

RMT launches 'No Cuts at Network Rail' campaign

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The RMT union has launched the next phase of a campaign over concerns about Network Rail plans which is claimed could result in thousands of job losses by this September and a wholesale dilution of safety standards, including halving the frequency of safety critical maintenance work.

As well as preparing for a national dispute the length and breadth of the railway the union has officially kicked off its "NO CUTS AT NETWORK RAIL" campaign across the labour movement with a social media roll-out and with campaign materials mailed out directly to all Network Rail members.

In response, Network Rail's Chief Executive Andrew Haines says they want to work constructively with the unions to create an industry fit for the 21st century that is genuinely safe, efficient and effective for everyone.

In launching the campaign, the RMT says the attack on jobs and safety comes on top of an attempt by the company to implement an open-ended pay freeze on Network Rail workers and a wholesale attack on working conditions.

RMT General Secretary Mick Cash said: "Under orders from the Government Network Rail is using the COVID-19 drop in passenger numbers and service levels to rush through the most radical restructuring of

the railway infrastructure since privatisation.

“RMT is launching the next phase of the campaign to fight to stop those lethal cuts whilst at the same time preparing the ground for a national industrial dispute.

“Rather than the post COVID-19 return to rail recovery which our economy and climate desperately needs this is a return to the disastrous days of Railtrack where cutting costs and corners led to a string of fatal accidents.

“Rail staff, who have been essential workers throughout the pandemic, have already had a kick in the teeth with an attempt to impose the government’s pay freeze. Now they are threatened with the loss of thousands of jobs accompanied by a drastic dilution of safety tasks, which will have catastrophic consequences for rail safety.

“Every rail worker and every rail passenger has a stake in this fight and we intend to focus and target the opposition through RMT’s “NO CUTS AT NETWORK RAIL” campaign.”

In response, Network Rail’s Chief Executive Andrew Haines, said: “Outdated practices, and the impact of COVID on passenger numbers, show that the railway is not serving passengers, taxpayers or staff as well as it should.

“That’s why we want to work constructively with the unions to create an industry fit for the 21st century that is genuinely safe, efficient and effective for everyone.

“I hope the unions will recognise and embrace the need to modernise and will work with us to improve Britain’s rail network.”