transport. From Ipswich to Sudbury, Suffolk which is approximately 23 miles, costs £3.80 one way, but from Sudbury to Lavenham in Suffolk a distance of approximately 4½ miles the cost is £3.20. Surely there should be a set price per mile to make the costs fairer.

BRAINTREE & BOCKING BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. D. RIGBY (London): The cost of travelling on public transport: this Congress is called upon to lobby the Government regarding the vast difference incurred by travelling on public transport. I live in a rural area as it is cheaper to get a house than in the town where I work, but it is my choice. I do not have a choice if I use public transport. From Ipswich to Sudbury in Suffolk is approximately 26 miles. It costs one way £3.80; not bad, you might think. I then have to get from Sudbury to Lavenham where I live, but from Sudbury to Lavenham it is approximately 4.5 miles, the cost £3.20. If the Government wants us to use public transport, then surely there should be a set price per mile to make the costs fairer.

Congress, having listened to our General Secretary's wonderful speech this morning regarding subscription increases, I think Paul should have a dabble in fixing the cost of public transport. Congress, I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. A. CHOLERTON (London): First time speaker. *(Applause)* I am here to second Motion 188. For me there is a basic principle here, it is that public transport should be available for all not just those who can afford to pay, servicing out of the way places and helping the poor and needy wherever they live. This should be based on mileage. That is the fairest and easiest way, not based on the profits of privatised companies. Please do not allow over-pricing of remote services to be a tool for the privatised companies to make it unaffordable for the poor and the needy with a view to making that service hardly used and then using it as an excuse to remove that service. This is a cynical tactic by privatised companies. These companies purely want to cherry-pick the best services making the best profits for their shareholders. We would not expect people in remote communities to pay extra for postage or for water, or for electricity, so I think the fairest way is to have a cost per mile for public services. Please support this motion. *(Applause)*

**EAST COAST MAINLINE
COMPOSITE 19
(Covering Motions 190 and 191)**

C19. COVERING MOTIONS:

- 190. EAST COAST HIGH SPEED RAIL (Northern Region)
- 191. EAST COAST MAINLINE (Northern Region)

EAST COAST MAINLINE

This conference believes that the development of a high speed rail link on the East Coast Mainline is essential for the economic prosperity of the Northern Region and welcomes the decision to take the East Coast Mainline franchise back into public hands for the second time. This follows National Express failed management of this strategically vital route.

Conference is concerned that recent announcements, in particular by Railtrack, that the preferred option would be the West Coast Mainline only would be economically and socially unacceptable. Conference calls upon the CEC to campaign to ensure that the government accepts the economic arguments and decides to provide high speed rail on both the East & West Coast Mainlines.

This conference believes that the repeated failures of private operators demonstrates that the privatisation "model" does not work and that all franchises should be brought back into public ownership. This being the only way to ensure the necessary investment in our rail infrastructure.

This conference further demands that National Express should not be simply allowed to renege on its contractual obligation to pay the government £1.4B, by 2014 and that all necessary legal action should be taken against the company.

(Carried)

BRO. K. STUBBS (Northern): Congress, the East Coast Mainline is an essential part of the North East economy as we have the worst trunk road communication both north and south underlining just how essential the East Coast Mainline is to both passengers and the freight business. There is no doubt at all that we need development of the East Coast Mainline by providing it with a high-speed rail link but, Congress, we are concerned following recent announcements that the preferred option would be the West Coast Mainline. We believe that this would be economically and socially unacceptable and call on the CEC to campaign for provision of a high-speed rail on both the East and West Coast Mainlines. Furthermore, Congress, the repeated failure of private operators demonstrates that privatisation does not work. From the very first day National Express took over the franchise it was clear the service would suffer. It was clear that National Express had grossly overpriced the franchise. The quality of the service was cut. The quality of the catering was cut. What had been the best service under GNER rapidly became similar to the service you would expect in a Third World country. Eventually, the company, unable to make any money and with absolutely no prospect of ever paying

the £1.4bn for the contract for the franchise, simply walked away and the Government picked up the service.

Congress, the service today is now much improved. The staff and customers are all much happier and the region is confident a vital service has been saved, but this highlights that all the franchises should be nationalised and brought back into public ownership. One big question still remains: where is the taxpayers' £1.4bn? Congress, a contract is a contract and National Express owes the British taxpayer. This motion also calls on Congress to demand National Express pay that money back and, if they do not, demand that all necessary legal action be taken against the company. So, on behalf of all taxpayers, I urge you all to support this motion. I so move. (*Applause*)

BRO. P. SAWDON (Northern): Congress, the mover of the motion has outlined the background of this motion, the vital importance of the service and the disaster that was National Express. The issue at the heart of the motion is why should a company who promised to pay £1.4bn in franchise be allowed to walk away paying not a penny. When they ruin the service, they therefore cannot make money. Let's get it back. Let's teach them that privatisation does not work. Let's hit them where it hurts, in the pocket. President, Congress, I urge your support. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. There is no CEC speaker, Congress. Motion 185, 188, and Composite 19, are being supported by the CEC. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are carried.

Motion 185 was carried.

Motion 188 was carried.

Composite 19 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I now move to Motions 193, 194, 196, and 197.

USING MOBILE PHONES WHILST DRIVING MOTION 193

193. USING MOBILE PHONES WHILST DRIVING

This Conference recognises the widespread abuse of the use of mobile phones whilst driving, and calls upon the Government to increase penalties for the use of mobile phones whilst driving to parity with those in force for drugs and alcohol related offences.

LEICESTERSHIRE 2000 BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. WRIGHT (Midland & East Coast) in moving the motion, said: As a result of overwhelming evidence built up since the introduction in the mid-80s of "the brick" - can you all remember the brick mobile phone; you could not hold one of those to your ear, I can assure you; it is a dangerous practice and it is on a par with drink driving, and drugs - in December 2003 there was a total ban involving handheld phones and a fixed penalty of £30. This really did not have an impact. I know, I was fined £30. There were 74,000

fixed penalty notices went out. In January 2007, the penalty was increased to £60 fixed penalty plus three points on your licence, and this could also go up to £2,500. I still do not think it is working.

I drive for a living. I do not admit to working for a living but I drive for a living. You can see people going around with kiddies in the back and they have the actual phone up to their ear talking away, and doing manoeuvres. This is dangerous and it can cause very serious accidents. I now have an earpiece which I use but if I am driving and the company wants to speak to me on my mobile phone or on the cab phone, unless I am stationary I do not bother.

There is evidence that of course it does hamper you because if you are trying to listen to somebody telling you how to make a casserole or what shopping you have to pick up, you are not concentrating on your driving; this also applies to the young people, novice drivers, and elderly people. Most of the elderly people like me cannot hear what they are saying anyway, but this can cause damage.

In a recent survey people who were asked (and they even agreed that they had been “done” for this offence) said that there should be tougher penalties. I ask that you accept this motion that there should be tougher sentencing against these people. Thank you. *(Applause)*

BRO. R. WHILDING (Midland & East Coast): Congress, we all see it, one hand on the steering wheel and one hand clamped to the ear. Mobile phone drivers are increasingly going unpunished. According to new figures 116,000 drivers were prosecuted in England and Wales, a 5% drop from the previous year. However, as any ordinary motorist will corroborate, phone use without a hands-free kit is actually going up according to the Department of Transport figures. Congress, you are four times more likely to have an accident when using your phone, so switch it off. I second this motion. *(Applause)*

CAR SPEED BOXES MOTION 194

194. CAR SPEED BOXES

This Conference recognises that car speed boxes could be a better way to stop the car from driving over the speed limit should be a requirement. It should be made law that when you buy new cars you are offered one of these boxes to be fitted to your car at cost price, which should be at a low affordable cost i.e. £199. This would save so many lives on the roads, make car insurance cheaper for any one that has a box fitted. This could be an alternative to speed cameras. Congress therefore believes that the GMB should suggest this idea to various safety and government advisor committees.

LONDON HOTELS & CATERING BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. AKBAR (London): Congress, present measures to reduce speed and speed-related deaths are not evidently enough. To a parent who has lost a child or to a child who has lost his parents new measures will not compensate for that but what Congress can encourage the MPs to do is push through legislation that will prevent more fatalities by installing a car speed box. You can judge the speed on the road ahead yourself but the speed box is able to indicate the speed limit and encourage the driver to reduce speed. These are some key benefits as well: speed reduced, insurance premiums fall, fines are reduced, and pressures on the NHS related to road traffic accidents can be reduced as well. Most importantly, there will be clear justification for the relevant punishment for owners of cars with speed boxes that are found guilty of breaking the speed limit. These boxes only cost just under £200. It is a cheap price to pay for the safety of an individual and other people's lives. Please support. I move. (*Applause*)

The motion was formally seconded.

DISABLED PARKING SPACES BEING MISUSED MOTION 196

196. DISABLED PARKING SPACES BEING MIS-USED

This Conference takes the Government to task over the mis-use of disabled parking places, and should make mis-use an offence liable for a fine to users who do not display a disabled parking blue badge.

LINCOLN TEC GENERAL & APEX BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. R. MORGAN (Midland & East Coast): Three common facts have emerged from recent consultations with groups and individuals involved in the disability debate. One, there is widespread abuse of the blue badge scheme; two, the penalties for gross misuse of the badge are totally inadequate; three, the validity of the badges is rarely checked in most places. The blue badge scheme gives blue badge holders greater flexibility when it comes to on-street parking. However, it does not apply to private off-street car parks and roads in most of the UK airports.

As the number of blue badge holders has risen beyond the 2 million mark in England, the disability motorist charity, Mobilise, led a campaign demanding reform of the scheme that had fallen into serious disrepute. The Welsh Assembly has already proposed some changes in the blue badge scheme. They proposed to extend eligibility to the under-3s with specific medical conditions and other new groups, to provide a temporary blue badge for people who experience major traumas, strokes, or require joint replacement, to improve the application process and work to streamline administration and reduce abuse with data-sharing systems; also to improve the security features and look at civil enforcement officers being able to seize badges used unlawfully and to work with partners to tackle the parking abuse in council and private car parks.

How can we reduce this abuse? The Department of Transport website has a simple consultation form on it. The closing date for response is Friday 2nd July. I would urge individuals, branches, and regions to respond to this consultation. Comrades, the GMB has always fought for the rights of disabled people. We need to let our voice be heard in this debate and to demand a fit for purpose blue badge scheme for all the UK and stronger sanctions against those who abuse the scheme. Comrades, I move. (*Applause*)

BRO. K. BRINKLOW (Midland & East Coast): Congress, as my colleague stressed before, the blue badge scheme gives the badge holders greater flexibility when parking close to the shops if they suffer with mobility problems and cannot walk very far. To arrive at a disabled parking bay only to find a non blue badge holder parked there must be so infuriating. This has happened to a disabled friend of mine on more than one occasion. This situation must happen time and time again up and down the country, and what are the penalties for parking in a disabled parking space? Some local authorities clamp them and impose a £60 fine. All well and good, but not all local authorities have that system in place, and nothing gets done. There are also flaws in the criteria of the blue badge scheme as there are restrictions for the holders, and no parking at all. A blue badge holder can still face a fixed penalty notice for parking outside of the terms and conditions of the blue badge scheme, like private off-street car parks and some airports.

Congress, the GMB will always fight for the rights of the disabled and a fair and simple blue badge scheme needs to be in place to protect those with mobility issues and stronger penalties for non blue badge holders who abuse these parking bays and use them rather than walk just that little bit further. I second this motion. (*Applause*)

BAN CAR CLAMPING MOTION 197

197. BAN CAR CLAMPING

This Conference calls upon the Government to ban car clamping in England. The attempt to regulate has not worked; the immobilisation of private property is unnecessary and does nothing for land owners, it merely lines the pockets of enforcement companies. No-one in this land should be punished by anyone, other than when justly imposed by the courts.

MANSFIELD CENTRAL BRANCH
Midland & East Coast Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. COPPIN (Midland & East Coast): Congress, President, this is a shortened motion due to time constraints and to give me time to thank you all from little George and JDRF. All George ever asked for from committee, branch, and region, and then to Congress, was for a platform for him to speak to anyone who would listen, and, crikey, did you listen. From George, thank you. (*Applause*)

Congress, most motorists are being held to ransom by unscrupulous private car clamping firms. If you feel you have been unfairly charged or conned, there is no means of redress. Wheel-clamping on private land has been illegal in Scotland since 1992 when Scottish

courts ruled that it amounted to extortion. Motorists in England have no protection and have no appeals body if they have been overcharged or have been conned by a private clamping firm. Motorists could soon, however, have the right to appeal as new laws giving the Secretary of State the power to introduce an appeal process were passed just before the dissolution of the last parliament, that is, if it wants to. Does this mean that we will now be getting a fair and safe system with a right to appeal and an end to cowboys? No, of course it does not. Wherever there is easy money there is always a crook. The only way is to ban car clamping and allow the courts to decide if there is a disagreement with parking on private land. Please support. I move. (*Applause*)

BRO. J. HALL (Midland & East Coast): Congress, President, who needs a licence to clamp cars on private property? Anyone undertaking vehicle immobilising activities will require a licence from the Securities Industry Authority, a licence for activities immobilising a vehicle with any immobilising device, including wheel clamps, on private land against a release fee. How do you get a licence? You will need to apply for a licence from the SIA. You must be over 18 and pass an identity and criminal record check. The licence application fee is £190 for three years. That is it, you are in business to cause misery and mayhem with profit. I second. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, John. Can I now put Motions 193, 194, 196, and 197 to the vote? All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? That is carried.

Motion 193 was carried.

Motion 194 was carried.

Motion 196 was carried.

Motion 197 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: Moving to agenda item 16, Social Policy: General. Can I call the movers of Motion 149, Composite 14, Motion 152 and 153?

SOCIAL POLICY: GENERAL

EXTENDING ALLOTMENT PROVISION MOTION 149

149. EXTENDING ALLOTMENT PROVISION

This Conference supports the idea of the use of derelict and neglected public land for extending allotment provision throughout the country.

There is currently a huge waiting list for allotments, which not only promote physical exercise and healthier eating habits, but are a positive contribution to the fight against climate change. When we grow more of our own food, we reduce our carbon footprint by lessening our reliance on motor transport to bring goods to food stores over long distances and by reducing the need for packaging.

Congress therefore instructs the Union to advocate and support such an extension of provision.

NORWICH GENERAL BRANCH
London Region

(Carried)

BRO. M. WALTON (London): President, Congress, when asked to move this motion I thought to myself, what can I say about allotments given that my knowledge of the subject can quite literally be placed on a blade of grass. I have to confess I have no real interest in the subject or any great passion for growing my own fruit and veg, although of course I am happy to eat the produce. It would seem that this apparent lack of interest is par for the course for a person born and bred in the city.

Congress, the facts tell a different story. In Camden, North London, 1,000 people have been waiting for up to 40 years to get an allotment space when there are only 200 available at any one time. In other parts of the country, there are waiting lists going back over 10 years. This seems ridiculous given that there is so much derelict and unused land available.

There are many benefits to extending allotment provision: it would cost very little and it would help clear up some of the rubbish dumps which we as a nation have created; it may even educate the uninformed like me. Congress, it has been suggested that some young children in this country believe that food comes from supermarkets. If that is true, then it is vital we support this motion. I move Motion 149. *(Applause)*

The motion was formally seconded.

PRESERVE ANALOGUE RADIO AND OUR ENVIRONMENT COMPOSITE 14

(Covering Motions 150 and 151)

C14. COVERING MOTIONS:

- 150. CHANGE FROM ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL RADIO (Southern Region)
- 151. PRESERVE OUR ENVIRONMENT – PRESERVE A.M. RADIO (Midland & East Coast Region)

PRESERVE ANALOGUE RADIO AND OUR ENVIRONMENT

This Conference calls upon the CEC to campaign to preserve the radio broadcasting tradition that has existed in this country for almost 90 years. The Government have stated that it is their intention that existing analogue national and regional radio stations will cease to broadcast on analogue wave length (FM and MW) by 2015 when digital radio is available across 90% of the UK. Although digital radio can provide many more local channels, not all national and regional radio stations will be able to be heard on digital.

This congress believes this is wrong as many people will not be able to afford new radio receivers, the average household has four radios and all will have to be replaced. Many existing radio

stations will no longer be able to be received outside their local areas, nor will national BBC stations be able to be received outside the UK without internet access.

The current Government strategy of encouraging the public to abandon their radio sets to the landfill site in favour of digital audio broadcasting (DAB) is short-sighted and against every sensible environmental practice. Throwing care of future generations to the wind by replacing that which we already have, with something that is of very questionable environmental merit, gives every GMB member the opportunity to preserve for the future generation something worthy that will soon reach its centenary.

Congress urges the CEC to campaign to keep BBC national and local radio stations on analogue (FM and MW) transmission after 2015.

(Carried)

SIS. J. COLLINS (Southern): Congress, President, changing analogue to digital radio would cause hardship to many, especially the low paid and elderly. Think of a number, say 4, and how many of you are going to find this only covers your actual radio in your home. What about your clock radios, add another 3? So, 4 plus 3 equals 7. What about your stereo unit in the lounge, 7 plus 1 equals 8. How many homes in the country will have to buy new digital radios eight times - millions upon millions. Now add your favourite radio station, are they analogue or capable of digital transmission? Losers: the low paid and the elderly, and analogue radio stations. Winners: digital radio manufacturers, many of these are not even made in this country any more. Winners: unemployment lines from the radio station staff. Let me finish on one last question: has anyone thought of where we would dump all the analogue radios? Therefore, I urge Congress to ask the CEC to campaign to keep analogue radio. I move. *(Applause)*

BRO. D. LASCELLES (Midland & East Coast): This afternoon I think we are gradually taking over the entire Congress but not for much longer, we are nearing the end. President, this Congress calls in this composite on the CEC to campaign to preserve the radio broadcasting tradition that has existed in this country for almost 90 years, that is to say, analogue radio. The current strategy of encouraging the general public to abandon their radio sets in favour of digital audio broadcasting, or as you know it, DAB, is not only short-sighted. It is actually against every conceivable environmental practice. If like me you witnessed the mess of the Copenhagen Summit when the great and the good of the world politicians left empty-handed without agreement, here is your chance to do your bit for the environment.

Do not throw away that AM/FM transistor radio on which you listened to Radio Luxembourg as a teenager - no, that must be me - by junking it to a landfill site. Each year over 1.2m tonnes of electrical and electronic waste go through that route without adding further. Let's keep that which is ours already.

Congress, protect our environment and do just this little bit yourself. Let's keep the broadcasting tradition of 88 years, soon to celebrate its centenary, because, Congress,

when we are all dead and buried our successors will actually thank us for not fouling the environment that we have bequeathed them. Thank you, President. *(Applause)*

**CHAPLAINCY
MOTION 152**

152. CHAPLAINCY

This Conference accepts the vital role that the Chaplaincy Service provides for our members in their hour of need be it in hospital, prison, youth detention or on remand, a service that enables many to deal with their problems and integrate back into society. Congress notes with alarm the possible but back of the Chaplaincy Service due to the proposed funding cuts. We don't have to remind ourselves of the value of these multi-faith departments who provide a much welcome and needed pastoral service offering a friendly shoulder to those who need it, twenty four hours a day. Many people cannot discuss certain subjects with staff or even their own families.

Congress calls on the CEC to take this matter up with the Government in order to ensure that cuts are not enacted in this provision.

W50 WELLINGTON BRANCH
Birmingham & West Midlands Region

(Carried)

BRO. J. DALY (Birmingham & West Midlands): The new government cuts across public services are seriously threatening to affect the chaplaincy service. Our chaplains work across a wide area, including hospitals, prisons, and the armed forces, to name but a few. They deal with some of the most difficult human experiences, many as a result of serious illness and injury. Chaplains can be described as nothing less than a frontline service. Chaplains nurture wellbeing, foster hope, and support people through their transitions, and within a healthcare team the chaplain service is a key provision for the patients. Specialist education and training received by chaplains, and their experiences in working with people in the most challenging of situations, provides a distinctive educational resource within our National Health Service. Chaplains contribute to training and development across staff groups on a number of important subjects, including communication skills, religious and cultural diversity, and bereavement care. Congress, the loss of this service would be a moral outrage. I urge you to support this motion. *(Applause)*

The motion was formally seconded.

**WITHDRAWAL OF CHEQUES
MOTION 153**

153. WITHDRAWAL OF CHEQUES

This congress is concerned that the banks are proposing to withdraw written cheques from 2016.

The cheque is very often the only way the people on low incomes can transfer money, pay for goods online or in catalogues.

It is also one of the most common ways of making gift payments to relatives such as grandchildren living in other parts of the country.

This congress calls on the CEC to campaign to keep the written cheque as a method of transferring money and paying bills.

C60 CROYDON BRANCH
Southern Region

(Carried)

SIS. J. COLLINS (Southern): Congress, President, are you sitting comfortably? Then I will begin. Once upon a time I used to write cheques to pay for my grandson's birthday and Christmas presents as they live far, far away and this was nearly as personal as giving a present; it had my writing on it. Now I can't.

I also used to write cheques to pay for my shopping so I could stay within a budget. Now I have the occasional spare tenner which always burns a hole in my purse. As a branch secretary I wrote cheques to pay my stewards' expenses and even the almighty GMB when they raise money for worthy causes, like this week for George. Poor George, in future he may only get £5,000 so that he does not break manual handling legislation as £26,000 in coins would be far too heavy to carry.

As the years go by I will be 90 years old. I will need to pay for my carer and the food they get me. I suppose I could go to the bank or a post office but the closest is now over an hour's drive away, that is if it is still there.

Oh, dear, I forgot, I need my carer to help me to get out of bed. What can I do? Go without, how silly of me to forget that.

The moral of this story is that for many thousands of people cheques are a way of life, especially for those who are on low income, or the elderly, to pay for essentials. I move.
(Applause)

The motion was formally seconded.

ANY OTHER CONGRESS BUSINESS

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Richard. Colleagues, we are nearing the end, you will be pleased to know. We now move into the closing and Any Other Congress Business. *(Inaudible calls from the floor)* Are you sure? Yes, we are putting the raffle prizes up on the back here. There you are. Collect your gains. I nearly forgot, silly billy: Motion 149, Composite 14, Motion 152, and 153; all supporting. All those in favour, please show? Anyone against? They are carried. Did I leave anything out? Thank you.

Motion 149 was carried.

Composite 14 was carried.

Motion 152 was carried.

Motion 153 was carried.

THE PRESIDENT: Now we move into the final scene. Can I call for the omnibus vote of thanks from Kath Manning, Yorkshire & North Derbyshire, to move? Kath.

CLOSING PROCEDURE OF CONGRESS OMNIBUS VOTE OF THANKS

SIS. K. MANNING (CEC, Commercial Services): President, Congress, it is with great honour and pleasure to give this vote of thanks speech on behalf of the CEC to GMB Congress 2010.

I must first give our thanks to Mary Turner, GMB President. Mary, I have known you for many years and I am so proud of how you represent the GMB, and I want to thank you for all you do for us and the GMB. I think we all agree that we could not ask for a better President than our Mary. (*Applause*) You have kept this Congress in good order and supported all the delegates, especially the first-time delegates. I was so delighted to see you receive your MBE and I could not think of a more deserving recipient than you. (*Applause*) Mary, I feel very privileged to call you my friend.

Colleagues, we must also give our thanks to Malcolm, who sits beside Mary and gives so much help and support not only to Mary but to the whole of the GMB. (*Applause*) Malcolm, we know that you work hard all year supporting Mary, supporting us, and I give our thanks to you. I certainly count you as a good friend.

Turning to the highlights of this year's Congress, for me Congress collecting £26,000 for 12-year old George Dove's charity showed the strength and generosity of the GMB. I am so proud of this great union. The emotionally charged thanks given by George's mum showed how much George's family appreciate the donation. The whole family was overwhelmed by the generosity of this Congress, typical of GMB Congress and typical of GMB members.

Billy Hughes from GMB Northern Region was his usual hilarious self. Billy, I have known you and I have come to Congress since 1983, and I have only missed one. Billy, I hope you will be coming to Congress for many more years. (*Applause*) Billy, you have inspired me and I am sure you will continue to inspire many new delegates.

The Daniel Dennis Health & Safety Award touched every heart this year. Dave Lyons could not have been a better recipient and I am sure all of us send our best wishes to Marilyn Lyons and the whole family. Dave reminded us that it only takes one GMB member to make life better and safer for so many. Marilyn's reference to the little handles on the G4 vans made me for one want to shed a tear. I do not think there was a dry eye in the house. (*Applause*)

The GMB has always been at the forefront of the Labour movement so it was no surprise that the first hustings for the new Labour leader took place in this very hall. The GMB hall was packed and we watched each candidate strut their stuff but I felt honoured that

the first hustings was in front of a GMB audience. I think all the candidates showed their passion and commitment to the Labour Party but whoever the GMB support the candidate will show that they share the same values as the GMB.

Finally, Richard Moore from Children in Crossfire was totally inspirational. He came to us to tell us about Children in Crossfire and asked us to commit to save the lives of 500 children. So inspirational was his address the GMB committed to save 1,000 children. There was one quote in his address which should be enshrined in the GMB, *You can lose your sight but you don't lose your vision.*

Well, Mr. Kenny, you certainly made us wait this year for your speech until the last day. I cannot remember when we had to wait so long to hear from you but it certainly was worth the wait. Paul, since you have been General Secretary of the GMB you have turned the fortunes of this great union round. I am so proud that you are our General Secretary. (*Applause*) I am so proud of what you have achieved. I know the GMB will continue to grow and continue to be great, a proud and wonderful trade union to which we are all proud to belong.

I also want to thank Pat Kenny. Pat, we know how much time Paul spends away from you and his family, and I want to thank you.

I want to thank all the regional secretaries for their support and leadership in the nine regions, with particular thanks to my regional secretary, Tim Roache.

I know you would all like me to thank the staff at National Office who have worked hard to ensure that Congress and the section conferences ran particularly well, and I want to thank Katie Feighan and Laura Jagdev for all their hard work. I also want to thank Dolores and Ida, and the Executive team. (*Applause*)

Thanks also to the Standing Orders Committee and the shorthand writers, Mike Thear and Phyllis Hilder.

Thanks also to the under-worked but very general member auditors, and the tellers. Colleagues, Congress and section conferences have been excellently policed by our superb friendly stewards. Thank you.

Thanks also to the solicitors and to Liverpool & Victoria for supplying the tea and coffee. But the most important people are you the delegates. Your contributions have made this Congress a wonderful success. All the issues vital to our union and members have been raised. Colleagues, what struck me was the extraordinary high level of first-time delegates and the quality of their presentations; our future is safe in their hands.

President, I am sure you are as proud as me to have been a part of this wonderful occasion. Mary, my last thanks go to you, the proudest trade union President, and I thank you, Congress. Thank you. (*Applause*)

THE PRESIDENT: Paul Kenny.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY: Let's start again on Sunday! There was a moment, believe me, on Sunday when I was not quite sure we would actually get to Wednesday: you would, but I was not sure I was going to get there. I came in and started off, it was great, half 8/9 o'clock I was buzzing, by half 9/ quarter to 10 I was rushing off the stage and being sick at the back, and I had not even seen the politicians at that stage! *(Laughter/Applause)*

First of all, the CEC would want me to say thank you to all of you, not just for your contributions as delegates here this week but thank you for all the work that you do back in your workplaces and your branches. It is that work that builds the reputation of the union. It is the efforts and the care that you put into looking after people. As I said before, it is about right and wrong and we know what side of the road we are on. So, thank you from the CEC for all the work that you do all the time.

The other day when I came in I saw a placard and it said, *Balls-up at Southport*. I thought, "Christ, we haven't even started yet!" *(Laughter)* Anyway, you get it.

First of all, I hope you have enjoyed this Congress. I would like to say thank you to a whole range of people who make this happen. Believe it or not, about a month after this we sit down and start working out the plans, and we will have a bigger, better congress next year so it is going to be even earlier, probably.

The NAU staff: John McCargo, Kevin Sweeney, Bob Robinson, Graham Dow, Karen Smith, and Alex McMillan, thanks very much. You did a great job. Thank you very much indeed. *(Applause)*

The National Officers who spent large amounts of money trying to persuade delegates to get up and say what a great job they have been doing, thank you to the National Officers for all that you have done. *(Applause)*

Can I just say there is so much goes on in our union, it is so fantastic, that when I was going round the regions this morning and when I was thinking about this last night and scribbling it, I forgot one really, really important event, and I apologised to Tim and the Yorkshire Region. It took Frances O'Grady to remind me that we actually had a big dispute in Yorkshire, didn't we, in Leeds? It was a fantastic result for the union and for the region, it was fantastically well looked after, and a really, really important one where a Tory-Lib council was seeking to drive down the wages of men so they would not have to give women equal pay. We fought that campaign. It was a brilliant campaign. I should know about it, I was on the picket line with Tim. We did mass meetings in comedy clubs. In fact, Tim and I even did a musical number with Keith Allen in a nightclub to raise money. So many great things happen that you forget about it. It was well won. *(Applause)* It was brilliantly run by the region and the officers and staff deserve our thanks.

I would like to say thank you to Robert Badlan, who spends his time going round and encouraging sponsors to put as much money into our Congress as they can, to provide free entertainment, hospitality, tea and coffee, and anything else he can screw out – I mean, anything else he can get them to contribute. *(Laughter)* Thank you, Robert. Tracey Holdstock and Leila Clemo for the work that they have done on the Ethical Threads stand this weekend. Thank you both. *(Applause)*

To Barry Smith, our National Legal Officer, and Helen Johnson and the Standing Orders Committee, who I think have just been brilliant, they have actually managed to make sure we get there, thank you very much. We owe you. *(Applause)*

Can I just say thank you to the technical staff, the people that you have not seen. *There* they are, Gary, Steve, Eddy, Jacob, another Steve, Dave, and Phil. Thanks very much. We all appreciate all the hard work and the effort you put into making our Congress look so well. Thank you very much indeed. *(Applause)*

I know we are pushed for time but I have a story. Mick Wright, where are you? I know you are here. I have heard you five times this afternoon. You are there, mate. I was talking to David Miliband outside. Well, he was talking down to me but we were talking, anyway. *(Laughter)* Mick came up to me and said, “Excuse me, Mr. Miliband,” he had a camera, and he said, “do you mind a photograph?” David Miliband said, “Well, no, that’s fine.” Mick said, “There you are, if you could take one of me and the General Secretary.” *(Laughter/Applause)* And he took it, didn’t he, Mick? What they’ll do for a vote! Jesus. *(Laughter)*

Thank you to the staff who make Congress tick. There is a line of them over *here*: Tom Hazeldine? Come on, put your hands up, I am going to embarrass you. Tom Hazeldine. Laura Jagdev. Come on, Laura. Katie Feighan. Marian Healy. Emma Cole. Helen Heath. Barbara Casher. Marilene Smith. Auriol Ware. Kasia Odlin. Our great Health & Safety Officer is there, Dan Shears. *(Applause)*

We also have a couple of other staff over there: Steve Short, who is the Executive Officer of the union. *(Applause)* Kevin Panton. Where are you, Kevin? There he is. *(Applause)* Kevin has worked for the union, what is it now, Kev, I forget – 43 years! It was only last week we actually found where he hides. *(Laughter)* Brilliant job! We love him to death. He is a fantastic servant to the union. He came into the office and he looked me up and down and the first thing he said was, “I’ve seen four or five General Secretaries off, you know.” *(Laughter)* But we are both still here. Well done, Kev. Other staff are Mick Balfour, Naomi Cooke, and Phil McEvoy who have helped delegates and done fringe meetings. Thank you very much for the work you do.

Also our team, our campaigns and communications team, they are absolutely brilliant. Charlotte Gregory. Where are you, Charlotte? Put your hand up. You are here somewhere. You are hiding! *(Applause)* Rose Conroy, you are over there because I have seen you. You tried to hide, didn’t you? *(Applause)* Stevie Pryle. *(Applause)*

Thank you to Andrew who takes all the photographs. There is Andrew in the corner. Thank you, Andrew, mate. It was a great week. (*Applause*)

We now come to some interesting people. We come to Ida Clemo. (*Applause*) She is looking like, “What is he going to say now?” She works passionately hard. When everybody thinks the job is done, she goes back and restarts it. You are never satisfied. It has always got to be perfection. Thank you very much. The amount of work, weekends, evenings, all sorts, that Ida puts in to make sure that Congress runs and we get all the papers right, and all the changes that her and Dolores have brought up for the SMT over the last couple of years, has made life a lot easier and I think made Congress easier. Thank you very much. You are brilliant. (*Applause*)

Dolores, I am not quite sure what more I can say about Dolores. We have been soul mates ever since I went to National Office. Her husband Brian is here somewhere. Well done. (*Applause*) It is their 40th anniversary. That is fantastic. I accept these flowers.... Oh. No! (*Laughter*)

There is a joke around the office, because they do so much for me and work out stuff they themselves, not me, by the way, they themselves have christened themselves *The General Secretary's handmaidens*. (*Laughter*) Recently I was showing a general secretary and his deputy of another union who may be interested in talking about joining us, I was showing them round National Office and as we went round inadvertently I said, “Oh, and over here are my handmaidens,” and one turned round to his mate and said, “This ain't a bad union, you know.” (*Laughter*)

Iain McNicol and the political team, Heidi Benzing and Steve Kemp, it was a fantastic job they did in the Election. (*Applause*) Brilliant job. Ian works tirelessly, trust me, he really does. We owe a lot and a lot of politicians and councils owe a lot for the amount of work that was organised by the political team, so thank you very much.

To all the regional officers and their staff, thank you for the work that you do. It has been brilliant.

To Kathleen Walker Shaw, one of the greatest assets this union has. (*Applause*) With very complex and difficult European legislation, she sends me volumes, but everything is explained in easy language. I think she is telling me I do not quite understand what I am doing but (*Laughter*) I will tell you what I tell her. I always say, “Kathleen, if you think it is right, then it must be right.” Her instincts about our policies, what is good for our members, is absolutely brilliant. She has done a fantastic job. I will tell you this, over the coming years we are going to have to build to make sure that we put a lot more GMB people into the European Parliament because we need to turn that place around. Well done, Kathleen. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

Malcolm Sage, as has been said, is a fantastic asset to our union. I see what he does away from the place. He is brilliant. He chairs and presides over the management meetings brilliantly. He does all of the great stuff at the TUCs. He is a fantastic asset. He seems

quite quiet but, trust me, underneath there really is a bar of steel. He knows exactly what he is doing and he knows how to get it done, and his passion and commitment to this union is without doubt. Thank you, Malcolm, for all your comradeship. (*Applause*)

Mary: I just think Mary is the embodiment of all that is great about our Union, I really do. The compassion: you have seen how at ease she is with people. Who else, what other national president would, with all that is going on, all the difficulties this week, all the pressures, she gets in a car and goes off and sees Edna Greenwood with Paul McCarthy, a couple of hours trip in order to see one of our good people in a hospital bed because she knows that means something, and she cares about it.

Mary, I think you are just an embodiment of all that is great in the trade union Movement. You are fantastic. I love you. (*Standing ovation*)

Finally, a little bit of self-indulgence. Can I just thank my wife, Pat? (*Applause*) She took a really disproportionate amount of responsibility when I was active in the union in bringing up the kids. I think she did a great job. My son Warren is in the delegations there. My four grandkids, who we love dearly, Jake, Hallie, Maygan, and Alex, are all a credit to our boys and to her.

People think maybe, well, you know, maybe she is the quiet half of our relationship. I will tell you a little story to illustrate the power in our household. You know that sometimes men go round supermarkets with their partners and sometimes they are a little bit grumpy. Have you ever had that? Anyone ever done that? Never! Anyway, I was out with Pat and in fact my Mum was with us and we were in a supermarket and you know what it is, I just wanted to get out of the place, and I said, "Oh, look, that queue...." "Look, that one's going faster." We have all done it, haven't we? So I am standing there and Pat is in front of me, I am behind her, and my Mum is behind me. Suddenly, I suppose I had moaned a little bit too much, it was packed, it was a Friday night, Pat jumped round like that and she said, "Excuse me, do you mind keeping your hands to yourself?" (*Laughter/Applause*) There was this deathly hush. Tills stopped. Worse, my Mum behind said, "I saw him, luv. Somebody get the manager." (*Laughter/Applause*) I know where the power lies in our house, trust me.

Finally, thank you all. I think this is a great union, a great movement. We are going to be called upon to do great things over the next few years but we are equipped to do it with good humour, comradeship, and a powerful, growing, vibrant GMB. If you are as passionate about it as I am, and I know you are, then the only thing we have to fear is the fear of trying. There is one thing that is guaranteed, we are always going to try our best for our members. You have a great time and, hopefully, I will see you all, and many more, in Brighton next year one way or another. Thanks. (*Standing ovation*)

THE PRESIDENT: Paul, can I say thank you for those lovely words, and to Kath Manning. Could I just add a couple of words myself? I would like to thank my region that has always supported me. I would also like to thank this Congress and its delegates, right through the union, for all the support and love that you have shown towards me, and

my family. Most of all, I would like to thank my family and I would like to thank your families because none of us up here or down there could do it without their support. I thank the visitors who are here with you this week supporting all of you. You are a wonderful crew. Paul, I do this job because I love this union and I love these people. Thank you. (*Applause*)

Congress, we now come to the closing ceremony, which is in two parts. We will now have a short slide show with some highlights of Congress. The music this year is *Proud* by M People.

Video shown to Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Always be on your guard when you are out, believe you me. Congress, it is now the moment that we will stand and sing “The Red Flag”.

Congress stood and sang “The Red Flag”.

THE PRESIDENT: Can I say I look forward to seeing all our guests and delegates at the President’s Night, which will be held in the Prince of Wales Hotel in Lord Street. The doors open at 7 o’clock. Can I say a big thank you to Pellacraft, the main sponsors of the President’s Night, together with Thompsons, solicitors, and Digby Brown, solicitors. Thank you very much. Colleagues, I will see a lot of you there and for those I do not have a safe journey home. God speed. See you all next year, hopefully.

Congress concluded.