



Consortium Tribune

The Official Newsletter of the Remploy Trade Union.



Consortium



Report from Consortium

The Remploy Consortium of Trade Unions have had several meetings with the Company over the Voluntary Redundancy Programme and have raised a number of concerns and issues with the Company.

It is now common knowledge that approximately 690 people have been accepted for VR out the 781 who applied for it.

The individual consultations will start on 3rd May 2011 and will run for a period of 30 days. The Consortium has also requested that individuals can be allowed to leave with the full package as soon as possible and their consultation period can be less than 30 days, if appropriate.

The Consortium has also raised the issue of the employees who are approaching the age of 65 and have been given notice of their retirement, being allowed to leave with their redundancy package. So far the Company has hidden behind the changes to the Retirement legislation and is refusing the request from the Trade Unions to pay our long serving members the redundancy package.

The Trade unions are very critical of the way these consultations have been conducted. Phil Davies GMB National Secretary and Secretary of the Consortium commented *"Little or no thought whatsoever has been given by the Company after the redundancy issue is over. There has been no proper skills audit, nearly every disabled person who has applied for redundancy has been accepted while less than 50% of non-disabled people have been accepted."*

"What does this say to our disabled comrades? It says that you are not wanted in Remploy—not wanted in a Company that was set up specifically to employ people with disabilities. The whole redundancy situation has been handled back to front with no planning for the future of the factories or the employees who will be left in them."

Kevin Hepworth from Unite and Chair of the consortium added *"The whole process has been very painful for the Trade Unions—we have been very mindful of the people that want to go but equally we are very concerned over the future of the businesses and long term job security for the employees still employed in those businesses. We have tried to do our best for everyone, despite the constant delay due to the management and/or the DWP."*

The Consortium of Trade Unions will meet again with the Company on 4th May 2011. The Consortium position will be that major changes to the management structures of EB and ES must take place if the Company is to survive.

Tim Matthews and Co must go now! They have failed the disabled employees of Remploy and they have failed to deliver on making the Company sustainable. They have also failed in securing any of the bids from the DWP for ES.

There must be no more failures. If any of the shop floor or team leaders failed in their jobs then they would be sacked like dogs. These people have failed and failed miserably! They should suffer the same fate!

There must be no more failures in the Boardroom!

Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Freedom

Employment Services A Study in Failure

For many months or even going into years, it seems that Remploy Employment Services bosses have been in talks with Balfour Beatty about creating a so called "partnership" to successfully bid for work from the DWP.

The whole issue had progressed to the point whereby a third party company had been set up to jointly bid for work. The Company was called "*The Workplace Partnership*" and a working share value of £100 had been put in by Remploy and Balfour Beatty.

You may by now be forgiven for thinking that this was an equal partnership, a 50/50 split. Not so, our directors once again showed the business acumen or to be more precise lack of business acumen by agreeing a 51/49% split with Balfour Beatty retaining the 51% controlling share. Tim Matthews would be the director from Remploy and there would be a high flyer from Balfour Beatty whom would be the other director.

Any profits from successful bids would have also been split the same way. Eagle eyed readers would now immediately spot the use of the word "profit". The Company tried to explain that this was not privatisation, but merely a mechanism whereby to Companies can jointly work together.

The Trade Unions did not and still do not accept that explanation. On the contrary it is the belief of the Trade Union Consortium that pound signs lit up in the eyes of Beth Carruthers, the ES Director and Tim Matthews, who viewed the issue as a very easy way of increasing their salaries and making a killing.

Well the rest as they say is history. Not one bid was successful. This not only means that we have no new business coming in, but we will be leaving some existing businesses. This will undoubtedly cause major stress and anxiety amongst our ES comrades who will be justifiably worried about their positions and future.

Who will pay for this shameful debacle? Of course the people who should pay are Beth Carruthers,

Tim Matthews and co. As stated earlier if anyone lower down the ranks would have failed so badly they would no longer be working for the Company. Let's have some equality and when people fail so spectacularly then they must go!

Summer of Discontent

The pressures that are being exerted on Remploy are due to the pressures brought about by the Government who have consciously made the decision to launch the biggest attack on working class people since the start of the industrial revolution. The Trade Union Consortium believes that there is no good reason for these cuts and attacks on our Public Services and the very fabric of the society that we live in. Every one of us will be badly affected by the cuts whether we lose our library, our local leisure centre, or have to wait longer for treatment in our local GP surgery or hospital. We can fight back! We should join our local anti-cuts groups, join our local Trades Councils our branches should be at the head of any fight that is being carried out locally. We have a part to play in the fight back. Let's not shirk that fight!

Dates for Diaries:

30th April Wales May Day march and rally Swansea. Bring your banners for the biggest May Day march in Wales. Start: 11am at Guildhall Swansea.

Annual Silk Mill march and rally Assembly rooms Market Place Derby

1st May traditional London May Day march, Marx Memorial Library, Clerkenwell Green London. Start: 11 am

7th May Aberystwyth Against the Cuts Demo, Aberystwyth. Details TBA. Contact Les Woodward on 07977 436 251

Let us know what is going on in your Factory, Branch, or site. The only way we can be effective is by pooling our information, sharing our experiences and banding together in the traditional trade union way.

Confidentiality will be respected if required. Are you planning any demos or marches? Do you know someone who is? Contact Les Woodward on: 07977 436 251 or send email to: leswoodward01@hotmail.co.uk