

# ASLEF members vote in favour of more strike action

February 15, 2024



Train driver's union **ASLEF** is urging rail operators and government to negotiate with its members, who have voted "overwhelmingly" in favour of more strikes.

ASLEF General Secretary Mick Whelan said that the vote represented a "clear rejection" of the pay offer put forward by the Rail Delivery Group (RDG) in April 2023.

Mick Whelan added: "But we remain open and willing, as ever, to talk about a revised offer. That's why we are asking the Secretary of State for Transport, or the Rail Minister Huw Merriman, to come and meet us. Mr Harper hasn't seen fit to talk to us since December 2022; Mr Merriman has not been in the room with us since January 2023; and the RDG has not talked to us since April last year.

"Today we are saying, clearly, to Mr Harper, Mr Merriman, the RDG and the TOCs, come and talk to us. Let's sit around the table and negotiate. You don't want any more strikes, and we do not want to be forced

to take any more industrial action, although we have the renewed mandates to do just that.

“We want to find a resolution to this dispute, for members who have not had a pay rise since our last deals ran out in 2019, and the only way to resolve this dispute is for the employers, and the government that stands behind them, to come and talk to us.

“That’s why I’m saying the ball is in your court. We are ready to talk. Are you?”

A spokesperson for **Rail Delivery Group** said: “We want to give our people a pay rise, but the ASLEF leadership need to recognise that in an industry where taxpayers are continuing to contribute an extra £54m a week to keep services running post covid, any pay rise must be fair and sustainable.

“Instead of staging more damaging industrial action which will continue to result in huge disruption for our customers and staff, we call on the ASLEF leadership to work with us to resolve this dispute and deliver a fair deal which makes the changes needed to make services more reliable and punctual and secure a bright, long-term future for our people.”

Dates of fresh strike action

ASLEF has also released the dates of fresh overtime bans and strikes, which will affect **LNER** and **Northern**.

Northern’s ASLEF members are set to walk out on Friday 1 March, while an overtime ban will be in place on the network between Thursday 29 February and Saturday 2 March.

ASLEF members at LNER will also strike on Friday 1 March. Disruption is expected across both networks during the strikes.

The union (which is in dispute with 16 rail operating companies) stated that this industrial action was due to Northern and LNER’s “failure to adhere to the machinery of negotiation.”

Commenting on the pay offer put forward in April 2023, Mick Whelan added: “The RDG knew the offer would be rejected because we had told them that a land grab for all the terms & conditions we have negotiated over the years would be unacceptable.

“Since then our members have voted, time and again, for strikes. That’s why Mark Harper, the Transport Secretary, is being disingenuous when he says that offer should have been put to members. Drivers obviously wouldn’t vote for industrial action, again and again and again, if they thought that was a good offer. They don’t. That offer was dead in the water in April last year – and I think Mr Harper knows that.”