

Online meeting

# COVID-19: Organise rank-and-file health and safety committees for bus and transport workers!

1 June 2020

The Socialist Equality Party (UK) invites bus, rail, and tube workers to attend an online meeting to discuss an international strategy to combat the coronavirus pandemic. The SEP is calling for the formation of rank-and-file health and safety committees independent of the trade unions.

In London, 43 transport workers, including 33 bus drivers and co-workers, have died from COVID-19. Last week, funerals were held for bus drivers from Holloway garage and Bexley Heath garage in London and from a Stagecoach garage in Lancashire.

For more than three months, no action was taken to protect bus and transport workers. Labour Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, Transport for London (TfL), the private transport companies and trade unions including Unite, joined together to insist that PPE for drivers was “not required.”

The only safety measures adopted were those introduced by drivers. As news emerged that their colleagues were dying, they began taping doors, covering security screens and taping off seats near their cabins, defying threats of disciplinary action.

All of the measures introduced subsequently by TfL were too little, too late. Despite high COVID-19 infection rates and warnings from its own scientists that ending the lockdown is dangerous, the Johnson government is proceeding with its back-to-work plans.

Millions of workers and children are being herded back this week to workplaces and schools. Public transport will be inundated. This makes a mockery of the government’s travel advice—repeated by TfL—that social distancing of two metres is “advisable.” The health, safety and lives of transport workers must not

be sacrificed to the dictates of the financial oligarchy!

Sunday’s online meeting will hear reports from bus and rail workers in London. They will be joined by Andy Niklaus, a bus driver from Berlin and a member of the Socialist Equality Party (Germany), and by *World Socialist Web Site* reporter Daniel De Vries from New York, who will speak about the deaths of more than 100 NYC subway workers from COVID-19.

The meeting will be open for discussion in order to develop an independent socialist strategy for the working class.

*Online meeting*

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Sunday June 7, 2pm (British Summer Time)

London, Berlin, New York

Register

at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5967909829317025292>

To dial in:

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365-269-256



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**