

# More UK postal workers write in to describe impact of Royal Mail cost-cutting exercise

“It’s all become a race to the bottom and that’s one race Royal Mail is winning hands down”

## Our correspondents

26 March 2023

*The World Socialist Web Site (WSWS) is publishing further correspondence from postal workers exposing the brutal exploitative regime being imposed by Royal Mail, with the help of the Communication Workers Union (CWU).*

*The CWU is sitting on a massive strike mandate while holding behind-closed-doors discussions with Royal Mail. The type of sellout being agreed is indicated by the pay offer recently recommended to Post Office workers by the union: a 9 percent pay rise from April 2023, for a deal covering April 2021-24!*

*Prices have already risen by 17.4 percent (RPI) since April 2021, meaning if workers accept they will be more than 8 percent down immediately, with every further increase in prices between now and April 2024 taking more out of their pay. A series of one-off lump sums are included to disguise just how terrible the deal is and will be used up within a matter of months, leaving workers to meet rising costs with a woefully inadequate wage.*

*The latest Royal Mail workers’ correspondence comes from Coventry, Ipswich, Grimsby, Leicester, Milton Keynes, Rushden, Paignton, Fakenham, Crumlin in Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland.*

\*\*\*

First of all, the amount of changes the job has gone through since I started has startled me. I have only been working for the Royal Mail for a year and a half: photo taking of parcels, scanning in tracked items, frames/duties made bigger. These are things that all have made the job that more difficult and time consuming. It feels like Royal Mail are intentionally trying to make the job unbearable. There never seems to be a change that suits or makes it better for the postman.

Every single second of our shift is starting to feel accounted for. You can’t afford the time to make mistakes. If five minutes of your day is taken up, it throws off your whole walk and it’s almost certain you will be back late. Back later than the allocated time that you didn’t agree to. If you aren’t late, personally on my walk it’s because the other postman and I are

running round it, essentially.

The Royal Mail is making it impossible for the job to be done correctly. You have no time to write out cards for customers who do not collect their parcels, you don’t have the space in vans to bring parcels back and you certainly would never get a walk complete if you were to go by the book. It is far too time consuming and space wasting.

Don’t get me wrong, I want to do the job efficiently and effectively, however you are forced to make up the job as you go along for it to be done. I find that to be totally unacceptable. Royal Mail don’t take into account the situations we are in on a daily basis, they must live in an ideal world where everything goes the way it is down in the rule book.

Another thing is management have no regard or care for the postmen. More often than not I see and hear postmen arguing with management because the postman has rightfully told them they are leaving loops because they won’t get it all done. Management’s response? “The computer says it’s a 6hr duty so what’s the problem?” Or they say, “That’s factored into the walk so it’s allowed.”

Management are either very naive or just ignorant. As postmen we know our own walks inside and out, management don’t, yet we are getting told by a faulty computer system that we are wrong. There is something just not right about that.

Another thing about management is that I have witnessed harassment and a pick-on attitude. They seem to get a thrill out of winding up easy targets and they will argue anything before wanting to understand and find a solution.

Lastly, since I have been with Royal Mail there is a half-an-hour break we are due in our shift. I can safely say that I have not been able to take a break on many, many occasions due to heavy work loads. If I have taken a break either myself or my partner can’t relax without feeling that we are wasting time. Or another regular reality is that if we do take a break then we are always over our time.

I enjoy being a postman,. I love the walking, chatting to customers, getting to know areas and a good demand for

fitness. What I wrote above are just facts. I am concerned for the future of the business and what a postman's job will look like. I am expressing more of a disappointment at the reality of my job and would like to see the postman have a voice in their day-to-day work, rather than the CEO and others like him milking the finances dry for their own riches.

\*\*\*

I worked at BT for years, the CWU did little to protect the workforce. Bullying was rife and unachievable stats were introduced to performance-manage employees out of the company. It sounds as if the same system has been adopted by Royal Mail.

\*\*\*

Our manager has forced through changes in order to save hours, all so he can receive his bonus. Those changes include later start and finish times, not replacing staff who've left, and scrapping walks, splitting them between all the other walks in the office, making almost all of our walks unachievable!

Sixteen years I've worked for RM, in that time and pre-Covid, we NEVER left mail in the frame, now it's a daily occurrence, with whole walks not being delivered day after day. We come back from a day off or a period of leave and are faced with 2, 3 and even 4 days' worth of mail to try and deliver.

CEO Simon Thompson is laughing at the government. The job is now a joke and MPs need to seriously take a look at what's happening under their noses.

\*\*\*

Executive Action has meant an average of 40 mins added to each round. USO [Universal Service Obligation] failing most days. Morale in office is low.

\*\*\*

Royal Mail does need to change to make the next step, but senior management haven't got a clue how to do it. With the changes, a postie and a driver can both go to the same address on the same day, pointless. Posties who can't finish their walks have more added on so the USO will always fail. Management are holding mail back to try and justify the USO is no longer viable, it's a joke.

\*\*\*

I worked for Royal Mail in total for 20 years over 2 periods. My last period of employment with Royal Mail lasted 5 years. I have to concur with all the recent comments posted. Management are nothing but bullies and have overinflated egos. They manage with an iron fist, it's their way or the highway attitude.

The union tell you one thing then say the opposite when questioned by management. Sexual harassment is swept under the carpet along with grievances and complaints against management.

\*\*\*

I was bullied, harassed, threatened and when I complained it fell on deaf ears, even the union rep just stood by and let it continue. Came to the stage where I wanted to not just quit my

job but even felt like ending my life. I continued only until I could no longer take the abuse. I would have quit earlier but due to me being focused on service to the customers I continued until I could no longer risk my own life.

\*\*\*

Sadly since the company was privatised the place has become a complete job. I told my Delivery Office Manager on several occasions to not add any more calls onto my already large walk (770) and he said it was going on whether I liked it or not! We started to regularly leave a full walk for the next 2 years, with some stand-in managers getting quite nasty about it. But luckily by then I had lost all interest and continued leaving stuff. Our union rep is a joke and actually grasses up the workers regularly. We have had so much bullying throughout the past 10 years. I've never gone from enjoying a job so much to actually hating a job. I have since left.

\*\*\*

I worked for Royal Mail for over 30 years. So sad to see the standards of a once great company drop. Royal Mail have too many products and have become a jack of all trades, master of none. And it's the workers who are suffering. Royal Mail want their postal workers to gain the trust of customers, but they don't want them to spend the time talking to them to gain that trust and friendship. It's all become a race to the bottom and that's one race Royal Mail is winning hands down.

**The WSWs has published a statement by the Socialist Equality Party inviting postal workers to an online meeting on Monday, March 27 at 7pm to discuss how a fightback can be mounted. Confidentiality will be preserved to prevent victimisation. Please register to attend. We encourage further comments, including on the statement's suggestions for a way forward.**



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

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