

UK postal workers expose grinding exploitation by Royal Mail, overseen by Communication Workers Union

“Bullying is rife in the business, and the top union reps are just frustrated managers and go along with all Royal Mail's business plans”

Our correspondents
22 March 2023

The World Socialist Web Site is publishing correspondence from postal workers around the country, angry over the endless drive to ratchet up exploitation by Royal Mail.

They are refusing to be silenced by the Communication Workers Union (CWU) which is viewed as unaccountable to its members and only interested in retaining its cosy relations with management.

The latest batch of correspondence was received from the following areas: London, Sandwich, Horsham, Amersham, Wednesbury, Bridgwater, Hutton, Nottingham, Carnforth, Liverpool, Saltcoats in Scotland and Belfast in Northern Ireland.

Our manager treats us like dirt, regularly threatens us all with the sack for any tiny misdemeanour. Our rounds are huge and another “bolt on” has just been added. They're just impossible to do. We're all shattered and completely frustrated by the way we're all treated. Our union is an embarrassment as well, 18 days of strikes (lost pay) and we're no closer to a deal. Our company's become a laughing-stock over the past 2 years. What an embarrassment.

I was given the day off. When I returned on Monday all the mail for Saturday was still in the frame. Totally unacceptable. I still could not deliver it all in the allocated time. I don't do overtime, but even so no overtime was offered to clear it. So, the part that was not delivered on Saturday and Monday will not get delivered until Tuesday. Three days mail in one day on part of the delivery. Priority given to Tracked items and packets. My delivery was not the only one that failed to be delivered. The office is full of walks that are still sat in the frame.

I returned as a postie after 20 years. I caught COVID so my start date was pushed back by Royal Mail by 5 weeks. They refused to pay me for the 5 weeks and the union did nothing to help. I'm no longer working at Royal Mail and will never return.

Royal Mail is an embarrassment! Royal Mail PR machine is in full defence mode. Postmen around the country are leaking information and photographic evidence of rounds failing in offices nationwide. Royal Mail says there are no failures in “that office”. Lies!!! Our CEO Simon Thompson was seen lying to the parliamentary commission on both occasions. Even the MPs didn't believe him.

So when the public complains about receiving no post or parcels for a few days or a week, don't blame your postman. He/she is doing his level best to complete but our managers are instructing us to fail and this directive is being funnelled down from the very top.

Now let's talk about defining a duty failure. You, I and your postman regards a duty failing when all the letters and parcels have not been attempted delivery. Makes sense to any rational person. Royal Mail has a different definition of duties failing. Maybe this play on words is why Royal Mail are so comfortable with their lies. For them, they are not lying because that's their definition, it's semantics. But to everyone else, if post isn't delivered then it's a failure.

We are run by people who don't care about the business or their customer facing postal workers. They are grinding us down, physically and psychologically. Postman who are “lifers” want to leave. When your most loyal workers want to leave that says a great deal about the atmosphere and running of the business of Royal Mail.

Like many other comments from posties, ex-posties and public alike, Royal Mail are a shambles. We have men at the top that get paid huge salaries, don't perform, lie to the public and parliament, demoralise their workforce and destroy the integrity of the Royal Mail business. And the irony is, some of them haven't been with us for more than 3 years.

Job losses will be coming, either later this year or 2024. Of

course, Simon Thompson will blame everything on blue collar workers that have no involvement in the strategy of the business. That's the CEO and Board's job, but they will blame us, just wait and see. I have been on this train before. Mass redundancies are coming.

Our work conditions are the same, demanding and demoralising as most other offices. Workloads impossible and exhausting. Royal Mail are in financial jeopardy? Need a loan? Get rid of the person or persons at the top. Then ask the shareholders to reinvest from their disgusting £500 million as they should have from the get-go. This makes sense, but it's easier to claim it back from the poorest so they can put money towards their 3rd house or luxury holiday.

I left Royal Mail in December thankfully, due to 6 years of trying to get into my dream job. I worked Royal Mail for 3 years over the pandemic and absolutely loved it.

When I began the boys in the office (most well over retirement age) used to speak of the good old days, when there was hardly any mail. They didn't live in a time where parcels, PDAs and vans existed in the job. There was no internet shopping! When I began, I completed a round in 4 hours with an allotment for 6 hours to complete a job (being the spring chicken I am at 29 compared to the standard Royal Mail workforce - of 50+). Every six months they added more and more to rounds, lapsing more walks and adding them to existing ones. Atop this they relied on overtime (3 hours give or take) that people put in at the beginning of shift just so people could prep rounds. They knew from years of experience. Every year there are busy periods and quieter ones. This is what the office lived for, their holidays and a time they could finish work and not be too exhausted to do house chores and daily living their lives.

Now with no overtime and delivering what 3 years ago would be classed as 2 rounds, I cannot imagine how exhausted posties everywhere are... I feel deeply for my ex colleagues and somebody somewhere high up needs to do something.

The world counted them as key workers, because most of the country still relies on post to get through—solicitors firms, NHS prescriptions, covid testing kits and all that cannot be sent digitally. It has become a farce, for an essential service to be brought to its knees.

Changes have been rushed through but the union in every office would have agreed them. As for being forced to do overtime that's nonsense. It's personal choice. The union are defo selling us down the river. Dave Ward (CWU General Secretary) still gets his £140,000+ a year though so it's fine.

Parcels being prioritised, mail being left every day, I'm delivering Mother's Day cards today, Tuesday, 2 days later, and being told no overtime. Shocking what has happened to this once great company.

Being set up for another P&O exercise. We will all be sacked and offered our jobs back on a lower wage and lesser terms and conditions.

The rogue section of union reps are destroying Royal Mail. And the bad local managers. I done over 29 years and it went downhill the last 5 years. The gang of rogue reps getting ghost overtime. Not helping the true workforce, just in the union room.

The local managers have been let go because they were hand in hand with the union. I feel for the real workers and good reps, but Dave Ward time to go so the union can sort itself out.

Parcelforce Deeside is run by bully management who set you up to fail before you even leave the depot. They come and go as they please, working max 4hrs a day (once all drivers have left they go home). Don't even get me started on the amount of holidays they have (at least 1 week a month)

This management team need sorting out before people leave in their droves.

I'd hate to be an owner driver in this depot. They're treated like dirt. No wonder most have had enough.

In our office there are packets being left every day. Letters are being only delivered every other day. Or sometimes left for 2 days. They have made all the deliveries too big, and you cannot clear it in the time given. Shocking.

I worked for Royal Mail (Post Office) for nearly 40 years and the union has always colluded with the business. Bullying is rife in the business, and the top union reps just frustrated managers and go along with all Royal Mail's business plans for their own reasons (easy life) and work "hand in glove" with all the businesses projects including job cuts.

All of the duties in our office were just about doable. I have just lost my duty after 10 years with next to no warning. It has been broken up and added on to other duties. My union rep stood with my manager and told me that my duty was an ideal duty to break up. My new duty has just had 25-30 minutes added on and we aren't allowed to book overtime. We are told to leave mail undelivered. Whole duties are left in the office for days on end.

We encourage postal workers to contact the WSWS to report on their conditions and to discuss how to take forward the fight.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact