

Postal workers speak out against Communication Workers Union's partnership with Royal Mail over punishing workloads: “The union has well and truly sold its members out”

Our reporters
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UK postal workers have written in to outline their crippling workloads and Royal Mail's trashing of its statutory obligation to deliver six days a week.

Increased walks and impossible targets are being enforced by management intimidation and use of overtime to clear back logs, forcing postal workers into a longer working week or to resign.

There is a deep well of opposition to the Communication Workers Union's (CWU) efforts to impose its rotten deal to end the national dispute, which agrees to a low-paid, flexible and two-tier workforce and a raft of attacks. CWU leaders Dave Ward, Andy Furey and the Postal Executive have postponed the ballot on the “negotiators' agreement” in the face of an overwhelming sentiment to reject.

We encourage postal workers to continue to write in to the *World Socialist Web Site* and to make contact with the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee to organise a fightback.

Coventry, West Midlands: I work from a Coventry delivery office and can concur with other comments made by other posties up and down the country. These revisions are being pushed through without considering the knock-on effect it has for our valued customers. Again, mail not going out for days on end because someone's time off hasn't been covered and management just shrugging their shoulders and only caring about premium tracked parcels.

Extra duties seem to be added to your job description

on what seems like a weekly basis, i.e., scanning your own tracked parcels before leaving the depot, parcel collection service, second-day option delivery on any parcels, the list goes on. You get the vibe from management if you don't like it, then leave.

One day last week was particularly busy and there were parcels littered all over the floor and managers were just walking by completely ignoring this, which shows their “couldn't give a damn” attitude. I also feel betrayed by the CWU and I'm strongly considering withdrawing from them.

Gillingham, Kent: The workload we have been given is unachievable, making mail go out on average every 3 to 4 days with management still telling us to leave mail behind and prioritise parcels.

North London: We were informed this week that our office has been chosen along with some others to implement the new working times, where we will be starting later and finishing earlier in the summer and then the reverse in the winter. We were also told that the union were working with Royal Mail on this. I want to know how can we make these changes without an agreement? My office is in North London and I think Royal Mail should be concentrating on delivering the USO in all areas.

South London: The union has well and truly sold its members out. Poor communication from them to their members. I have no faith in the union.

Hours cut and extra work given out without adding extra time onto the walk. My partner and I already

struggle with our routes as logically and logistically they do not make sense to put them together. We tell the managers that the routes do not work as a pair and that we struggle to complete on most days. We are told regardless to take all work from the frames, knowing that in the morning the work not completed needs to be re-added to the frame again. Just so the managers can say that the frames are cleared in the office.

Tracked and special deliveries are prioritised, despite them saying they are not. When you get back from your walk you are having to scan everything you didn't deliver back into the enquiries office and attach stickers to them which in-house staff used to do. Not to mention any parcels you don't deliver that day have to go out the following day, adding to an already impossible workload.

Customers on our routes think taking parcels out twice is ridiculous and that they preferred the old way. Royal Mail state that they want to bring it in line with other delivery companies. However, the likes of DPD, Yodel, etc., do not have to deliver to a majority of addresses on a daily basis.

The hierarchy are paid high salaries to come up with concepts that do not work and push their "genius" ideas and cuts onto their overworked staff. Poor management of a once highly thought of company who don't care about staff, but just lining their pockets and bonuses.

East London: I worked for Royal Mail for 34 years, left last year due to ill health. I loved it when I first went there but was so glad to leave. Managers pushing you all the time, have a day off and come back with no work being taken out. Work twice as hard to complete as you don't want to let customers down.

Lincoln: Two months ago half our office had revisions put in, all fail, not complete. Now rest of office has revisions put in, no one has completed their duty. USO failing every day, customers missing hospital appointments.

Most duties have had 2 to 3 hours added, all with same hours, and this time of year is supposed to be quiet. When September comes, not a chance.

I've done over 40 years, and if Royal Mail give letters a good service then they will attract more business. Now Royal Mail's reputation has gone.

Manchester: Do not trust the union anymore. If you do actually get a chance to vote, reject it. I was a postman from 1998 till 2019. They have not got your

interests at heart.

South Yorkshire: I only work in a small Subs office. We have had 2 out of 7 of us put in and take redundancy. These jobs have not been filled and with holidays and sickness, even days off, most days are busy since this has happened. We have been asked to 'lapse' the other two duties, or at least 1 of them. This is creating way too much work and pressure. All that is happening on the days the rest of us do pluck up enough courage to tell management 'NO' Tracked are being prioritised and we still have extra work.

The amount of overtime on a weekly basis covers more than a full-time person's wage and it is ridiculous that we are expected to do that much overtime. When we do throw the work back, we are asked why or told it's not busy, usual rubbish managers come up with. We are asked constantly to work our days off, knowing full well if we don't we will be owing into double mail and parcels, and again tracked mail will go... but as Mr Thompson said, 'we don't prioritise tracked.'

We are nowhere near our USO despite our best efforts, and it's coming to the point where people are dragging themselves to work and causing unnecessary stress between employees too. One last thing I will say is this time of year is our 'slack time' where we are told it's not busy. What happens from the back end of October when we do get busy?

West Sussex: Part time walks being failed to cover full timers' walks, only tracked and Special Delivery packets being done. Part time staff having to do 2 days' worth of deliveries every other day. Also required to do heavy and large packets, additional lapsing added to walks to cover staff leaving.



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