

# Strikes: day two of industrial action

June 23, 2022



The second day of the strike, anecdotally, brought less people to some of the railways than the first, with potential travellers heeding warnings from train operators to avoid the railways.

Some it seems have been because of adjustment to the industrial action, with [Virgin Media O2](#) telling the BBC it has seen a 10% lift in usage on Tuesday and 5% week-on-week rise, suggesting more are working from home. Like Tuesday, there hasn't been quite the chaotic rise in traffic some might have anticipated, either: [TomTom says](#) congestion levels were 13% higher in London, but there was just 2% more journey time in Manchester.

We have also reported the Conservative government has pushed ahead with plans to allow businesses to take on agency workers in a strike — a move that may have limited effect in rail where specialist roles take years of education, training and experience. [You can read about that here.](#)

Meanwhile, research has said that searches for the phrase “join union” have jumped 187% to their highest level in more than a year.

A spokesperson from [Workello](#), which carried out the research, commented on the findings: “This week the British public have been faced with trains up and down the country coming to a standstill as a result of

these strikes by RMT, leading to difficulties getting to work, attending events and appointments.

“However, the strikes have also encouraged a surge of online interest in joining a trade union, indicating the massive impact that strikers are having across the country. With more strikes across other sectors rumoured to take place in the future, it will be interesting to see whether these searches continue to rise, especially if strikers achieve their desired outcome.”

Meanwhile, in Rwanda, Boris Johnson said that he thought strikes were a “terrible idea” and “unnecessary”.

**He told reporters:** “This is a government that is investing more in railways than any previous government in the last 50 years.

“To have a great future for rail, for railway workers and their families, we have got to have some sensible reforms and that is things like reforming ticket offices – I did a huge amount of that when I was running London.”

UK Hospitality told the BBC it believed that the strikes could cost its sector half a billion in lost revenue.

## Other union strike action

Meanwhile, TSSA has said it has served notice to ballot dozens of members at Trans Pennine Express for strike action and action short of strike in a dispute over pay, conditions and job security.

The union is demanding a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies for 2022, no unagreed changes to terms and conditions, and a pay increase which reflects the rising cost of living.

The ballot opens on 29 June and closes 13 July.

TSSA General Secretary, Manuel Cortes, said: “Rail workers were hailed as heroes in the pandemic and now they deserve a real terms pay rise which keeps pace with inflation, rather than shouldering the burden of the Tories’ economic meltdown.

“Our demands are simple – pay which reflects the times we live in, a deal which delivers job security, and no race to the bottom on terms and conditions.

“It’s time the government changed course. Instead of making cuts across our railway the DfT should either give TransPennine and other companies the signal to make us a reasonable offer, or ministers should come to the negotiating table and speak to us directly.

“The alternative is a fast-approaching summer of discontent across our rail network.”

Other sectors have raised the possibility of strikes and today, and UNISON has explicitly stated the need for a pay boost. UNISON members have been among those appearing on picket lines in a show of support to the RMT rail staff.

UNISON assistant general secretary Jon Richards said on inflation: “There seems no limit to how bad this crisis can get. This is little short of a nightmare.

“Inflation has hit another high, yet the government talks of public sector pay restraint. Ministers are clearly living on another planet.

“Under-pressure health, care, school and council services desperately need staff to be given a pay boost that matches runaway prices.

“Without decent wages, the UK risks its public services falling apart, as key workers call it quits and opt for better paid, less stressful work elsewhere.”

Meanwhile, RMT has now said it has declared a dispute over the outsourcing of London Underground cleaners. RBD has reached out the the Mayors office and TfL for comment.