

TSSA re-ballot for strike action

November 28, 2022



Rail union TSSA has announced a re-ballot of rail workers for strike action in seven train operating companies in the ongoing dispute over pay, jobs and conditions.

The union is balloting more than 1,600 operational, station, control and management staff, for strike action and action short of strike. Ballots will be held throughout December with results due just before Christmas.

The companies being re-balloted are:

- Avanti West Coast (ballot runs: 2 Dec – 19 Dec)
- CrossCountry (ballot runs: 2 Dec – 22 Dec)
- East Midlands Railway (ballot runs: EMR) (ballot runs: 2 Dec – 22 Dec)
- LNER (ballot runs: 2 Dec – 22 Dec)
- Northern (ballot runs: 2 Dec – 22 Dec)
- Southeastern (ballot runs: 2 Dec – 22 Dec)
- Transpennine Express (TPE) (ballot runs: 2 Dec – 22 Dec)

Ballot mandates in some other train operators remain live for a longer period because the original ballot was held later, but these will also be re-balloted if no offer is tabled. The re-ballot is necessary because

anti-trade union legislation requires unions to re-run ballots every six months to keep them 'live', unless employers agree to extend for up to a further three months, which employers have declined.

TSSA called off industrial action when an invite to talks with the Rail Delivery Group (acting on behalf of train operators) was made on 4 November. The union has been in three weeks of intensive talks with the RDG, and while it says progress has been made, no offer has yet been tabled. TSSA says it remains committed to achieving a negotiated settlement, but the lack of an offer and current timescales means the union has no option but to ballot members a second time for industrial action to prevent mandates expiring before talks conclude.

The ballot timetable is:

Ballot opens: 2 December

Ballot closes: 22 December (19 December for Avanti)

Nadine Rae, TSSA organising director, said: "This re-ballot is vital to keep the pressure on employers for a deal.

"The incredible determination and strength of our members is what dragged employers back to the negotiating table, and we hope that this re-ballot will focus minds on achieving a settlement without the need for further action. But be in no doubt, we stand ready to call further strike action unless an offer is tabled.

"The issues our members across the railways face haven't changed – they deserve job security, protection of their terms and conditions, and a pay rise.

"No one wants to be striking in the run up to Christmas or starting the new year in dispute, but with inflation rocketing, and real take-home pay worth less, employers and government must realise that workers across our railways will not back down. A decent offer must be made."

TSSA says talks with the RDG have been held for three weeks and further talks are scheduled for this week.

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