

Union says UK's "biggest rail strike in modern history" could begin in June

April 20, 2022



More than 40,000 workers at Network Rail and 15 train operating companies will be balloted for strike action in what union RMT describes as "potentially the biggest rail strike in modern history."

RMT says Network Rail intends to cut at least 2,500 safety critical maintenance jobs as part of a £2bn reduction in spending on the network.

Furthermore, it adds operating company staff have been subject to pay freezes and changes to their terms and conditions.

The ballot opens April 26 and closes May 24. If members vote "yes" in the ballot in enough numbers, RMT says a national railway strike could begin as early as June.

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said: "Railway workers have had to contend with pay freezes, the prospect of losing their jobs and repeated attacks on their terms and conditions.

"Removing 2,500 safety critical jobs from Network Rail will spell disaster for the public, make accidents

more likely and will increase the possibility of trains flying off the tracks.

“Train Operating Companies have praised our members for being key workers during the pandemic but have refused to keep staff pay in line with inflation and soaring living costs.

“As a result, thousands of railway workers have seen their living standards plummet and have run out of patience.

“The way for trade unions to effectively take on the cost-of-living crisis is to stand up for their members at work and take industrial action when employers are not moved by the force of reasoned argument.

“A national rail strike will bring the country to a standstill, but our members’ livelihoods and passenger safety are our priorities.”