

March 2018  
**Wheels**

**UR**  
UNITED ROAD  
TRANSPORT UNION



# THE GREAT JOBS AGENDA

PLUS:



**SLEEP APNOEA**



**TUC RALLY**



# ACTING GENERAL SECRETARY

## General Secretary

This will be the last time that I will write for our journal 'Wheels' in my current role as Acting General Secretary. From April 2018 it will be my privilege to commence my fourth term as our Union's General Secretary. My position as Acting General Secretary was a created role, in order to assist our Union get through a period in time when our Union was ordered by the Acting Certification Officer to re-run an election for the position of General Secretary, which had originally been carried out during 2015. As you are aware, the result of the election remained unaltered from the original outcome in 2015. I think this suggests to all members that the *rationale* for challenging the original decision, that the Union's rules had been broken, seems quite correct.

## 'Brexit'

How you so ever cast your vote during

the 'European Union' ('EU') referendum, our Union assuming a neutral position in regard to the campaign leading up to the referendum, there is no escaping the fact that within the next twelve months the United Kingdom will no longer be part of the 'EU'. As truck drivers and ancillary workers what does that mean? At present, I am witnessing a virtual standstill, with companies just waiting to see what the fall-out from 'Brexit' will actually mean. Will there be some form of Customs Union? Will there be horrendous delays either side of the Channel? Why are we not seeing huge Customs 'sheds' being built outside of the Channel ports, in readiness for a 'hard Brexit'? This lack of clarity has added to the current feeling of not wanting to 'invest' in UK PLC. Certainly, many of our warehousing members have returned to mainland Europe, uncertain of their future lives here in the UK. The next twelve months will no doubt pass as quickly as the last twelve. Before too long we will have arrived! Lets us all hope that when March 2019 has passed us all by, we can say that the outcome was .... worth the wait!?

## Regional Officials

'Wheels' reports on the appointment, since its last edition, on our Union's recruitment of two new Regional Officers (page 4). I have known both Mark Greaves and Kevin Ashby for a number of years and feel confident that they will both be an asset to our Union, not only to the members with whom they are involved on a day to day basis, but also to our Union's membership as a whole. They both have much experience and a '40 foot box' full of enthusiasm. I am sure you would wish to join me in welcoming them to our team.

## TUC March and Rally

Finally, you will read (page 5) that the 'Trades Union Congress' ('TUC') are holding a National March and Rally on 12 May 2018. If anyone of you are planning on attending, please let us know on [info@urtu.com](mailto:info@urtu.com), in order that we can hopefully 'link up' our members on the day.

Until next time ... drive safely.



Bob Monks  
Acting General Secretary



# Contents

- 02 Acting General Secretary**  
'Brexit'
- 04 In the News**  
New URTU Regional Officers
- 05 In the News**  
TUC March and Rally
- 06 In the News**  
Drivers' Hours
- 07 In the News**  
Workers' Memorial Day
- 09 In the News**  
Supercabs
- 10 Holiday Pay**  
Calculating Holiday Pay
- 12 Letters**  
Out of Control
- 14 Your Shout**  
What's the Point of Driving
- 16 Union Campaign**  
Let's Secure Great Jobs for Everyone
- 19 Q&A**  
Hugh Button
- 20 Have a Rant**  
Shift Times
- 21 Training Advice**  
Starting a Course?
- 23 URTU Course Dates**  
2018 - 19
- 24 Learning News**  
Calling All URTU Reps
- 25 Learning News**  
Learn to use the Internet
- 27 Nomination Form**  
URTU President vacancy
- 29 Nomination Form**  
NEC Member (Region 1) vacancy

**Question and Answer**

**Hugh Button**  
URTU member Hugh Button is a sufferer of Sleep Apnoea, which affects around 1.5 million people in the UK. Here he speaks to Wheels about the condition.

**What is Sleep Apnoea?**  
I have been suffering from this condition since I was 15 years old. It's a condition where you stop breathing for a few seconds or even minutes at a time while you're sleeping. It's caused by the airway narrowing or closing off during sleep. It's a common condition and it can be treated with a CPAP machine. I use a CPAP machine every night and it's made a massive difference to my sleep and my health.

**How do you manage it?**  
I use a CPAP machine every night. It's a small machine that you wear over your nose and mouth. It provides a steady stream of air that keeps your airway open. I also try to lose weight if I can, as being overweight can make the condition worse. I also avoid alcohol and sedatives before bed, as these can relax the muscles in your throat and make it harder to breathe.

**When did you realise you had the condition?**  
I first noticed it when I was 15 years old. I was in a hospital and they noticed that I was stopping breathing during sleep. They did a test and they found out I had Sleep Apnoea. I was a bit scared at first, but I was told it was a common condition and it could be treated.

**Are there any preventative steps?**  
There are a few things you can do to help prevent the condition. You should try to lose weight if you are overweight. You should also avoid alcohol and sedatives before bed. You should also try to sleep on your side, as sleeping on your back can make it harder to breathe.

**How did you get diagnosed?**  
I was diagnosed when I was 15 years old. I was in a hospital and they noticed that I was stopping breathing during sleep. They did a test and they found out I had Sleep Apnoea.

March 2018 Wheels 19

**Have your say on the issues that affect our industry**

**Have A Rant**  
**SHIFT TIMES**

**Garoth**  
I have been a driver for 15 years and I have always worked a 12-hour shift. I have always enjoyed it, but now I am starting to think about changing. I am thinking about working a 9-5 shift. I am not sure if I should, but I am thinking about it. I am not sure if I should, but I am thinking about it.

**Alan**  
I have been a driver for 15 years and I have always worked a 12-hour shift. I have always enjoyed it, but now I am starting to think about changing. I am thinking about working a 9-5 shift. I am not sure if I should, but I am thinking about it.

March 2018 Wheels 20

**By Simon Walker, URTU ULR Project Worker**

**Training Advice**  
**ARE YOU PLANNING ON STARTING A COURSE?**

URTU ULR Project Worker, Simon Walker, discusses why it is important that you have an initial assessment.

It's important that you have an initial assessment before you start a course. This is because it will help you to decide if you are suitable for the course. It will also help you to decide if you are ready to start a course. It will also help you to decide if you are ready to start a course.

**Requirement Examples**

| Requirement | Examples     |
|-------------|--------------|
| Age         | 18 years old |
| Health      | Good health  |
| Education   | GCSEs        |
| Experience  | None         |

March 2018 Wheels 21

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UNITED ROAD TRANSPORT UNION

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Cover photo: Provided by Volvo Trucks

# In the News

## NOMINATIONS SOUGHT FOR URTU PRESIDENT & NEC MEMBER FOR REGION 1

Have you ever considered taking a more active role in the running of your Union? If so we're looking for nominations, for URTU President and a National Executive Committee (NEC) member in Region 1

A nomination form for URTU President appears on page 27 of this issue of 'Wheels' and the nomination form for URTU NEC member (Region 1) on page 29.

If you wish to nominate, you should complete the form and return it to Head Office by no later than **26 April 2018**.

### Role of a NEC member

The role of the NEC is covered by Rule 15 of the Union's Rule Book. The NEC is the national governing body of the Union and NEC members have a collective responsibility for the decisions and the policies of the NEC. NEC members are not accountable individually for the work of the Union and have no individual decision-making powers. All decisions are the result of debate and vote and all NEC members are expected to uphold such decisions. Although NEC members do not sit as delegates at a TDM for their Regions, they are elected on a Regional basis. The NEC makes major decisions that can affect

the working lives of URTU members. It often deals with sensitive issues such as negotiating strategy, employment policy and Benevolent Fund requests. Therefore, each NEC member must adhere to the concept of collective confidentiality in the interests of the Union and its members.

### Role of the President

The role of the President is covered by Rule 16 of the Union's Rule Book. The President presides at all meetings of the National Executive Committee, the TDM and SDM, during the term of office and shall conduct such meetings with propriety and order. The President signs all Minutes of the National Executive Committee, TDM and SDM and, in conjunction with the General Secretary, order special meetings of the National Executive Committee when necessary.

All of this, no doubt, might sound very daunting. The reality, however, is that no decision will be taken by you without first having been fully briefed by professional advisors. It is anticipated that the President and all NEC members will attend all meetings, for which you will receive agreed travelling expenses.



*The United Road Transport Union is committed to improving the diversity of its National Executive Committee and Trustees, irrespective of age, sexual orientation or religious beliefs and would welcome in particular nominations from members of currently under represented groups, including women, people from BME groups and people with disabilities all whom possess a full practical knowledge of the Union.*

## NEW REGIONAL OFFICERS FOR REGIONS 9 & 11

We are delighted to announce that, following acceptance of offers made by our National Executive Committee, we now have new URTU Regional Officers for Regions 9 & 11. Kevin Ashby has become the new Regional Officer for Region 9. Prior to taking up the post, Kevin was the URTU Learning Project Worker for Wales. He lives in Lydney, Gloucestershire. Mark Greaves has become the new Regional Officer for

Region 11. Mark is joining URTU from Hovis and lives in Hornchurch, Essex. Bob Monks, Acting General Secretary, said; "I am delighted that Mark and Kevin have joined the URTU Regional Officer team. I have known both of them for many years and their additions will be a great asset to our Union." Members in Region 9 and 11 can now contact their new Regional Officer using the following contact details:

**URTU Regional Officer (Region 9)**  
South West England, South Wales

**Kevin Ashby**

Tel: 07775 852990  
Email: kevin.ashby@urtu.com

**URTU Regional Officer (Region 11)**  
South East, Southern England

**Mark Greaves**

Tel: 07912 215888  
Email: mark.greaves@urtu.com

## REGION 3 OFFICER CONTACT DETAILS

Please be aware that the address details for URTU Regional Officer, Chris Dubber (Region 3) are:

**Chris Dubber**  
Rose Cottage, High Road, Spott, Dunbar, East Lothian, EH42 1RJ

## PLEASE DON'T BIN IT! PASS IT ON!

When you have finished with this copy of 'Wheels', please don't throw it in the bin. Pass it on to a colleague who is not a URTU member or leave it out for other people to read. If you would like extra copies of 'Wheels' to give to potential members, call FREEPHONE 0800 526639 or email [info@urtu.com](mailto:info@urtu.com)



# TUC MARCH & RALLY

Join the TUC's national march and rally on Saturday 12 May 2018 in central London. All workers deserve a great job so everyone has a chance to progress and get on in life. Affiliated unions, including URTU, and thousands of supporters will come together to call for more and better jobs and a more equal, more prosperous country. We want you to join us.

Speakers at the rally will include TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady, union leaders and frontline workers.

This family-friendly event is part of the TUC Great Jobs Agenda campaign, which you can read all about on page 16 of this issue of Wheels.

## Route & Rally

The march will assemble on the Embankment between Hungerford Bridge and Blackfriars Bridge from 11am. It will move off at 12pm and march to Hyde Park. The rally will take place in Hyde Park, finishing at 4pm.

## Accessibility

The event is accessible to everyone who wishes to join it:

- There will be a short march for those who do not wish to do the full route.
- There will be an assembly area for wheelchair/scooter users on the

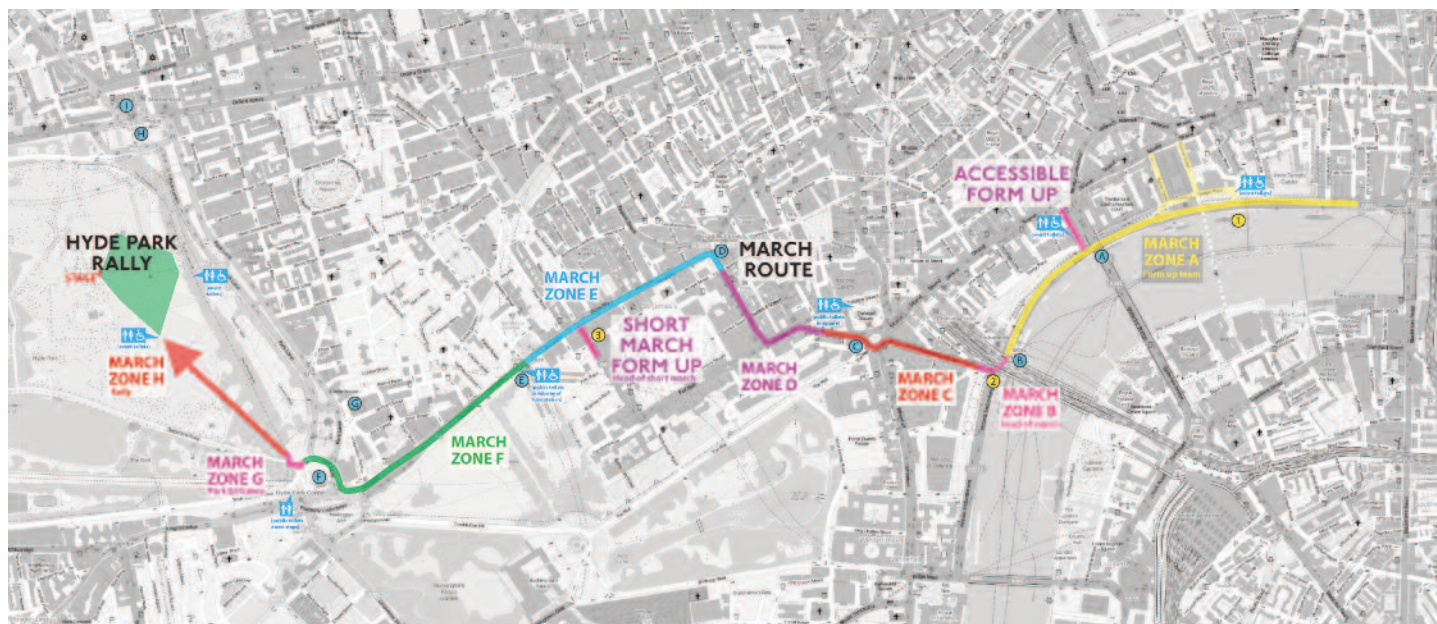


Embankment for which we will be able to arrange drop-off through road closures with advance notice from unions.

- There will be a viewing platform in Hyde Park for wheelchair/scooter users.

The TUC event page is now live with information about the event.

[www.tuc.org.uk/events/new-deal-working-people-tuc-march-rally](http://www.tuc.org.uk/events/new-deal-working-people-tuc-march-rally)





# In the News

## DRIVERS' HOURS: CHANGES TO FINES FOR COMMERCIAL DRIVERS

On-the-spot fines for any drivers' hours offences committed in the last 28 days

Since 5 March 2018, Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) traffic examiners have started issuing on-the-spot fines for any drivers' hours offences committed in the last 28 days.

In a single roadside check, DVSA traffic examiners will issue fines for up to five drivers' hours offences. It means you could be fined up to £1,500 in a single check if you've consistently broken the rules.

It won't matter if the offences took place in Great Britain or elsewhere.

The rules will also apply to drivers who don't live in Great Britain. However, they'll need to pay any fines immediately, before being allowed to continue their journey. DVSA will immobilise their vehicle until they pay.

Prior to 5 March, DVSA could fine drivers up to £300 if they're caught breaking the rules only fine drivers for:

- Offences committed that day.
- Ongoing offences eg. manipulating tachograph records, which record drivers' hours.

DVSA Chief Executive, Gareth Llewellyn, said: "The DVSA's priority is to protect you from unsafe drivers and vehicles.

"These tougher fines will help us to take stronger action against any drivers or operators who break drivers' hours rules and will help make our roads safer.

"There's no excuse for driving while tired. The results of falling asleep at the wheel of a 40-tonne lorry can be devastating to families and communities. Any drivers breaking these rules is putting other road users at risk and could face losing their licence and livelihood."

James Firth, the Freight Transport Association's Head of Licensing Policy and Compliance Information, said:

"For some years, DVSA officers have been virtually powerless to take effective action against non-UK HGV drivers who may have committed a string of offences in the days and weeks before the vehicle is stopped.

"These new powers mean the enforcement authorities will be more able - and more likely - to take action against all drivers who are found to have repeatedly flouted these critical road safety laws."

Whilst the United Road Transport Union (URTU) support action against firms who deliberately flout drivers' hours rules, we are calling on the Government to address the desperate need for more lorry parking areas so that drivers have somewhere secure to rest.



## LAYBY PARKING REMINDER

Whilst on the issue of DVSA fines, we would like to remind Wheels readers that since 1 November 2017, DVSA is fining drivers up to £300 if they spend their full weekly rest break in their vehicle in places where it causes a problem. For example, if a lorry driver spends their full break in the cab of their lorry in a layby.

DVSA traffic examiners will target places where this is causing the biggest problems, such as residential areas and laybys. DVSA will also work with its counterparts in other countries to deal with overseas operators whose drivers regularly do this. Again, URTU is urging Government to address the need for more lorry parking areas so that drivers have somewhere secure to rest.



# WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY

Workers' Memorial Day takes place annually around the world on April 28, an international day of remembrance and action for workers killed, disabled, injured or made unwell by their work.

The purpose behind Workers' Memorial Day has always been to "Remember the Dead: Fight for the Living". Unions, including URTU, are focused on both areas by remembering those killed through work and, at the same time, ensuring that such tragedies are not repeated. It is an opportunity to highlight the preventable nature of most workplace incidents and ill health and to promote campaigns and union organisation in the fight for improvements in workplace safety.

That can best be done by campaigning for stricter enforcement with higher penalties for breaches of health & safety laws.

Workers Memorial Day is commemorated throughout the world and is officially recognised by the UK Government.

In 2018 the theme for the day is 'Unionised workplaces are safer workplaces' and will focus the huge difference that unions make in preventing deaths in the workplace. We will also be celebrating 40 years of union health and safety representatives.



## What you can do:

You can find out what is happening in your area on 28 April by visiting your Union's website [www.urtu.com](http://www.urtu.com).

You could also:

- Get together with some of your workmates or others in the area where you work and organise something. It can be a commemorative rally, a workplace meeting or just a small get-together.
- Organise a minute's silence in your workplace on the day.
- Ask your local council, or any other public body, to fly official flags at half-mast on the day.
- Arrange an event such as planting a memorial tree in a public place, putting up a plaque, dedicating a sculpture, a piece of art, or a bench, to remember workers who have been killed at the workplace or in the community.



If you are planning any events for the day, or you want to raise awareness about Workers' Memorial Day on 28 April, then it is important you consider how you can best use local media both before and on the Day.

Ask local religious centres to include Workers' Memorial Day in their worship on the day and

distribute purple 'forget-me-not' ribbons, the symbol of Workers Memorial Day; Let people know about anything that happened in your area on the day - hashtag #IWMD18 For resources on Workers Memorial Day including ribbons and car stickers please contact [mail@gmhzards.org.uk](mailto:mail@gmhzards.org.uk).

## 16 WORKING DAYS SAT IN TRAFFIC

Latest figures released as part of the TomTom Traffic Index reveal congestion is costing UK businesses approximately £915 million a year in lost productivity, up from £767 million in last year's study.

Traffic across the UK's 25 most congested cities and towns increases the time each vehicle spends on the road by an average of 129 hours a year (up from 127), which means an average commercial vehicle driver wastes more than 16 working days while sat in traffic. This translates to an approximate loss of £915,239,520 for businesses across the country.

To compound the situation, traffic has been getting continuously worse since 2010, with an average journey now taking 30% longer than it would in free-flowing conditions, up from 25%.





# In the News

## SUBSTANDARD COUNCIL BRIDGES ON THE RISE

URTU is calling on Government to increase investment in bridge maintenance after analysis of data for the 2016-17 financial year (received from 204 of the 207 local highway authorities in England, Scotland and Wales) found that 3,441 structures over 1.5m in span are not fit to carry the heaviest vehicles now seen on our roads, including lorries of up to 44 tonnes.

Many of these bridges have weight restrictions. Others will be under programmes of increased monitoring or even managed decline.

The 3,441 bridges represent 4.6% (about 1 in 22) of the roughly 74,000 bridges to be found on the local road network.

The number of substandard bridges is slightly higher than the 3,203 identified a year previously.

If money was no object, then councils would ideally want to bring 2,077 of the substandard bridges back up to standard.

However, budget restrictions mean councils only anticipate 370 of these will have the necessary work carried out on them within the next five years.

The one-off cost of bringing all the substandard bridges back up to perfect condition would be around £934 million – equivalent to £271,000 per structure.

The total cost of clearing the backlog of work on all bridges – including those that are substandard – is estimated at £5 billion, up sharply (28%) on the estimate of £3.9 billion a year earlier.

At the same time, the estimated amount of money councils are spending annually on maintaining their entire bridge stock is £367 million, just a fourteenth of the backlog total and down on the £447 million spent in the previous year.

Steve Gooding, director of the RAC Foundation, said:

"It is unwelcome, if unsurprising, news that the number of substandard local authority bridges appears to have risen slightly.

"The road maintenance crisis faced by financially-beleaguered councils is often reported in terms of potholes to be filled but this research hints at the wide spectrum of things needing attention, including blocked gulleys, overgrown verges and, of course, fragile bridges.

"The really worrying thing about this data is that the costs and affordability of fixing the problems are moving in opposite directions – while the estimated cost of clearing the bridge maintenance backlog has risen by 30%, an increase of a billion pounds, the amount

councils are spending to maintain the total bridge stock has fallen by 18% year-on-year, from £447 million to £367 million. "As council budgets continue to be squeezed by

the growing pressure of social care these numbers are a stark illustration of the gloomy consequences for the quality and integrity of our local networks."



## PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT

You are protected from sexual harassment in the workplace by the Equality Act 2010. It does not matter how long you have worked for your employer or whether you are a permanent employee, an apprentice or trainee, on a fixed-term contractor supplied by an agency, you are still protected by this legislation.

This 2018 booklet describes the offence, its impact and the rights you have to fight back if it happens. You can download the booklet on the Union's website [www.urtu.com](http://www.urtu.com) or email [info@urtu.com](mailto:info@urtu.com) if you would like a copy posted to you.



# GOVERNMENT INTRODUCES HAULAGE PERMITS AND TRAILER REGISTRATION BILL

The government has introduced legislation on cross-border haulage as the UK continues its preparations for life outside the EU. It says that its overall aim in the negotiations with the EU is to maintain and develop the existing liberalised access for commercial haulage, as part of the wider future partnership. However, it says that it is possible the future deal with the EU could require a form of permitting system and the government will need to have legal frameworks in place to introduce a new administrative system if required.

The Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Bill, which was introduced by Baroness Sugg in the House of Lords, gives the government this flexibility, it says. This Bill aims to give the UK the powers it needs to support UK hauliers to continue operating internationally after it leaves the EU.

Chris Grayling, Transport Secretary said:

“Our road haulage industry is right at the heart of the £110 billion of trade that takes place between the UK and EU every year.

“We believe reaching an agreement to continue the liberal access enjoyed by both sides is in everyone’s interests and remain confident we will do so.

“But I also understand that hauliers are planning for the years ahead and want to have certainty that any future deal can be implemented smoothly – so this Bill ensures we have plans in place if the deal requires a permitting system.”

## Key elements of the bill include:

- Arrangements to enable a permit scheme if required as part of a deal with the EU - ensuring UK hauliers can obtain the necessary paperwork to provide services to and from EU countries.
- The establishment of a trailer registration scheme in line with the 1968 Vienna Convention - this will ensure UK operators driving on the continent can comply with the requirements of those EU countries which require the registration of all trailers travelling on their roads.

Some European countries have agreements with third countries which require a permit as a condition for hauliers to operate across borders.

The bill aims to ensure that the UK government are prepared to manage the issuing of permits should this be needed as part of post exit arrangements.

Through a separate parliamentary process to the bill, the UK intends to ratify the 1968 Vienna Convention on Road Traffic.

The convention was introduced by the United Nations to build on earlier conventions that enable international road travel and increase safety by establishing common traffic rules. Under the convention’s terms, access to foreign roads is only guaranteed for registered motor vehicles and trailers.

The bill will therefore enable the UK to introduce and enforce an international trailer registration system. Mandatory registration will apply primarily to commercial trailers travelling internationally.

The UK already conforms to the majority of aspects in the convention through the Highway Code. Exemptions will be applied to some of the articles within the convention.

# ‘SUPERCABS’ TO TACKLE DANGEROUS DRIVING ON MOTORWAYS

Highways England has announced plans to fund three new unmarked HGV cabs after a single one used by police forces across the country was used to help catch over 4,000 dangerous drivers in its first two years.

The three new cabs will patrol motorways and main trunk roads, and have been fitted with wide-angle cameras to capture unsafe driving behaviour. They also have a derestricted speed limiter which means they can travel at speeds up to the national speed limit, and flashing lights have been installed for use by police forces in an emergency.

The cabs allow police officers to film evidence of unsafe driving behaviour by pulling up alongside vehicles. Drivers are then pulled over by police cars following behind.



# Legal Update

## HOW DO YOU CALCULATE HOLIDAY PAY FOR EMPLOYEES OR WORKERS WHO WORK IRREGULAR HOURS?

**Depending on the working pattern of the individual concerned, holiday pay may need to be calculated differently.**

How do you work out what to pay your employees and workers who work irregular hours throughout the year? This may be your casual or bank employees, employees on zero hours contracts or part time employees with variable hours. In an important decision the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) in *Brazel v The Harpur Trust* has confirmed that the established practice of paying 12.07% of annualised hours is not correct. Depending on the working pattern of the individual concerned, holiday pay may need to be calculated differently.

### The Facts

Mrs Brazel was employed by The Harpur Trust as a part time music teacher. She worked mostly during term time and was engaged on a zero hours contract. Her contract of employment entitled her to 5.6 weeks annual leave (in line with her statutory entitlement) and she was required to take her holidays outside of term time. The Trust paid her 12.07% of her annualised hours for periods of annual leave. This was paid in 3 instalments at the end of each term. Mrs Brazel complained that this was not correct and meant that she was being underpaid during her holiday periods. In the employment tribunal the Trust maintained that taking any other approach would give Mrs Brazel an unfair windfall

because she did not work for the standard 46.4 week working year (52 weeks less 5.6 weeks statutory leave). The Trust relied on ACAS guidance that supported the principle of paying 12.07% (5.6 weeks divided by 46.4 weeks) of annual hours for casual employees.

The Employment Tribunal agreed and found that to do otherwise would result in Mrs Brazel receiving circa 17.5% annualised hours as holiday pay which was more than a comparable full time employee.

### Mrs Brazel appealed the decision

The EAT found in Mrs Brazel's favour. It disagreed with the tribunal's finding that there was a need to pro-rate holiday entitlement so as to ensure full time employees are not treated less favourably or to avoid the windfall for employees such as Mrs Brazel who work fewer weeks than the 'standard' working year. It found that the calculation was actually very straightforward. For someone who has no normal working hours, the correct approach is to apply section 224 Employment Rights Act 1996 and work out her normal week's pay based on the pay received in the 12 week period prior to taking annual leave. The EAT recognised that this could produce anomalies such as to favour an employee such as Mrs Brazel who did not work throughout the year but found that the legislation was unambiguous.

### What does this mean for me?

We know that many employers struggle with what (and when) to pay in respect of holidays for employees who do not work regular hours whether part time employees, casual or zero hours staff. This case demonstrates that adopting the approach of simply paying 12.07% annualised hours as holiday or increasing hourly rates by 12.07% to include an element for holiday pay ('rolled up holiday pay') may produce the wrong result for employees and may leave you vulnerable to claims for unlawful deductions from wages and for the previous two years. Payments already made in respect of holidays will be offset against this liability. The correct approach for employees who do not have regular hours of work is to work out the average pay in the 12 week period prior to the holiday being taken.

### Comment

In many ways this judgment is unsurprising. It is consistent with the long running holiday pay cases concerning commission, bonus and overtime payments in which the courts and tribunals have found that 'normal' pay should be paid to employees and workers when they take annual leave. Whilst this case looked at a different issue, the principle is the same; for those who have irregular hours of work, an average of the previous 12 weeks' pay should be paid during statutory leave entitlements.

If you have been working on the 12.07% principle, whether as an amount paid in addition to hourly rates or as the basis for holiday entitlements paid when holidays are taken, you should now assess whether there has been an underpayment and consider changing your approach for future holiday payments.



This legal update was provided by Weightmans.  
[www.weightmans.com](http://www.weightmans.com)



## ■ FTX Logistics Ltd. ■



FTX Logistics Ltd has a PFI contract with the Ministry of Defence. Within the contract FTX Logistics provides the MoD with a fleet of 92 Heavy Equipment Transporters (HET). HET provides the British Army's heavy lift capability across the UK and on main land Europe. FTX Logistics also provides the Army with one third of the manpower to deliver this service.

### Positions available

**C+E DRIVERS** who want the opportunity to drive and operate one of the largest truck and trailer combinations on the road mixed with commercial driving local to your home address.

**HGV MECHANICS** to work at one of our two sites in the UK, Bulford Wiltshire and Catterick North Yorkshire.

All Driver Operators and Mechanics have a Sponsored Reservist commitment.

### Key points

- Commercial driving in your local area.
- HET work across the UK and Europe.
- You must be eligible to become a Sponsored Reservist.
- Very competitive salary based on average 48 hour week.
- Additional pay supplements are available.
- Download an application form on our web site

For further information visit our web site [www.ftxlog.com](http://www.ftxlog.com)

Call on 01980667119

E mail [philmitchell@ftxlog.com](mailto:philmitchell@ftxlog.com)

# Letters

## OUT OF CONTROL

I am writing regarding my concerns over the behaviour of UK car drivers, which I feel is running out of control. It's a nightmare every day. The stress levels, both in the workplace and when driving, is through the roof.

I will give you a rundown as to my daily run. Each day I drive up to 400 miles. I look in the mirror every minute to see whether a car is coming up on the inside, cutting me up on the driver side or tailgating.

Cars coming off slip roads is a big problem as car drivers are unaware how to deal with the approach onto the main motorway. They approach it at a slow speed, which causes the lorry to break hard causing all the traffic to build up fast causing accidents.

May I suggest making that part of the hard shoulder longer to enable the car on the slip road more time to find a gap. It wouldn't cost a lot to put that into action.

Car drivers need to be educated regarding the rules of the road. This can be done by garages giving out educational leaflets. Many accidents could be avoided by spelling out these rules on a daily basis.

I see every day large numbers of drivers that are clueless about which is the correct lane to be in and roundabouts are a fine example of that. Roundabouts are a nightmare for lorry drivers as car drivers are only interested in themselves and will cut up anyone that gets in their way.

Large numbers of drivers are approaching roundabouts at up to 50mph, which needs to be addressed. Signs need to be put up regarding the speed at roundabouts, plus clearer markings on the roads as to which lane they need to be in at roundabouts.

Am I right in saying that a foreign driver that now lives here is allowed to drive in this country

on their country licence? If so, this needs to be changed as I see so many foreign drivers that are involved in accidents.

The government should come down hard on people that do not give a damn and are breaking the law on a daily basis. They are doing so much damage on our roads and there is a big cost to the country as a result of time that is lost due to accidents.

I would like to see more respect from car drivers that give lorry drivers a very hard time and so much daily abuse.

Nearly everything that is in your house and car, plus the clothes you wear and the food you eat and drink is delivered by the lorry driver. But people are so brainless to understand that and have no consideration towards us.

**David Simpson**  
*Wisbech, Cambridgeshire*

## REVOKED LICENCE

I am writing to inform of the troubles I am having after my car licence was revoked in 2014.

I was employed by various haulage companies (mainly parcels) as a night trunk driver up to my retirement in 2011.

My licence to drive my car was revoked in 2014 and since then I have not driven.

Using the NHS I have had laser cataract and eye surgery to remove gel from around my left eyeball. Although my vision is considered 'good' by the hospital clinical

staff, they will not give me a letter to pass onto the drivers medical unit at the DVLA.

The re-instatement of my licence would help this and also my wife who has had open heart surgery and is not as mobile as she was previously.

In the past I have had three driving courses - police advanced, HGV III and HGV I. I served as a PC from 1968-1974 and I know how to observe the law.

**John Rogers**  
*Rotherham*

## LORRY DRIVER VICTIMISATION

Is there any other profession where one is prosecuted and fined substantial sums of money for working hard, long hours?

Why would any sane person become a professional lorry driver!

**Martyn Cook**  
*By email*



Let us know your views on the matters that affect our industry. We will try to include as many of your letters in future Wheels.

Email [info@urtu.com](mailto:info@urtu.com) or write to  
**Wheels, Almond House, Oak Green,  
Stanley Green Business Park,  
Cheadle Hulme, SK8 6QL**



# WHY?

Why are terms and conditions, facilities and pay so bad for drivers across the board? It's unsafe that drivers are planned 13 to 15 hour days. It's wrong that they sometimes tip on breaks to finish on time. Because who would want to spend anytime where they have to have their breaks bolt up right in their cabs? Why do drivers now have to unload in places they have never been or with kit they haven't been trained on? Why are yards so small that you can barely get on the bays. For store deliveries it's not uncommon to have to reverse through traffic. Why do transport offices always push and skirt the rules. Why is the pay so bad? Is it because a driver can't be any more efficient so let's not reward them correctly for the stresses and responsibilities. There needs to be action. There needs to be stronger CPC regulations. Why do we only get debriefings over our fuel consumption by

someone who can't drive or has never worked in the industry? Why is it so hard to get full time work unless you want to sign away your life to days with random shift start and finish times? The agencies need regulations too. We need to take the government and road haulage association to task and strike as drivers all together. Maybe push for a ten hour working day. If there's a shortage why exploit and demoralise workers? Those poor foreign drivers who work for general haulage for £8.50 an hour when they could push a trolley in Tesco for more. Royal Mail is a unionised workforce and they made a huge profit last year. Yet they pay their drivers £19 an hour. Please, I'm fed up in this industry. I'm young and I've invested a lot of money and time buying the licence and making myself a safe professional driver. There must be something we can do. It has to be radical.

**James Knaggs**  
*By email*

# MEDICATION

I would very much like views and opinions of 'Wheels' readers on the offence of driving under the influence of prescription medication.

- Have you been charge with driving under the influence of prescription medication?
- How well have you been informed by health providers about the prescription drugs you are taking?
- Have you told your employer you are taking prescription medication? If so, have they told their insurance providers or the DVLA Medical Branch?
- Have you been asked by their employer to change to non-driving duties while taking the prescription medication?
- Do you Drive aboard? If so, has this caused any issues in other countries, where UK prescription medication maybe actually illegal drugs?
- Are you disabled and having issues of prescription medication with regards accessible information?

If you can help me with my research, I would be very grateful if you could email Gurkhamum@gmail.com.

**David Hughes**  
*By email*

# NIGHT OUT

I am writing regarding HMRC requiring proof of expenditure for night out tax free allowance.

Myself and thousands of other hard working colleagues bring all of our food and weekly supplies from home where we have plenty of choice and free time at the weekend to make correct discussions regarding food and supplies for a week away on the queen's highway to try and maintain a healthy diet and to also avoid paying over inflated prices on motorway service areas

Also, I have also spoken to some drivers who have special dietary requirements ie. coeliac disease / ibs etc that all require special foods which are not available so easily when driving a 40 plus feet long.

I cannot believe that, yet again, we as drivers are being targeted and penalised by just going about doing a job that is already difficult and is becoming harder on a daily basis.

New drivers are not coming into the industry because of the financial constraints that are involved in becoming a driver ie. rising cost of getting a license/cpc/unattractive working conditions to name a few. And now this latest fiasco that has been introduced to, yet again, take away what is rightfully ours due to the inability to return home at night while fulfilling our duties.

I and many other drivers I have spoken to, have all agreed that all this is an underhanded way for the HMRC to gather information to basically say you do not require the £26.20 amount we receive currently and to, yet again, tax even more of our hard earned money.

What I and everybody else would like to know is why, yet again, drivers are being picked on and what about travelling salesmen contractors etc who also receive an allowance, which is greater than we receive. Are these people also being targeted or just the hard working driver, without who the country would grind to a halt?

We, as a body of drivers, should be gathering forces and lobbying Parliament to stop this underhanded practice now before it gets out of hand. Believe me, if we were French drivers, not a wheel would turn and we would be blockading the ports until this absolutely absurd infringement of our rights is yet again being exploited

**Matthew Northway**  
*By email*

# GRATITUDE

I am writing to express my absolute gratitude for all of the help and support offered by the Union in my court case against RF Transport. Even though the judge's decision was not in my favour, I feel that I have been heard and I feel vindicated. I was believed and my story was heard. This will help me rest more easily and I now finally have closure.

My best regards and thanks go to Bob Monks (URTU Acting General Secretary) and Paul

Gallagher (URTU Head Office Manager) for all of their input, without whom my case would not have been heard.

I would also like to express how well both Alex Barley and Matthew Snarr, my legal representatives, looked after me. I was always impressed by the high level of professionalism and respect given by them. My absolute gratitude is with them. I always remain supportive of you.

**Thomas Sangster**  
*Skegness*

# Your Shout

## WHAT'S THE POINT OF DRIVING FOR A LIVING IF IT'S GOING TO COST ME MORE MONEY IN MY PRIVATE LIFE?

In early January I had to renew my car insurance on both the wife's car and my own that I use for work. The quote given to me by the insurance company for my car was £237 and I was happy with the price.

Before I rang to accept the quote, another driver told me that if you have an accident in your company car (or truck in my case) you have to tell them about this.

So, to keep lawful, I rang the insurer and told them about three accidents that I was involved in:

- **August 2015:** Car went into the side of me at a roundabout.
- **March 2016:** Van drove into the back of my trailer.
- **December 2016:** Car drove into the back of my trailer.

All of these accidents were deemed 'non fault' for me as all third parties admitted responsibility, which is why I had not reported them before. My

understanding was that I only had to report 'fault accidents' until my friend told me otherwise.

As soon as I reported these accidents to the insurance company, they suddenly stated that I was high risk and refused to insure me at all, even though I protested that they were not my fault and that I was on company insurance anyway.

They said that it did not matter and that even 'non fault' accidents increase your premiums once reported.

I also told them that I am on the road every single day and possibly do more miles in a week than most do in a month, but in a truck not a car. But again, they did not care and still said I was high risk.

So now I find myself wondering, what's the point of driving for a living if it's going to cost me more money in my private life?

Also, the company insurance should be there to protect the driver as much as the company and

its vehicles. This commercial insurance is supposed to be allowing for more road use and higher mileage. So why am I classed as high risk for my private life? It's not my car that I do the deliveries in, it's a company artic.

This rule by the insurance companies doesn't just affect HGV drivers, it affects anyone who drives a company vehicle for a living. Plumbers, electricians, builders, milk floats and even pizza delivery drivers. What would happen if all these people learnt about the rule and decided that the job would not be worth doing and left for other work not involving a company vehicle?

I have written to my local MP regarding this situation but I'm under no illusion that this will get sorted out without the help of bigger organisations calling for a change in the rules. If you are driving a company vehicle you are under company insurance and should have nothing to do with your own insurance.

I was told that, because I had 'non fault'

accidents I'm at high risk of having another accident that is my fault within twelve months. When I told them that was rubbish and the fact I did not have an accident at all (fault or non fault) put their theory to an end, they just said, "It did not matter".

I have also done some digging about the way they get their information.

This is done using the Claims and Underwriting Exchange, or CUE to them.

According to the CUE, there are three types of accidents:

**Fault accidents** where the driver is to blame - so premiums will go up.

**Non fault accidents with a claim** - again premiums will go up but not as much.

**Non fault accidents with no claim** - this is classed as just a notification and should







# Free Distance Learning

## Learning opportunities for you, your family and friends

These short distance learning courses are available FREE of charge to anyone aged 19 and over who have lived in the EU for the past three years.

### Business

- Team Leading Knowledge
- Principles of Business
- Administration
- Customer Service Knowledge
- Information Advice and Guidance
- Stewarding
- Equality and Diversity

### Care

- Dignity and Safeguarding in Adult and Social Care
- Understanding End of Life Care
- Understanding Autism
- Understanding Working in Mental Health
- Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care
- Understanding the Safe Handling of Medicines
- Principles of Working with Individuals with Learning Disabilities
- Principles of the Prevention and Control of Infection in Health Care Settings
- Care Planning
- Customer Service for Health and Social Care
- Behaviour that Challenges
- Dyslexia and Other Specific
- Learning Difficulties

### Leisure & Interest

- Principles of Dementia Care
- Awareness of Mental Health Problems
- Understanding Nutrition and Health
- Understanding the Care and Management of Diabetes
- Common Health Conditions
- Caring for Children and Young People

If you would like to find out more or enrol onto one of our courses please contact:

Claire O'Brien (URTU Project Administrator)  
Telephone: 0161 486 2108 Email: [claire.obrien@urtu.com](mailto:claire.obrien@urtu.com)



not make a difference to your premiums. However, there is no allowance on this database for company vehicles and company drivers. I agree we are at high risk of having an accident because we are on the road all day, every day. But this is on commercial insurance in a commercial vehicle, not a private car. As HGV drivers we are now made to attend a CPC course every year just to keep our job and licence. But a car driver can pass their test many years ago and never look at the Highway Code book again for the rest of their driving life. This industry is in a poor state already and there is no young blood coming into this type of job. But this could be even worse if this was made common knowledge. Who in their right mind would agree to take the hit on their insurance if they had a non fault accident?

I have spoken to many drivers up and down the country since this has happened to me and many of them did not know that, if they did not report the accidents, it made their own car insurance null and void. What's more, every single one of them were going to ask their own companies if this was right and, if so, they were going to seek different work. The insurance companies are basically printing their own money at the moment and the government seems happy to allow them to do it. They are not regulated in their premium charges and each company has a different approach to 'non fault' accidents with some companies charging up to 39% more on your premiums for this.

Is it not the case that we have insurance so that the person who caused the accident takes the full force of the cost? But currently that's not the case and I wonder why we have no-claims bonus (NCB) at all.

I have 11 years NCB on one car in my household and eight years on another and this counted for nothing. I was still refused by a couple of insurers, with many others willing to insure me, but with massive cost in extra premiums. It was cheaper for me, with all my years as a so-called professional driver to get my wife (with no NCB) to be the main driver and me go as only a named driver.

In the end my wife saved the day and found the CO-OP insurance company who were willing to insure me as the main driver with very little extra cost.

**Mr R Melia**  
**Chadderton**

# Union Campaign

## LET'S SECURE GREAT JOBS

The world of work is changing. We have record numbers in work, but more than one in ten workers are in insecure jobs, where their basic rights are denied or ignored. We need no more and no less than great jobs for everyone. Everyone at work deserves a great job. A

great job is one where the worker is paid and treated fairly. And it's one where workers get opportunities to progress, to learn and to have a voice on what matters. That's why unions, including URTU, have come together to create the Great Jobs Agenda.

The Agenda will give the trade union movement a common set of bargaining asks in workplaces. And it sets out what we want the government to do to ensure that every worker has a great job with fair pay, regular hours and the opportunity to progress.

### Voice at Work

#### Why it matters

While an employer can ignore the views of a single worker, when workers come together in a union, employers have to listen. Collective bargaining raises pay and improves terms and conditions of work too.

And if we want an economy that works for everyone, workers need a voice in the boardroom to promote long-term thinking.

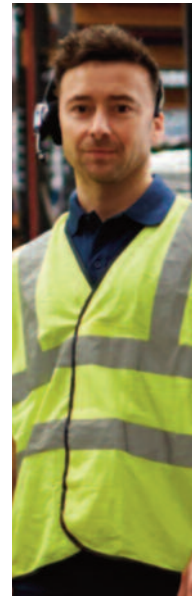
#### We want employers to:

- Recognise a trade union for collective bargaining on pay and conditions.
- Agree collective consultation arrangements.
- Establish the representation of elected workers on company boards

(or highest management body).

#### We want politicians to:

- Give unions a right to access workplaces to tell individuals about the benefits of joining a union.
- Ensure more employers consult on important changes.
- Let workers speak for themselves on company boards.
- Get businesses, unions and government together to discuss pay, training and conditions in low paid industries.



### Learning

#### Why it matters

In many occupations it is now essential for workers to acquire new skills as established ones become obsolete. Lifelong learning is vital if people are to maintain their earning potential and ensure the country has a skilled workforce.

Every £1 of government investment in the Union Learning Fund generates a total economic return of £12.30.

#### We want employers to:

- Negotiate with unions on quality apprenticeships and providing learning and progression opportunities for all.
- Make all employees aware of

### Decent Pay

#### Why it matters

Working people need their pay to start rising again and to have access to a high-quality workplace pension.

#### We want employers to:

- Negotiate pay settlements with a recognised union.
- Pay all workers at least the real Living Wage.
- Work towards total pension contributions of at least 15% of wages.
- Ensure that pay policies do not widen the ratio between top and bottom pay, and reduce the gender pay gap by carrying out regular pay audits.

#### We want politicians to:

- Increase the National Minimum Wage to £10 as quickly as possible, and make sure younger workers can benefit too.
- End the loophole that means agency staff can be paid less.
- End restrictions on public sector pay.
- Make sure everyone benefits from a decent pension.
- Crack down on gender and ethnicity pay gaps, and make sure employers publish the gap between top and bottom pay.

### Regular Hours

#### Why it matters

Over three million people now face insecurity at work. They often miss out on rights and protections that most take for granted. And they often get little notice of their shifts and rotas meaning it is difficult to plan their lives, particularly for working parents.

#### We want employers to:

- Avoid zero hours contracts (ZHCs). Give staff who want them contracts with guaranteed hours that reflect their normal working patterns.
- Agree a minimum notice period for allocating and changing shifts. Report on the use of ZHCs, short

hours  
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#### We want

- Make a statement from the
- Ban the ensure pay for complete
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# JOBS FOR EVERYONE

The Great Jobs Agenda is a charter for everyone. It helps you check whether you're in a great job. Unions can use it to negotiate for change. Employers can check how they're doing, and we all can use it to campaign for government action. We want workers to know when their job is

a great job or a rubbish job, we want employers to sign up to make all their jobs great jobs, and we want MPs and councillors to commit to making great jobs for all a possibility. The Great Jobs Agenda says all workers must:

- Be paid fairly.
- Work in a safe and healthy workplace.
- Be treated decently.
- Have regular hours.
- Get a voice on what matters at work.
- Get the chance to get on in life.

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and development rights, including the right to request time off for training or study.

- Recognise the rights of trade union learning reps and give employees time off to pursue union-led learning.

**We want politicians to:**

- Promote ways for people to learn throughout their lives, including new learning accounts.
- Give people new rights to a midlife career review, and face-to-face careers guidance.
- Provide free retraining programmes to targeted groups and make sure that further education is properly funded to deliver this.

## Fair treatment

**Why it matters**  
All workers deserve basic rights, respect, and the chance to get justice when something has gone wrong. But almost one in three workers have been bullied in the workplace. Many of the 3.2 million people in insecure employment also lack basic rights including statutory redundancy pay and family friendly rights.

**We want politicians to**

- Ensure all workers have the same rights currently enjoyed by employees.
- Ensure all individuals automatically qualify as employees, unless the employer proves they are genuinely self employed.
- Strengthen protection from harassment at work, and introduce rights for union equality reps.

**We want employers to:**

- Work with unions to put in place a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying at work.

contracts, and agency work in reports, and explain why they are using them.

**We want politicians to:**

- Ensure everyone gets a written statement of their pay and conditions on the first day of the job.
- Ban the regular use of ZHCs, and ensure all workers receive premium pay for any non contracted hours and compensation when shifts are cancelled at short notice.
- Ensure companies and public bodies report on how many people are employed in agency work, ZHCs and short hours, including through supply chains in their annual reports.



## Healthy workplaces

**Why it matters**  
A good working environment is vital to people's physical and mental health. But more than one million workers suffer from ill health that they think is related to their employment and around 23 million working days are lost each year due to injury or illness in the workplace.

**We want politicians to:**

- Make sure employers with 50+ employees have a joint health and safety committee.
- Place a duty on company directors to ensure good health and safety.
- Develop health and safety regulations on stress and a maximum temperature at work.

**We want employers to:**

- Have an active joint health and safety committee and trade union health and safety representatives.
- Implement a policy for workplace well-being.



# ABOUT URTU

The United Road Transport Union (URTU) has been in existence since 1890. We are a non-political organisation, dedicated to advancing the interests of those workers connected with the road transport, distribution and logistics industry.

## WHY YOU SHOULD JOIN URTU

- We want recognition of the vital contribution that the road transport industry and professional drivers in particular, make to the nation's economy.
- We want to ensure all those who employ road haulage workers understand their responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working environment.
- We want equality of opportunity for both existing workers and those seeking to join the road transport and distribution industry regardless of age, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion or creed.
- We want to ensure, as far as is practicable, that appropriate opportunities exist in the road transport and distribution industry for those who experience any form of disability.
- URTU is the oldest transport and distribution Union in the UK and is a member of the STUC, WTUC, TUC as well as ETF.

## WHAT URTU CAN DO FOR YOU

**The URTU provides a wide range of other benefits and services including:**

- Legal representation should you be injured at work.
- Representation in grievance and disciplinary matters.
- Free representation at Employment Tribunals, Medical Appeal Tribunals, Licensing Authority.
- Access to a free legal helpline.
- Sickness benefit (after qualifying period).
- Death grant.
- Hearings and DWP Appeals.
- Free Union magazine - 'Wheels', which is posted to your home bi-monthly.
- A Benevolent Fund, which provides free legal representation in Court should you be in a position where your licence is at risk and financial assistance to alleviate the hardship that might result from the imposition of fines for certain road traffic offences.
- Education and training opportunities.

Further details regarding Trade Union benefits, Law at Work, Drivers' Hours, Tachographs and the Union's Rule Book can be found in the Member's Diary, which is available to all who complete an application form and become members of the URTU.

**FREEPHONE 0800 526639**

**www.urtu.com info@urtu.com**





# Hugh Button

URTU member Hugh Button is a sufferer of Sleep Apnoea, which affects around 1.5 million people in the UK. Here he speaks to Wheels about the condition.

## Q What is Sleep Apnoea?

Sleep Apnoea is a condition where a person has one or more pauses in breath or has shallow breath whilst they are sleeping. These pauses can last from a few seconds up to a few minutes and lead to restless sleep. These pauses can occur 30 or more times an hour, typically normal breathing kicks in sometimes followed with a loud snore or a choking coughing sound. A person suffering from this condition may not realise or would have no recollection of these pauses in breath.

These pauses in breath were affecting me up to 76 times an hour, which resulted in my blood oxygen level dropping to 64%. In a healthy adult your oxygen levels should be around 98%.

## Q When did you realise you had the condition?

For as long as I can remember I have always snored, which did lead to being beaten up at boarding school when I was around 11 for waking the others with my snoring. Over the years it had got progressively worse and, at its peak, even led to sleep walking. It affected both my home and work life. I could not watch a film in the evening as I would just fall asleep. I could even fall asleep walking to the toilet in the night as I was that tired and exhausted.

As a driver I did a lot of tramping and could be away for full weeks at a time. I put the tramping down to the reason I was always feeling tired? My tiredness slowly got worse and started to affect my senses and I found it harder keeping alert and active at work. When the condition was at its worst, I would need to take short sleep breaks in the cab to be able to carry on. I reached the breaking point when, after a long driving shift, I parked the cab up for the day and fell asleep at the wheel. I knew then that I had to do something.

## Q How did you get diagnosed?

I visited my doctor and explained my symptoms. I was referred to a specialist and, as I live on the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire border, I had the choice of hospitals. There were two hospitals in Nottinghamshire, which both had a six to nine month waiting time but I was lucky and

got in at the Derbyshire Hospital where I was seen within seven weeks.

They monitored my sleep through a home sleep test. You would wear a finger clip at night, which records a person's pauses in breath and oxygen levels through the night. You then take it back to the hospital so they could look at the results.

It was after this test that they confirmed that I was a sufferer of Sleep Apnoea.

## Q How are you managing the condition?

I now have to wear at night a machine called a CPAP machine, this stands for Continuous Positive Airway Pressure. It is not the sexiest of things to wear but has improved my life immensely.

You put the mask over your face and the machine draws in air from the room. It then pressurises and filters it before delivering warm, moist air into your airways. This then stops your airways from closing and reduces pauses in breath.

Since I have started using the CPAP machine, it has reduced my pauses in breath from 76 times an hour to just 0.5 times an hour.

I now feel amazing and cannot believe how tired and ill the condition had made me feel.

## Q Are there any preventative steps?

There are no cures for the condition, you just

learn to manage it. I have found that drinking alcohol, even in small quantities, can increase the symptoms. A person's weight can also have an impact on the condition. If a person maintains a healthy weight this could reduce the symptoms.

## Q Have you received support?

I was lucky that I was able to be seen within seven weeks of visiting my doctor. People in other areas may have a longer waiting time. After being diagnosed I applied for a new job and, due to the condition, I had to go through extra medicals before I could start the job. I think this was due to lack of understanding and knowledge of the condition. But, it is best to be on the safe side and ensure that drivers, such as myself, are fit enough to undertake the role.

## Q What would you say to someone who thinks they may have it?

All I could say to anyone who thinks they may have this condition is go and see your doctor straight away. The quicker you can be diagnosed, the sooner you can start enjoying a healthy life and reduce the risk to you and other drivers around you. Being diagnosed is the best thing that has happened to me.



# Have A Rant

## SHIFT TIMES



### Gareth

I was booked to start my shift at 2am this morning and booked on

at 1.47am, which meant I had to leave home at 0.20am to get to work on time.

On arrival, I was told to go upstairs to the canteen, where there is only hard chairs, along with about 14 other drivers. We then sat on the most uncomfortable chairs for just over three hours or more in some cases.

I was then sent out on a run at 5.50am for a store delivery and back haul, which takes approximately 10 hours. In addition to this, after I left, the unit broke down and I had to return to the yard at 6.15am. I then left the

yard at 6.50am.

I asked if there was anyone else who could do this run because I had a pre-booked physio appointment, which was follow up treatment for my back and neck injury where I was forced to take a week off work. I was told there was no one else.

I actually arrived back home at 6.15pm. I had to cancel my appointment and was also expected to be back in work at 1am.

I said that I would be in for 3am, not 1am, so to take an 11 hour break off work, which I am entitled to. Of course, due to the traffic at this time of year and the time it took me to get home, I am obviously not getting 11 hours free from work and driving.

This sort of practice is putting lives at risk due to drivers being tired. I have now been awake for almost 20 hours. I am now going to bed and hope I can unwind enough to sleep as I will have to be up again at 1am. I have to allow at least two hours from getting up to get to work on time, due to the fact that the M4 is closed in certain places and the 15 minute walk into the office from the car park (That's 40 minutes getting ready and one hour and 20 minutes to get into work and to the office).

I feel this practice should be looked at under 'Health and Safety' and 'Welfare' of drivers.

**Gareth Williams**

### Allan

I can remember situations as described by Gareth as being the norm.

Managers do not give a toss for drivers health and wellbeing. They never have and I doubt they ever will.

Imagine a situation where one of our managers turns up for work at 09:00 for a

shift of nine hours, where they expect to be finished by 17:00. A duty time of eight hours.

On arrival at the office they are told their pen and paperclips are not ready for them, so they are sent upstairs to sit and wait for three hours on uncomfortable chairs.

At 12:00, they are recalled to their office where they are now able to push their pen and count their paperclips, but they must

now do this until 20:00. A full three hours beyond their expected finishing time. Supposing that prior to leaving for work and on a reasonable expectation of their finishing time, they had made plans to collect little Johnny from his footie training, then take the cat to the vets and then attend the important parent teacher meeting scheduled for that evening. Of course all of these family plans are then thrown into chaos by the incompetence of others.

Now I am prepared to wager that this kind of situation would not prevail for very long and a solution would be found in double quick time. Drivers have for too long been treated like second class citizens and are certainly not valued for the sterling work that they do on a regular basis.

The situation that Gareth describes is not an isolated incidence. Many drivers will attest to the fact that this kind of incidence is fairly normal. There is going to come a time when a disgruntled, tired driver is likely to be involved in a serious accident. Where will our managers be when the 's\*\*\* hits the fan'? Probably, as usual, "Not me Guv! Driver's responsibility!"

With power comes responsibility. You cannot have responsibility if you do not have the power to change things.

Any driver who complains is instantly labelled a troublemaker and is met with a shrug of the shoulders and the comment, "That's transport." This is tantamount to accepting incompetence as being the norm.

Thankfully I am nearing the end of my driving career and very soon will not have to venture into this cess pit.

**Allan Manning**





# Training Advice

## ARE YOU PLANNING ON STARTING A COURSE?

**URTU ULR Project Worker, Simon Walker, discusses why it is important that you have an initial assessment.**

Recently we have had a situation arise that have left some members with a debt under the student loan system. The learners enrolled on a Level 3 Diploma in Customer Service but failed to complete the course. This resulted in the learners having no qualification but still having to repay the Advanced Learner Loan.

When planning on undertaking any course it is important that an initial assessment is conducted. This is a process of identifying an individual's learning and support needs. Basically, it determines an individual starting point for their learning programme. In this case no assessment was carried out. Many of the learners were struggling to undertake the Diploma and, with the lack of additional support, didn't complete the work allocated. It could be argued that the company providing the Level 3 Diploma were driven more by the need to make profit than the requirement to support individual learners. In August 2016, the government, via the Skills Funding Agency, stopped funding Level 3 courses and above for all adults over the age of 19.

Learners are instead expected to fund their own learning. This can be done by direct payment or, what is more commonly the case, via the Advanced Learner Loan System. This basically means that you have to apply for the loan from one of the government's approved student loan providers.

The loans are repayable even if you withdraw from the course, however, you don't start repaying the loan until you earn £21,000 per year and above.

This can prove to be expensive, especially if you are on a course that you are struggling to complete.

If you are planning on starting any courses then it is important to make sure that you are able to work at the required level. This can be done by either by an initial assessment or by your record of prior learning. For example, if you have already completed a Level 2 course, then it is pretty safe to say that you will be capable of doing another Level 2 course or even moving to a Level 3. I

If you are starting a Level 3 course (or

above), then be careful of what you are agreeing. Be aware that you could be liable for the cost of that course even if you don't complete it.

It is also worth noting that some providers are far better than others and will support you on your learning journey. Others may not be so supportive.

The URTU Learning Project team is here to support you in your learning needs. If you are unsure about anything or need advice and guidance, then either contact your Union Learning Rep (ULR) or one of the Project Team.



### Repayment Examples

| Earnings per year | Repayment      |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Up to £21,000     | £0 per month   |
| £22,000           | £7 per month   |
| £25,000           | £30 per month  |
| £30,000           | £67 per month  |
| £35,000           | £105 per month |

# URTU Legal Helpline

Our **free** legal helpline  
offers advice on:

Data protection matters

Consumer problems

Clinical negligence

Education law

Insurance law

Criminal law

Family law

Defamation

Property

Small debts

Land disputes

Wills and probate

Neighbour disputes

Landlord and tenant disputes

Power of attorney and deputyships

**PLUS:** Employment advice for family members



Call **0800 916 9022** today



# URTU Course Dates 2018 - 19

Your Union is running training courses for Shop Stewards and Health & Safety Reps throughout 2018 and 2019 at Ruskin College in Oxford. If you are interested in taking part in any of the courses, please contact Claire O'Brien on 0161 486 2108 or email [claire.obrien@urtu.com](mailto:claire.obrien@urtu.com).

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>APRIL 2018</b><br>16 - 20 April<br>Advanced<br>Shop Steward      | <b>MAY 2018</b><br>14 - 18 May<br>Advanced<br>Health & Safety      | <b>JUNE 2018</b><br>11 - 15 June<br>Advanced<br>Shop Steward    |
| <b>SEPTEMBER 2018</b><br>17 - 21 September<br>Basic<br>Shop Steward | <b>OCTOBER 2018</b><br>15 - 19 October<br>Basic<br>Health & Safety | <b>JANUARY 2019</b><br>14 - 18 January<br>Basic<br>Shop Steward |
| <b>APRIL 2019</b><br>8 - 12 April<br>Advanced<br>Shop Steward       | <b>MAY 2019</b><br>13 - 17 May<br>Advanced<br>Health & Safety      | <b>JUNE 2019</b><br>3 - 7 June<br>Advanced<br>Shop Steward      |

Please note that you need to be a URTU Lay Official to attend any of the URTU courses. If you are not a Lay Official, please contact your URTU Regional Officer to find out how you can get involved by becoming a URTU Shop Steward, Health & Safety Rep or Union Learning Rep.

**For more information about URTU course dates, call 0161 486 2108 or visit [www.urtu.com](http://www.urtu.com). All URTU courses are subject to availability.**

# Learning News

## CALLING ALL URTU REPS

### Have you dealt with a domestic violence case?

University researchers would like to speak to URTU reps who have supported a member experiencing domestic violence. The researchers from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and Sheffield Hallam University are exploring the role that trade unions can play if an employee is a victim / survivor of domestic violence, and how it impacts within workplaces. Sadly, domestic violence is an issue that is affecting members, with a TUC survey finding 13% of staff are experiencing domestic violence.

Government statistics show that 30% of women and 16% of men in the UK suffer from domestic abuse during their lifetime. However, it is important to recognise that abuse affects people of all races, ages, sexualities, incomes, occupations and other personal characteristics. Although the term domestic violence is typically used, it also includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional forms of abuse. It isn't very well known, but domestic violence can also affect people at work. It can reduce their performance, attendance and career development. Perpetrators can also continue

the abuse at the workplace. Sometimes the workplace can be a haven from domestic violence, offering support and resources. Yet far too often employers lack the skills and knowledge to handle domestic violence, and victims may lose their job. The researchers recently did a small project on the role played by trade unions, and found that representatives were a source of support for both victims and organisations in helping them better handle domestic violence in the workplace. For instance, reps can help an employee to keep their job and access organisational support if experiencing domestic abuse. Yet it can be very challenging and more information and resources are required for representatives, organisations and victims/survivors. To understand more about how trade unions can support victims of domestic violence at work, the researchers are conducting short confidential interviews with union representatives and officials across the North of England. The interview will be arranged at a time and place to suit you. The aim is to be able to share knowledge and best practice about how to support members suffering from domestic violence. If you would like to help with the research please contact Dr Gemma Wibberley gwibberley@uclan.ac.uk or 01772 894674.


For support and more information about domestic violence:  
 For women - [www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)  
 For men - [www.mensadvice.org.uk](http://www.mensadvice.org.uk)



## URTU LEARNING - MEET THE TEAM




**Jeff Latham**  
 Project Manager  
 07775852987  
[jeff.latham@urtu.com](mailto:jeff.latham@urtu.com)



**Claire O'Brien**  
 Project Administrator  
 07736269463  
[claire.obrien@urtu.com](mailto:claire.obrien@urtu.com)



**Judith Swift**  
 Project Worker  
 07809342218  
[judith.swift@urtu.com](mailto:judith.swift@urtu.com)



**Simon Walker**  
 Project Worker  
 07903319995  
[simon.walker@urtu.com](mailto:simon.walker@urtu.com)



# Learn to use the Internet

It is more important than ever that people learn how to use a computer to get online. Many workplaces are now using electronic devices and services are increasingly moving online. Using a computer can also be fun and enjoyable and save you money!

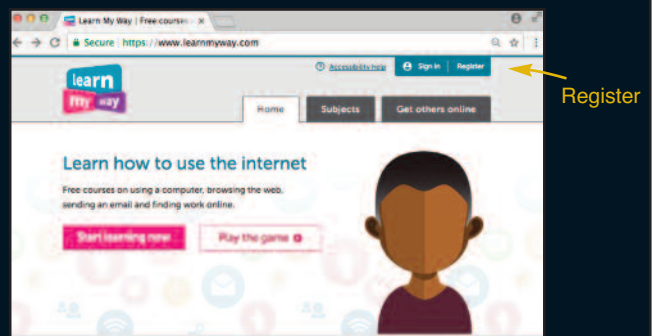
To help people learn computer skills and get online, URTU Learning have teamed up with Learn My Way to offer free courses including browsing the web, sending an email and finding work online.

This fun and friendly resource will help people

gain the skills and confidence to use a computer.

If you would like to access these courses visit the Learn My Way website ([www.learnmyway.com](http://www.learnmyway.com)) and register by following the information below:

**1** Visit [www.learnmyway.com](http://www.learnmyway.com) and click on 'Register'



**2** On 'Register' page complete your details and under 'Centre' type:

**3451706** - URTU Head Office

Once completed, press 'Register for Free' and start your free online training courses.

If you do not have an email address, click this box

Choose a password

Type **3451706** here



## URTU Power Banks

We are giving away free URTU Learning Power Banks to members who register on Learn My Way using URTU Learning Centre number - 3451706. All you need to do is:

1. Register on [www.learnmyway.com](http://www.learnmyway.com).
2. Include the URTU Learning Centre number (**3451706**) when registering.
3. Complete one unit on the Learn My Way site.
4. Email your username and delivery address to [claire.obrien@urtu.com](mailto:claire.obrien@urtu.com) on the URTU Learning Project.

Once your details have been checked, we will post you out your free URTU Learning Power Bank.



# Glaisyers Solicitors

**Big on expertise, small on jargon**



## Who are Glaisyers?

Our team of solicitors are a friendly, professional bunch, who come from all walks of life and all love working in our bright, modern offices in the heart of Manchester.

Here, we like to make things simple and straightforward, so we promise not to bamboozle you with legal jargon or bore you with stuffy language. Throughout your journey with us, we want you to always feel welcome and relaxed. You provide the initial information and then leave it to us to do the rest to secure the best result possible in your claim.

**If you've had an accident or suffered an injury we know that life can be very stressful indeed. We understand, we've helped lots of people in your situation.**

## Who will be dealing with your claims?

Nicki Simmons is a Senior Solicitor and Head of the PI department. Nicki has over 25 years' experience in specialising in personal injury claims. She is very experienced in both complex and high value claims. Nicki will ensure you recover the highest possible damages for your accident.

Nicki's main areas of expertise are accident at work cases, slips, trips and falls, industrial disease claims to include industrial deafness, vibration white finger, contact dermatitis, latex allergy, occupational asthma and accidents caused by Defective Equipment.

Nicki runs her own cases from start to finish providing the personal service she believes each of her clients deserves throughout their claim. She attends to every detail with precision whilst always maximising the damages she receives for her clients as her end result.

She has spent 25 years dedicated to helping people who get injured through no fault of their own. In short, she gets her clients the financial, medical and other help they deserve and supports them as they get their lives back on track.

A Senior Barrister has provided an accurate and true testament:

*"Nicki ... has the ability to not only cut to the heart of the matters that she is litigating but, in my opinion, has the more crucial capacity to empathise with her clients and ensure that they are taken through the litigation process with as much ease as possible. She genuinely cares about obtaining the best outcome for the people that she works for. This important quality is, in my view, becoming rarer in litigation. But it achieves the best results. ... I know very few harder working individuals. Whilst you ask about honesty and integrity, which are qualities of Nicki that are not in question, I think the issues that I have described above give a flavour of that but also set her apart from anyone that I have worked with at my time at the Bar."*

**Contact details: [njs@glaisyers.com](mailto:njs@glaisyers.com) Tel: 0161 833 5674**

## Personal Injury relating to Accidents at work

Your employers have a legal responsibility to ensure your safety and protect your health and welfare while you are at work.

If you have been injured at work or have had a workplace accident, even if it was the fault of a work colleague or another company, then we can help you claim the compensation you deserve.

Our personal injury experts have vast experience of helping people injured at work. Perhaps it's an injury that's happened as a result of a fall, slip or trip, manual handling, a repetitive strain or exposure to dangerous substances. Whether it's a lifting injury or one caused by faulty equipment or dangerous machinery, we can help.

Whatever your circumstances, our friendly and professional, personal injury lawyers will take the time to listen and understand your situation, before giving straightforward advice.

## The URTU Personal Injury Scheme

URTU and Glaisyers are working together to ensure you get the financial, medical and other help they deserve.

## Who can use this scheme?

- Any member (and their family) who suffers an injury or disease at work.
- Any member (and their family) who suffers an injury travelling to or from work.
- Any member (and their family) who suffers an injury outside work and which causes them to be absent from work for any period.
- It also includes accidents which occur away from work, but are not connected with it, which results in an injury causing absence from work.

## Why use the URTU Personal Injury Scheme?

- You will receive 100% of the compensation that is awarded.
- You will not have to pay anything to the Union Solicitors.
- There are no legal expenses as the Union covers the risk and no insurance is required.
- We will ensure that your case is handled by an expert with over 25 years in dealing with cases such as yours.
- Our members deserve 1st class solicitors and a 1st class service and URTU have worked hard with Glaisyers to ensure this is what you will get.

## How to Claim

**Email [info@urtu.com](mailto:info@urtu.com) or call URTU on FREEPHONE 0800 526 639 to request an application form and let us do the rest.**



# URTU PRESIDENT VACANCY

There is to be an election for URTU President. The timetable appears opposite. All candidates must be in compliance with rule 16 and have been in continuous membership for five years up to the closing date for nominations, **26 April 2018**.

The Electoral Reform Services have been appointed as our independent scrutineers and they will be sending ballot forms to all in-benefit members' homes for whom we have addresses. The appropriate nomination form appears below and if you wish to nominate you should complete the form and return it to Head Office by **26 April 2018**.

Only the below form will be accepted. Nominations cannot be made by facsimile transmission, photocopy or any other alternative means.

## TIMETABLE

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Nomination Forms to be returned to Head Office by .....  | <b>26/4/18</b>         |
| Nominees to confirm their acceptance and submit their Election Addresses to Head Office by ..... | <b>17/5/18</b>         |
| Election period from .....   | <b>2/7/18 - 6/9/18</b> |
| Ballot results declared .....  | <b>5/10/18</b>         |
| Elected Member to take up seat at the NEC Meeting on .....                                       | <b>8/12/18</b>         |
| Ballot results published in December 2018 edition of 'Wheels'                                    |                        |

## NOMINATION FORM FOR URTU PRESIDENT

This form must be completed in every detail, so as not to be declared 'void', and returned to **URTU, Almond House, Oak Green, Stanley Green Business Park, Cheadle Hulme, SK8 6QL**  
NO LATER THAN FIRST POST ON **26 April 2018**.  
All candidates must be in compliance with Rule 16.

**PLEASE NOTE:- ONLY THIS FORM IS ACCEPTABLE. E-MAILED FORMS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

MEMBER NOMINATING ..... MEMBERSHIP NO .....

BRANCH/SECTION NO ..... SIGNED.....

PLEASE PRINT (**One nomination allowed**)

I WISH TO NOMINATE .....

MEMBERSHIP NO ..... BRANCH/SECTION NO .....

ADDRESS .....

If you have not received confirmation from Head Office by **26 April 2018** that this nomination form has been received, please notify Head Office immediately by telephone and confirm in writing.

THIS SECTION IS FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

This form was received (date) ..... and accepted

This form was received (date) ..... and is void because





# NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER VACANCY FOR REGION 1

There is to be an election for a National Executive Committee member for Region 1. The timetable appears opposite. All candidates must be in compliance with rule 15 and have been in continuous membership for three years up to the closing date for nominations, **26 April 2018**.

Please note that you need to be a member of Region 1 (i.e. your branch number begins with 1) to nominate and the member you are nominating must also be a member of Region 1.

The Electoral Reform Services have been appointed as our independent scrutineers and they will be sending ballot forms to all in-benefit members' homes for whom we have addresses. The appropriate nomination form appears below and if you wish to nominate you should complete the form and return it to Head Office by **26 April 2018**.

Only the below form will be accepted. Nominations cannot be made by facsimile transmission, photocopy or any other alternative means.

## TIMETABLE

Nomination Forms to be returned to Head Office by ..... **26/4/18**

Nominees to confirm their acceptance and submit their Election Addresses to Head Office by ..... **17/5/18**

Election period from ..... **2/7/18 - 6/9/18**

Ballot results declared ..... **5/10/18**

Elected Member to take up seat at the NEC Meeting on ..... **8/12/18**

Ballot results published in December 2018 edition of 'Wheels'

## NOMINATION FORM FOR REGION 1 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

This form must be completed in every detail, so as not to be declared 'void', and returned to **URTU, Almond House, Oak Green, Stanley Green Business Park, Cheadle Hulme, SK8 6QL**  
**NO LATER THAN FIRST POST ON 26 April 2018.**  
All candidates must be in compliance with Rule 15.

**PLEASE NOTE:- ONLY THIS FORM IS ACCEPTABLE. E-MAILED FORMS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

**PLEASE NOTE YOU MUST BE A MEMBER OF REGION 1 TO NOMINATE AND THE MEMBER YOU NOMINATE MUST ALSO BE IN REGION 1.**

MEMBER NOMINATING ..... MEMBERSHIP NO .....

BRANCH/SECTION NO ..... SIGNED.....

PLEASE PRINT (**One nomination allowed**)

I WISH TO NOMINATE .....

MEMBERSHIP NO ..... BRANCH/SECTION NO .....

ADDRESS .....

If you have not received confirmation from Head Office by **26 April 2018** that this nomination form has been received, please notify Head Office immediately by telephone and confirm in writing.

THIS SECTION IS FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

This form was received (date) ..... and accepted

This form was received (date) ..... and is void because





URTU collects and maintains personal information in order to carry out its functions as a trade union, provide membership services and comply with certain statutory obligations. All personal information is treated with the utmost confidentiality and with appropriate levels of security. By joining URTU you agree that we may use the information about you to the running of the Union, including the maintenance of records to assist with employment disputes, ballots, injury claims and other services and benefits. All information (updated as appropriate) will be kept throughout membership. It will be available to our employees, officials, and other organisations associated with the Union. Where the Union uses the services of such organisations, they are obliged to process your data on behalf of the Union as data processor in a secure and confidential manner. You also have the right to ask for a copy of the information (for which a fee can be charged of £10) and to request correction of any information held. This notice will be amended from time to time and will be regularly published by the Union in 'Wheels' and on the URTU website.

DATA PROTECTION ACT NOTICE

## PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY

Please complete the form overleaf in full as clearly as possible.

Return the **WHOLE** form to the **United Road Transport Union**.

Your date of entry to the Union will be the date the form is received by Head Office and all benefits will accrue from that date.

We will then forward the signed instruction to your bank or Building Society and the first date of deduction will normally be a fortnight from the Friday following receipt of the form at Head Office.

You should receive a confirmation letter together with your membership card before the first deduction.

**ALL INSTRUCTIONS TO PAY YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS BY DIRECT DEBIT CAN BE CANCELLED AT ANY TIME BY YOU INSTRUCTING EITHER YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY.**



**UNITED ROAD TRANSPORT UNION**  
 Almond House, Oak Green,  
 Stanley Green Business Park,  
 Cheadle Hulme, SK8 6QL  
 FREEPHONE 0800 526639 / 0161 486 2100

### Application for Membership by Direct Debit

Title..... First Name(s) ..... Surname .....

Address .....

..... This address will be used for balloting purposes .....

..... Postcode .....

Home Tel No ..... Mobile Tel No .....

E-mail ..... Date of birth .....

Occupation ..... Branch Ref (if known).....

Name and address of employer .....

..... Depot .....

**Contribution Scale** Please tick against how often you wish to pay

|                         | Monthly                         | Quarterly                       | Half-Yearly                     | Annually                         |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (Driver)<br>Scale A+BF  | £14.94 <input type="checkbox"/> | £44.84 <input type="checkbox"/> | £89.70 <input type="checkbox"/> | £179.39 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (Non-Driver)<br>Scale A | £13.03 <input type="checkbox"/> | £39.09 <input type="checkbox"/> | £78.20 <input type="checkbox"/> | £156.40 <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Part-Time               | £7.24 <input type="checkbox"/>  | £21.72 <input type="checkbox"/> | £43.44 <input type="checkbox"/> | £86.89 <input type="checkbox"/>  |

**Notes on Contribution Scales**  
 Driver A+BF means your membership includes participation in the URTU's Benevolent Fund, designed specifically for drivers. Part-time staff are those working less than 20 hours per week.

Are you at present / recently a member of any trade union? Yes  No

If yes, name of union ..... Membership No .....

In the event of being admitted into the above trade union, I agree to conform to the current rule book.

Signed ..... Date .....

Your date of entry to the Union will be the date the form is received by Head Office and all benefits will accrue from that date.

**For office use**  
 Membership No ..... Date of Entry .....



### Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit



Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:  
**United Road Transport Union, Almond House, Oak Green,  
 Stanley Green Business Park, Cheadle Hulme, SK8 6QL**

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

To: The Manager  
 Bank/Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Bank/building society account number

Branch sort code

Service user number

9 1 4 6 0 9

Reference (For office use only)

**Instruction to your bank or building society**  
 Please pay United Road Transport Union Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with United Road Transport Union and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Signatures

Date

### The Direct Debit Guarantee

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account. This Guarantee should be detached and retained by the payer.



- This Guarantee is offered by all banks and building societies that accept instructions to pay Direct Debits
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit United Road Transport Union will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed. If you request United Road Transport Union to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by United Road Transport Union or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society
- If you cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society, Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us:
  - If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when United Road Transport Union asks you to
  - You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us: