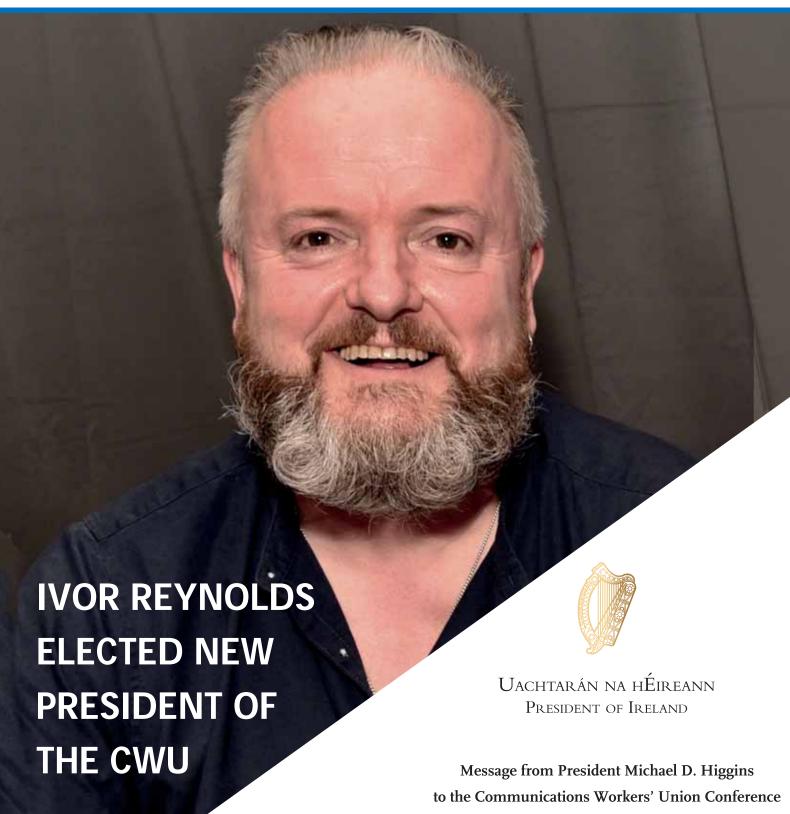


SUMMER 2022 VOL: 24 NO.1

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CONNECT

Contents

Editorial	2-3
Message from President Michael D. Higgins	
to CWU Conference	4-6
CWU Elects New President &	
Vice-President	7
Organising Update	8
Postal/Courier Update	9-16
FM Downes CWU Mortgage Service	17
CWU Digital Photography Course	
& Competition	18
Cost of Living Coaltion National	
Day of Action	19
Telecoms Update	20-27
CWu 11th Biennial Conference	28-31
Irish Red Cross thanks	32
Mails & Parcels Conundrum	33
11th Biennial Conference	
Closing Ceremony	34
Postal/Courier Update	35-40
Why a Rhodes Scholar's Ambition Led	
Her to a Job at Starbucks	41-44
Let's Talk AVCs	45
Postal/Courier Update	46-47
General Secretary questions Government's	
'inordinate delay'	48-49
Workers' Memorial Day Ireland	50
Is Debs feeling the Cold?	51
Unsung Heroes of Ukranian Postal Service	
Brave the Shelling to Deliver a Lifeline	52-53
Newly-Elected National Executive Council	54-55
The Rowland Hill Memorial Fund of Ireland .	56-57
Education Update	58-59
CWU People	61-78
Book Reviews by Adrienne Power	79-80

Editor: Seán McDonagh Sub-Editor: Imelda Wall

Issued by: Communications Workers' Union, 575 North Circular Road, Dublin 1, D01 TR53. Tel: +353 1 8663000 Fax: +353 1 8663099 E-mail: info@cwu.ie Web: www.cwu.ie

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A message from your General Secretary

Dear Colleague,

FTER several attempts the CWU held its Biennial Delegate Conference in the Sheraton Hotel Athlone, the decisions of which I advised to you separately by way of a GS Circular. For the very first time, all the reports and excellently documented presentations by the Officials are available to you online. In our ongoing efforts to improve communications and access to information for members, we also, as another first, embraced social media platforms to provide updates. The overwhelming feedback is the Conference was a tremendous success and a thoroughly enjoyable event. Delegates were delighted to be back together again to have the opportunity to renew old acquaintances, denied to them because of the COVID-19 restrictions.

The business of Conference was conducted in a professional and respectful manner, setting the agenda and policy direction for the next two years. The National Executive Council's strategic plan **Shaping the Future Union** was wholeheartedly endorsed by Conference, bringing about a fresh new beginning post-COVID, re-energizing the organisation, ready to face the challenges ahead in solidarity and with confidence.

In this edition of Connect there are updates and articles on a wide range of issues the CWU organisation is dealing with on behalf of members across the communications sector. One common issue relates to inflation, which members and society as a whole, are reeling from. Across the industry, the CWU has successfully secured pay increases and agreements with employers, which have been accepted by members. That said, the reality is these hard-won deals will not insulate members from the current raging inflation, which in the main, is driven by the ongoing war, following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

Our first response must be to ensure all aspects of the agreements are honored in full and resist any possible attempts by management to seek to row back from their commitments contained in the pay deals, because of inflationary impacts on

the business. Of course, the Union will be open to dealing with any such difficulties in direct discussions regarding efficiency measures that will protect employment as well as pay and conditions, which members too can share the benefits. We are also examining every opportunity to improve members remuneration where we can, as evidenced by the increases in pay for eir customer care members and Vodafone retail staff. It is particularly pleasing to report our members in UPS are considering pay proposals concluded in direct discussions with the Company. This, against the backdrop of very disturbing industrial relations matters, as reported at Conference and as covered in this magazine. Furthermore, the CWU is intent on securing further consolidation of the productivity allowance in An Post. The Company must understand and accept the Union can't deliver major transformational change, unless there is cash on delivery. So our focus is, to continue to work with employers to secure the best pay terms possible, but we recognise neither the CWU nor any one employer can, in isolation, address the consequences of what is a worldwide crisis.

For this reason, we are actively campaigning with our international colleagues, UNI Global, and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for a new Living Wage with Fionnuala Ni Bhrogain a key member of the Low Pay Commission.

At the time of writing discussions had stalled at the WRC, where the public service Unions are attempting to secure increases in pay in a review of their pay deal. In reality the more recent increases have restored pay cuts and are generally behind pay levels in the private sector, never mind inflation. Hopefully, they will secure agreement acceptable to our colleagues in the public service and I wish them a successful outcome in their endeavors.

The ICTU has made a comprehensive pre budget submission to government, setting out the voice of workers and society as we are facing into the worst cost of living crisis in more than a generation. Some of the sensible and practical demands of the ICTU to reduce the cost of living are:

- Raise the small benefit exemption from €500 to €1,000
- Make the Living Wage the Minimum Wage
- Cap electricity prices for low income households
- Reduce costs for early childhood care

 Increase social welfare rates by more than inflation

In respect of housing, President Michael D. Higgins was correct to express his frank and honest view that it isn't a crisis anymore, it's a disaster! Building homes is what is important. Housing and the basic needs of society should never have been left to the market. It is mad



Seán McDonagh General Secretary, CWU

speculative money that is destroying our country.

The obligation is on government to work collaboratively with the ICTU and employers to agree additional measures to protect citizens, focusing on the poor and lower paid, who suffer the most at this time. Collectively we are stronger and better able to deal with the immediate demands. As agreed at Conference, we will vigorously pursue employers in discussions on future pay agreements to make up any shortfall.

Reverting back to our Conference, we rightly celebrated the work of members and CWU activists throughout the pandemic for keeping communities connected while ensuring members' issues were delt with and safety was maintained. The acknowledgement and recognition of this by President Higgins in his letter, is well deserved and appreciated, a copy of which is reproduced in this magazine.

In the closing ceremony of Conference, we remembered departed colleagues, with a moving recital by Christy Brannigan of the poem "We Remember Them". Pat Compton gave a rousing and uplifting rendition of Joe Hill, as we go on to organize. The CWU Brass and Reed Concert Band, the only remaining trade Union band in Ireland entertained delegates and guests. These special moments will remain with great pride for all in attendance.

We have a lot to be proud of and I look forward with the confidence of your support as we face the challenges ahead.



At our 11th Biennial Conference, the Deputy General Secretary, Ian McArdle, read out the following correspondence sent by President Michael D. Higgins to CWU Members



ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN

Message from President Michael D. Higgins to the Communications Workers' Union Conference

4-5 May 2022

May I send my very best wishes to all those attending the Communications Workers' Union IIth Biennial Conference, and I am hoping to have the opportunity your conference offers to congratulate Seán McDonagh following his appointment as General Secretary. I am so well aware from my days in Galway, how well Seán has served the Union at every level, including President, before becoming General Secretary. Comhghairdeas, Seán.

Your Conference being a gathering of 300 delegates from parts of the country, and across all areas of the postal and e-communications sector, is happening at an important time. Your agenda rightly focuses on building a better, more equal and just future for all workers across the wider communications sector, but it will also commemorate and celebrate the role of communication workers in the postal and e-communications industry.

The outstanding efforts of CWU members, throughout the challenges of the pandemic – keeping communities connected, maintaining essential services and supporting

important commercial activity – should all be recognised and applauded. May I, as President of Ireland, thank you all for your hard work through such a challenging period of pandemic.

Many of you faced personal tragedy resulting from Covid-19, yet you never lost your sense of public duty, keeping the country connected while many continued to work remotely from their homes during lockdowns, as well as staying in touch with loved ones during long and difficult periods of enforced isolation. Remembering family, loved ones, colleagues and customers who sadly passed away during the pandemic will serve as a key reminder of the loss we have all felt as the Covid-19 death toll passes 7,000 of our people.

Your conference will rightly celebrate the great work of the CWU and its representatives in keeping workers safe, while they continued to work, and it will acknowledge the positive response and engagement of employers in responding constructively to the CWU representations.

The Communication Workers' Union has a proud record in relation to international solidarity. They were to the forefront in expressing solidarity with trade unionists in Colombia who were the group being most threatened in Colombia, and indeed the Union contributed to my own trip to Chile when it was necessary to confront General Pinochet's Rule. So your record is one that has earned respect at home and abroad.

The trend of rapidly increasing digitalisation of the global economy, galvanised by the pandemic, requires us to ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect those who will be left behind or exploited by such a trend.

We see the adverse impacts of digitalisation manifesting across society, with shops and financial services branches continuing to close, staff being redeployed to back office services or made redundant, and the customer experience ever-diminished, all of this rationalised in the name of efficiency, flexibility, productivity.

Digitalisation can yield positive, shared results. It need not be wholly negative if offered within a social-economic model, ensuring that workers are covered by employment law and collective agreements.

Responding to the pandemic has the potential to usher in new campaigns that address a new era for workers' rights. May I suggest that trade unions such as yours are presented

now with an opportunity to ensure that a major change is brought to fruition with regard to workers' rights in Ireland.

This can include advancing crucial policy agendas, such as a move to achieving support for universal basic services and an appropriate living wage, the need for access to an occupational pension, the right to disconnect from work, the right to seek remote working arrangements, new legislation for statutory sick pay arrangements, and, perhaps most importantly, a new approach to collective bargaining and industrial relations giving greater power to trade unions.

How our society and economy emerges from this pandemic will be vitally important to the future of workers' rights. It is vital, therefore, that we all commit to playing our part in the creation of a society and economy that removes the obstacles standing between so many of our people and their full participation. Let us commit to valuing those heroic workers who have risked their lives and their security to support us through the dark period of pandemic. Let us keep defending their rights as the founders of the trade union movement did more than a century ago.

I believe there never was a more exciting and relevant time to be a part of the trade union movement. I wish you well in your endeavours to create a future of equality, justice and sustainability, one that will carry the trade union's emancipatory imprint.

We must never forget that the rights we have were won by active trade union members, and active trade unionism is their best protection for the future.

I wish your conference every success.

Míle buíochas is beir beannacht.

Michael D. Higgins

Uachtaran na hÉireann

President of Ireland



CWU ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT & VICE-PRESIDENT AT 11th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE IN ATHLONE, MAY 2022

The Communications Workers' Union announced the election of Ivor Reynolds as the incoming CWU President and Frank Donohoe as the incoming CWU Vice-President at its 11th Biennial Conference in Athlone.

Commenting on his election as President of the CWU, Mr. Reynolds said: "I wnt to pay tribute to our outgoing President, Willie Mooney, who has guided the Union through a very challenging COVID pandemic where communications services were both the glue and the grease that kept communities connected and businesses working. Despite these challenges, he has worked tirelessly and made significant progess in advancing the pay and conditions of communications workers."



Ivor Reynolds, CWU President

Mr Reynolds said, "My priorities are to work with the General Secretary, Seán McDonagh, and his team in implementing

our strategy – 'Shaping the Future Union' – which is designed to improve the effectiveness of our Union in representing communications workers in radically changing workplaces and market dynamics. All unions are built on the strength of their membership. We must also prioritise organising in workplaces, and particularly among those employers that oppose trade unions. Ultimately, the challenges we face together and united can be overcome."



Frank Donohoe, CWU Vice-President

Frank Donohue was first elected onto the NEC in 2008 and has been Branch Secretary of the Dublin Postal Delivery Branch since February 2008. During this time, he has gained great experience in dealing with many issues, including office redesigns and realignments. Frank was highly active in ensuring that the Compny concentrated on the parcel and packet business when letter mail volumes began to plummet. Mr. Donohoe said: "There will be fresh challenges facing us all in the coming years and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to continue to face these challenges as CWU Vice-President."

The Changing Role of Organising under the Shaping the Future Union strategy

Under the Shaping the Future Union strategy, as agreed by the National Executive, Organising is no longer a separate function but is embedded into every action and function of our Union. As a result of this renewed focus, the role of the existing Organisers has been expanded to combine organising and the industrial relations agenda. The positions have been re-graded as Industrial Organisers and will be working closely with the National Officers to execute the overall Organising Strategy for the Union.

It has been agreed by the NEC that Organising is a core responsibility of all Officers. Together with workplace activity, these are key to achieving our goal of defending, expanding and (re)building our organisation. A meeting of the Organising Sub-Committee of the NEC was held outlining the renewed strategy and of course, we will only succeed by providing the necessary resources and by supporting our Branch Activists, who are essential to organising and recruitment.

Since the implementation of the Shaping the

Future Union strategy, the Industrial Organisers are now firmly embedded in their new roles, and sectoral analysis is complete. This process included in-depth examination of all main areas of the Union's business in the Postal/Courier and Telecoms industries, identifying where there may be losses and where there are areas of potential growth.

Where before, the CWU was intrinsic to the fabric of two or three main employers, the sectors have expanded to include not just new employers, but new modes of work and new models of employment.

Building for the future requires taking the long view of consolidating in areas where our membership has been traditionally robust, while also strengthening in those newer areas. And with Organising built into everything we do, we can build a self-sustaining future for members and for the Union.

Reports outlining the successful roll-out of the Organising strategy can be found in both the Telecoms and Postal/Courier Update chapters.

American Airlines – Pay Agreement

Over the last few months, CWU Officials and the American Airlines Branch have been in negotiations on a new pay agreement for our members in American Airlines.

Following these negotiations, the following proposals were put to a ballot.

A three-year pay agreement from 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2025 (with a provision for the Union to revisit matters outside of pay during the agreement)

- Year 1 4.5% increase to the base rate of pay, backdated to 1st April 2022
- Year 2 Inflation + 1.5%
- Year 3 Inflation + 1.5%

 An early shift premium – extra €3 per hour from 05.00 to 06.59

The preceding increases are in line with those negotiated in other industries and within the guidelines of pay claims recommended by The Irish Congress of Trade Unions. Our members in American Airlines voted in favour of the pay proposals.

In addition to the pay agreement, the American Airlines Branch have secured a minimum of 6 hours per day during the winter season. This security of hours was hard-fought-for by the Branch and results in our members now having a secure income for the winter months. This is a very strong outcome and was only made possible by the commitment and hard work of our members in American Airlines.

DPD Tralee

While DPD directly employ their staff in the main HUB in Athlone, they adopt an outsourcing model when it comes to their 36 Delivery Depots across the country. This means that there are potentially 36 different employers for each Depot which fractures the employment relationship and presents challenges from an Organising perspective.

Notwithstanding those challenges, the CWU has been engaging with workers from the DPD Delivery Depot in Tralee, who a have embarked on an organising campaign to improve their pay and terms and conditions.

A number of activists have already begun building the foundations of their Union by undertaking Organisng Training. As part of their training, the workers identified the issues of pay, sick pay, and overtime as the key elements that they have built their campaign around. We are happy to report that the vast majority of workers in the Tralee Depot have joined the campaign by signing up to the CWU.

Following engagement with DPD management, the Company agreed to engage with the CWU on behalf of our members in Tralee and also agreed to facilitate their Union

dues being deducted at source. This was a significant development, as there was no previous engagement or agreement between the CWU and DPD management in relation to their Delivery Depots.

The workers were due to meet with DPD management in early May to discuss and progress their issues but unfortunately the meeting was cancelled, and the Company have yet to fulfil their commitment to engage with the staff.

Workers in Tralee have demonstrated a high level of commitment to achieving their campaign goals, as meetings are extremely well-attended and there is a high level of worker participation in planning and developing the campaign strategy.

For example, as frustrations grow, members in Tralee have recently organised a petition to send a collective message to DPD management that they demand to be respected and represented through their Union. The petition has been widely supported and demonstrates the solidarity of members and the level of resolve among the group in Tralee, to have their voice heard and their issues addressed. Members will be kept up-to-date as the campaign progresses.

DPD Athlone

Member Survey

The DPD Athlone Branch AGM was held in March, and members identified several issues in relation to pay, the transparency and fairness of the process for achieving an SGS Upgrade and the lack of a sick pay scheme for DPD workers. Members also reported a culture of disrespect from management within the DPD Hub. To gain an understanding of these issues, the DPD Branch Committee has conducted a survey of members and the results will be presented to DPD management with a view to progressing these issues.

DPD Athlone Survey Findings – 2022



Introduction to the Workplace Survey

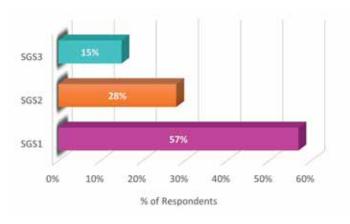
The DPD Athlone Branch AGM was held on the 13th March 2022. Members at the AGM raised concerns in relation to the processes around the awarding of Upgrades to the SGS Grades, the lack of sick pay for DPD workers, in addition to what members feel is a culture of disrespect within their workplace. The local CWU Branch Committee decided to conduct a survey of DPD workers to gain an understanding of these issues, with a view to presenting the findings of the survey to DPD management and progressing these issues for members.

The survey results have now been collated and are presented in this booklet. Direct quotes from the survey are included to give voice to the experience of respondents.

Christy Coyne
CWU Branch Secretary

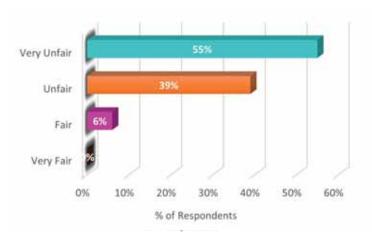
Question 1

What is your current SGS Grade?



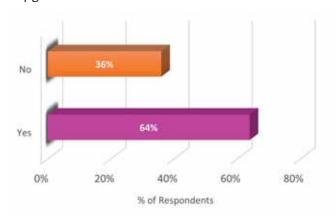
Question 3

How would you describe the process for achieving an SGS Upgrade?



Question 2

Do you understand the process for achieving an SGS Upgrade?

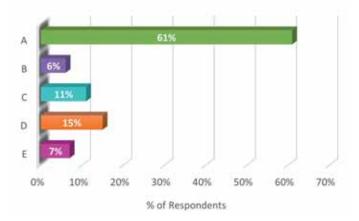


"It took me 13 years to get from SGS1 to SGS3 while other staff that are here only a short time get to SGS3 after a year or two. This system is so unfair and needs to change."

"Needs to look at time served, people working over 15 years still on Grade 2."

Question 4

In your opinion, what improvements, if any, could be made to the SGS Upgrades process?



Α	Length of service	61%
В	Increase rotation of work areas	6%
С	Consider work ethic/capability	11%
D	Exclude attendance record	15%
E	Other	7%

Sample Answers to Question 4

"Change the process so that there is clarity and openness to it rather than the favouritism that is here now."

"We should be rotated more. Being stuck in the one place for years makes it impossible to gain new skills and achieve an Upgrade."

"We shouldn't be penalised for genuine sicks and Upgrades should be granted after a certain period of time working in DPD. Loyal staff should be rewarded."

"Length of service needs to be a factor. Numerous employees passed over for upgrades despite excellent levels of attendance and service. The points system is unfair."

"Length of service has to be taken into account. It is a very difficult place to stay in so a student or anybody staying for a short time receiving the same pay is very disrespectful. But disrespect unfortunately is a common feeling in the Hub."

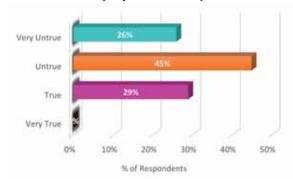
"Work rate ethic and knowledge of your role should be considered, if the effort is put in and supervisors are happy with your work an Upgrade is deserved." "The upgrade process should be determined by one's ability rather than how many areas they can work in. Personally, due to my gender, there are only so many areas I can work in."

"Should be changed to length of service. SGS2 after 1 year and SGS3 after 3 years."

Question 5

Please indicate how true you believe the following statement is:

"DPD management set the standard by treating all employees with respect"



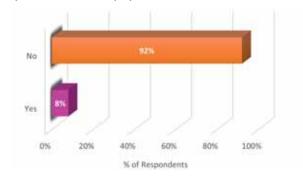
"Treat people the way you would like to be treated; we are all human at the end of the day."

Show some respect and appreciation to your employees."

"Employees should be treated with respect and not like school children."

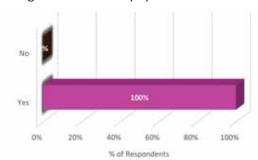
Question 6

Do you receive sick pay?



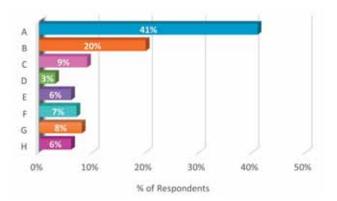
Question 7

Do you think that DPD should support their staff by providing them with sick pay?



Question 8

What three things would you like to change in your workplace?



Α	Pay increase	41%
В	Respect from management	20%
С	Increased hours	9%
D	Training opportunities	3%
E	More staff	6%
F	Longer/paid breaks	7%
G	Rotation of duties	8%
Н	Other	6%

Sample Answers to Question 8

"A pay increase for the cost of living and the work that we do."

"Pay rates are extremely poor, other businesses gave a pay rise for the cost of living."

"Actual action from management as issues repeat and nothing has changed despite surveys and Union reps explaining such issues."

"Wages are too low, need to be improved."

"Workers are overworked, we need more staff."

"Treat workers with respect."

"Management should listen more and communicate better."

"Increase of working hours. The company has cut hours this year after promising good hours last year."

"More hours and more pay."

Findings

The survey revealed that the majority of respondents (57%) were on the lowest SGS Grade. While the majority of respondents (64%) indicated that they understood the process for achieving an SGS Upgrade, the overwhelming majority (94%) felt that the process was

very unfair or unfair. When asked what improvements could be made to the SGS Upgrade process the vast majority of participants (61%) indicated that length of service should be a key factor. In addition, respondents also cited other ways of improving the SGS Upgrade process such as increasing the rotation of work areas (6%), the exclusion of sick leave (15%), and consideration of work ethic and capability (11%). The comments within the survey indicate that, although a high number of participants understand the SGS Upgrade process, many employees feel that there is a lack of transparency and openness in how the process is applied.

When it came to respect, worryingly, almost three quarters of participants (71%) indicated that they do not believe that DPD management set the standard by treating all employees with respect. This finding points to a workplace culture where workers experience a lack of respect from management.

When asked whether participants receive sick pay, 92% indicated that they did not. However, 8% reported that they did receive sick pay. It is not clear from the survey whether that 8% were managers or whether they had received sick pay due to a no-fault workplace accident.

What is clear from the survey is that every participant (100%) indicated that they thought DPD should support all staff by providing them with sick pay. The open question at the end of the survey asked participants what three things they would like to change in their workplace. An increase in pay (41%) was the most cited change desired among participants, while unsurprisingly, given the results of question 5, respect from management (20%) was second. A significant number of respondents (9%) indicated that they wanted more hours, which suggests there is a level of underemployment for some workers in DPD. Increased training opportunities and rotation of duties came in at a combined 11%, which may point to a lack of opportunity or progression for some workers in DPD.

Conclusion

The high level of participation and engagement in the survey is very encouraging, as it demonstrates a willingness from DPD workers to effect positive changes in your workplace.

The CWU is committed to having your voice heard and will work with the local Branch to progress these issues when we present the findings of the survey to DPD management.

You can join the CWU
by contacting
your local
Branch Secretary,
Christy Coyne
or online at
www.cwu.ie



UPS Update

CWU Biennial Conference - Emergency Motion

At our recent Biennial Conference, the UPS Finglas Branch submitted the following motion:

"This Conference instructs the incoming NEC to condemn the actions of UPS management in its harsh, unfair and punitive treatment of our members in UPS and to fully support a ballot for industrial action, up to and including strike action, should it be necessary"

The motion was submitted in response to several underlying issues that had emerged during a recent Branch AGM. Members reported experiencing unfair treatment in relation to ETAs, workloads, discipline, and Health and Safety in addition to what they described as a prevailing culture of stress and pressure in UPS.

The motion received the full backing of our Conference and sent out a clear message that the ill treatment of our members in UPS will not be tolerated and every action necessary will be taken to protect our members.

To have these issues identified and addressed in a collective and coherent manner, the Union, in conjunction with the local Branches, will conduct a staff survey to give voice to the experience of our members and provide UPS management with the opportunity to address these issues once and for all. The Survey will be rolled out across all of the Depots in the coming weeks, and it is important that as many people as possible participate so that your voice is heard and the issues that matter to you are addressed.



Health & Safety – Cruiser Vehicles

Several incidents in relation to the Company's Cruiser vehicles were reported to the Union in recent months. Members raised concerns about the safety of these vehicles whilst out on delivery in addition to the Company's failure to adequately address these concerns. The Union wrote to the company on the 7th of April outlining our concerns in relation to this particular piece of equipment and advising them that the Cruiser vehicles should be taken off the road until a proper risk assessment had been carried out. We also outlined that we would advise our members of the risks associated with these vehicles and that if our members chose not to use them, we would not accept any disciplinary action and they would receive the full backing of the Union. The Company has acceded to our advice and took the vehicles off the road and a risk assessment is currently underway.

Pay Proposal Update

Following extensive negotiations, a pay proposal has been negotiated between the Communications Workers' Union (CWU) and UPS management for 2022.

The pay proposal provides for a one year 5.5% pay increase with no strings attached and comprises the following:

- 2.2% pay increase backdated to 1st April 2022
- A further 3.3% pay increase from 1st October 2022 to 31st March 2023

This proposal represents a meaningful increase in pay for UPS workers and is in line with the upper end of the pay guidance issued by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

The proposal is due to go to ballot at the time of writing and the CWU and the Branch Committee are strongly recommending that members vote in favour of accepting the pay proposal.

This positive development was won by the collective power that UPS workers have built through their Union and by the hard work, dedication, and input of the committee in the negotiations.

Members will be kept up to date on the outcome of the ballot.

An Post's future is "gravely uncertain" without major government investment, a Conference will hear today.

Irish Independent



Communications Workers Union General Secretary, Seán McDonagh, urged the state to "step forward" to protect and maintain post office network services and letter and parcel deliveries.

Speaking at the Union's Biennial Delegate Conference in Athlone, he said €100m is needed to cover Brexit-related losses of the last two years.

The financial sustainability of the company will be difficult without commitment from its government shareholder.

His speech referred to the growth of global technology companies like Facebook, Amazon and Google, and warns they should be carefully regulated.

He backed staff trying to organise in unions. "Government needs to step forward to protect and maintain the valued and necessary public services provided by An Post."

The services provided by An Post during the pandemic have been widely praised as critical to keeping communities connected and supporting business.

He confirmed the Union has agreed pay deals with An Post for 5.06pc over two years and 6pc over three years at eir, expecting all parts of agreements to be honoured in full.

However, it says workers are reeling from the impact of inflation and unprecedented energy price increases caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

It says the Union has called on the Government to engage with unions to offset the worst effects of cost of living increases.

"We have negotiated significant pay increases for workers in our sectors and we will ensure that these agreements are fully implemented by the employers," it says.

"Hard-won pay rises need to be insulated from the worst effects of inflation and the CWU fully support the efforts of the ICTU in its engagements with government and employers to lessen these effects."

Mr McDonagh claimed that the eir network must be defended against a repeat of the "corporate raiding" of the last 25 years.

He referenced to plans by eir to sell its fibre access network which could net its French owners, Iliad, €1bn, describing the network as the backbone of Ireland's communications infrastructure.

He outlined the Union supports the €3bn national broadband plan but says it will put significant pressure on the resources and skills available within the telecoms and related sectors.

The pay and conditions of workers that will build the networks are at stake as companies vie for National Broadband Ireland contracts.

The General Secretary said eir has received "a lot of justifiable criticism" for its customer care services but welcomes new CEO, Ollie Loomes, and his mission to repair the brand.

The Company is facing a retirement cliff among its networks and technical employees and the Union is prioritising an apprenticeship programme to bring in new staff.

Global technology companies including Amazon, Facebook and Google have the capacity to "hollow out" local economic activity, within the SME sector in particular.

"We see our worker comrades in Facebook, Amazon and Google attempting to organise," says the speech.

"The reaction of these billionaire-owned tech multinationals is to spend millions fighting unions gaining a foothold in their companies because they recognise that trade unions improve working conditions and pay, and reduce inequality."



An Post Seeking €100m Injection From Government To Make Up For Pandemic Losses

Midlands 103



Shaping the Future is the theme of the Communications Workers' Union Conference in Athlone today.

The future of An Post in particular is "gravely uncertain", according to the Union, without significant government investment.

Other topics of discussion at the Sheraton Hotel are a pay increase for eir and An Post staff, rebuilding an apprenticeship programme in eir, and ensuring National Broadband Ireland is held to high standards.

CWU General Secretary, Seán McDonagh, says the essential role of An Post during the pandemic proves a need to safe-guard the service.



Future of An Post 'gravely uncertain' without Government investment, Union warns

The Examiner



The Communications Workers' Union (CWU) has warned that the future of An Post is "gravely uncertain" without Government investment to protect and maintain its vital postal services.

The 11th biennial CWU Conference is to begin in Athlone today.

CWU General Secretary Seán McDonagh said: "The financial impacts of Covid have placed a huge burden on An Post, which has compounded the effects of the sharp decline in letters and packets volumes that was already underway.

"The growth in on-line financial services and the 'exit from cash' is putting further pressures on footfall across the Post Office network," Mr McDonagh continued, adding how An Post's services during the pandemic have been "widely praised as critical to keeping communities connected and supporting business".

Mr McDonagh said at least €100m is needed to cover the Covid-related losses of the pandemic, and that the Government needs "to step forward to protect and maintain the valued and necessary public services provided by An Post".

Over 300 CWU delegates are attending the Conference addressing motions across multiple companies represented by the CWU including An Post, eir, Vodafone, UPS and others.

One motion being raised is inflation and the rising cost of living, with the CWU calling on the Government to engage with the trade union movement to offset the worst of its effects on workers.

Mr McDonagh said: "We have negotiated significant pay increases for workers in our sectors and we will ensure that these agreements are fully implemented by the employers."

He added that "hard-won pay rises need to be insulated from the worst effects of inflation".

The Conference is also to hear about issues regarding eir, the National Broadband Plan, and the CWU's campaign to rebuild its apprentice programme.

Mr McDonagh said the eir fibre network is the backbone of Ireland's communications infrastructure and "has been the subject of repeated corporate raiding over the last quarter-century".

Commenting on plans by eir to sell its fibre access network which could net its French owners, Iliad, €1bn, he urged that ComReg and the Government must ensure that the network's development "is not derailed once again by short term, private financial gain".

Mr McDonagh also highlighted the progress made in overhauling the pay and conditions of customer care workers at eir.

He said the network had received "a lot of justifiable criticism" for its customer care services, and that the CWU welcomed the recent appointment of Mr Ollie Loomes as CEO and his stated mission to repair the eir brand.

Also up for discussion is the CWU's campaign to rebuild the apprenticeship programme within eir.

Mr McDonagh said: "Eir is facing a retirement cliff among its networks and technical employees.

"The only sustainable way to counter this is to ensure a flow of new recruits who see an interesting and rewarding career path and who will receive high quality training from the outset."



CWU calls for greater investment in An Post

RTÉ - 4 May 2022

The Communications Workers' Union has warned that the future of An Post is gravely uncertain without

Government investment to protect and maintain vital services.

Addressing the Union's Biennial Conference in Athlone, CWU General Secretary, Seán McDonagh, said that the financial impacts of Covid-19 had placed a huge burden on An Post.

With at least 100 million needed to cover the Brexit-related losses of the last two years, the financial sustainability of the Company will be difficult without commitment from its Government shareholder, Mr McDonagh said, "Government needs to step forward to protect and maintain the valued and necessary public services provided by An Post," he added.

More than 300 delegates are attending the CWU Conference, addressing motions across multiple Companies represented by the Union, including An Post, eir, Vodafone and UPS.

The CWU is expressing concerns over plans by eir to sell its fibre access network, describing it as the backbone of Ireland's communications infrastructure.

The Union has voiced its support for the National Broadband Plan but said that as contracts are awarded by National Broadband Ireland, the pay and conditions of the workers building the networks must be protected.

The CWU also said it would support the efforts of workers at tech giants such as Amazon, Facebook and Google who want to organise and join a union to represent their interests.





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CWU DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY COURSE & COMPETITION

Now that the days are getting longer, it is an ideal time to learn a new skill. So why not take the plunge and try out our online Digital Photography course? Simply login or create an account on www.unionlink.org and get started. This basic course will give you the necessary skills to go out and enjoy taking photographs whether you are a complete beginner or simply want to learn more. The course will introduce you to the following:

- Camera basics and functions
- · Light & how to use it

- Composition techniques
- Tips and guidance for excellent photos

The CWU is also pleased to announce the return of the Digital Photography Competition for members who have completed our Digital Photography course on Union link.

How to enter:

Please visit www.cwu.ie/unioncompetition and submit your photo(s) in JPEG format

The photo competition is open from June 17th until September 2nd 2022 and the winners will be announced by GS Circular. Extra prizes for runners up!

* By entering the competition all members accept the terms and conditions outlined on the webpage

Photographs that have been entered for previous competitions may not be re-entered and are exempt from this year's CWU Digital Photography Competition



Should you need assistance with the course or have any queries, email carol@cwu.ie



COST OF LIVING COALITION NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION



















Telecoms Update

Vodafone Branch Update – CWU Biennial Conference 2022

Mountainview

Due to the level 5 restrictions during the pandemic, office-based workers in Mountainview worked from home. Following the lifting of restrictions, Vodafone management recognised the benefits of introducing a hybrid working model for our members and introduced a 60/40 return to the office (60% remote, 40% office).

Details of the hybrid model are to be finalised, but the proposal has been broadly welcomed by our members as it offers a better work/life balance and allows for employment in Mountainview outside of the traditional Dublin base.

Obelisk

The CWU has entered into initial discussions with Obelisk management on a pay claim and our members will be kept up to date on our progress.

On foot of the recent announcement that Obelisk has been bought by a Portuguese telecoms company 'Construcel Visabeira', the CWU has sought a meeting to discuss if there will be any impact for our members.

Vodafone Retail

Prior to the pandemic, visits to Vodafone retail stores took place regularly. These visits provided engagement between the Vodafone Branch and members in the retail stores, while also highlighting potential issues. Due to the restrictions during the pandemic, store visits were

not possible for two years. The Company also moved to an online training model for new staff which resulted in a loss of physical induction access for the Union. To keep up engagement with our retail members, the Vodafone Branch conducted a series of online meetings with the stores and conducted an online 'Mental Health' survey.

In late 2021, restrictions had eased, and the Vodafone Branch visited all the stores across the country to engage members on issues with targets and staff shortages. As a result of the visits, retail membership increased by 43%.

In April 2022, the Vodafone Branch completed a second round of store visits with a survey. The purpose of the survey was to gather information on issues in Vodafone Retail and seek an interest in establishing a Retail Forum. There was a high uptake of members engaging with the Branch and taking part in the survey. Membership in retail increased by a further 11%.

The results of the survey identified three key issuses:

- An increase to the base rate of pay
- Additional payment for working Sundays
- Average commission payment for annual leave

Armed with the results of the survey, the CWU and the Vodafone Branch engaged with management. The Union has secured a 6.6% pay increase for all members in Vodafone Retail and the Company agreed to further engage on a Sunday Premium and an average commission payment for annual leave.

PhoneWatch Update – CWU Biennial Conference 2022

Customer Service

In May 2021, Secto Alarms made the decision to centralise its customer service operations to Fuengirola, Spain. Following engagement with the CWU and Phonewatch Branch, it was agreed that there would be no voluntary or compulsory redundancies as a result of the decision. Members in Customer Operations were offered the option to relocate to Spain and take up a new role on local terms and conditions but maintain their service. Those who opted not to move will continue their existing roles in Dublin until they exited the business or were promoted to an alternative role.

Pay

In late 2021, the CWU entered pay negotiations with PhoneWatch Management. The Company's initial position was a 12-month pay freeze, due to financial

losses as a result of the pandemic. The Phonewatch Branch strongly rejected this position, as members carried a significant burden throughout Covid-19. Following intensive negotiations, an agreement was reached on a set of proposals the Branch could recommend for acceptance in a Ballot.

- A pay agreement for 12-months (1st Jan 31st Dec 2022)
- Overall pay increase of 3% for all staff
- Introduction of Performance Related Pay Progression for Arc staff employed since 2015 and a one-off payment for these members due to the delay in agreeing the process

A ballot was conducted, and members voted to accept the pay proposals. As part of the ballot process, the PhoneWatch Branch successfully invited new staff to become members of the CWU.

eir Retail Update – CWU Biennial Conference 2022

Synchro

In October 2021, eir announced 28 retail stores operated by Synchro under a franchise agreement would be brought back in-house. Approximately 95 workers would transfer their employment to eir under TUPE. Synchro employed these workers on lesser terms and conditions and poorer commission structures than our members directly employed in eir Retail. The Union had no collective agreement with Synchro and only one worker was a member of the CWU. Under the terms of TUPE, these workers had no entitlement to the improved eir terms and conditions. Following the announcement, a small number of Synchro staff contacted the CWU seeking assistance.

CWU Industrial Organisers arranged a series of online meetings with Synchro workers. It was decided to begin a campaign with the aim to have the CWU represent these workers through the TUPE process and then harmonise to eir terms and conditions. Within weeks, over half of the workers in Synchro joined the Union and five members were elected to a Synchro CWU Committee.

On foot of the campaign, the CWU represented Synchro members through the transfer and members had the option to harmonise to eir terms and conditions on the date of transfer. For the majority of workers in Synchro, the eir contracts provided for an increase in the base rate of pay, better commission structures, sick pay and other improvements won by CWU members over the years. The campaign was a success; these workers have now been harmonised into eir.

eir Retail Stores

After the insourcing of Synchro, there are now 70 eir retail stores across the country. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, stores had not been visited for over three years. At the time of writing, Rachel Carton, NEC member from the Dublin No.1 Branch and the Industrial Organisers have visited 60 retail stores. Members were engaged through a survey and many members expressed interest in a Retail Forum.

Results of the survey so far have indicated a number of issues, such as:

- Removal of contactless payments negatively affecting sales
- No average commission for annual leave
- Concern around targets
- Lone working

Union inductions did not take place during restrictions, so the store visits afforded new staff the opportunity to join the CWU and eir retail membership has increased by 63%.

Retail Sunday Premium

As part of the last pay deal, it was agreed to bring the Retail/FOTS staff into the Joint Conciliation Council (JCC), which allows the pursuit of claims under the formal structures that we use for other claims, as well as ensuring that these members are now comprehended by the collective pay agreements that the CWU concludes with eir.

On foot of a claim to the JCC to improve the Sunday Premium Payment, agreement was reached to increase the rate from 10% to 33%. This was communicated in January 2022 but was backdated to 1st July 2021.

The agreed premium will apply to both salaried and non-salaried staff (Store Managers, Assistant Store Managers, Full & Part time RSCs) and is applicable to the basic rate of pay for hours worked on Sundays.

Lead RSC Allowance

In January, agreement was reached to restructure part of eir's retail estate by examining store locations with a view to having one manager take responsibility for two locations that were in close proximity. 12 shops were identified to be in scope. As part of this agreement, the position of Lead Retail Sales Consultant (RSC) was created for the shops that were in scope and the role attracted a €3,000 allowance.

Telecoms Update

eir Networks

F.A.S.T.

Fault levels are stabilising and are impacted by the roll-out of Fibre To The Home (FTTH). The National Broadband Plan will also impact on fault levels as its network build will concentrate on very rural areas (areas traditionally associated with high fault index). The acceleration of openeir network upgrade combined with other operators build plans is impacting on fault levels or workloads for our members. The Company has also lodged a white paper to COMREG on the "copper switch off".

Network Build

The focus is on IFN. Voluntary Leaving Deals have reduced our member numbers considerably. The network is competing with other operators such as SIRO, NBI and Virgin, however 40 service providers are selling on openeir's network. Recently eir announced that it has passed 880k homes and businesses, making Ireland one of the most fibre-connected countries in the world.

FNI - Fibre Networks Ireland

Infravia, a French capital investment company, will own (pending Competition Authority approval) openeir's fibre and copper network. The CWU had no knowledge of the proposed deal but we have received assurance from the Company that the employment relationship for our members remains the same.

NRT (Former Apprentice)

As of now, the Company is not prepared to increase the \in 2,000 payment/allowance and the DC scheme rules –

confirmed by the scheme trustees – **does not allow** the payment/allowance for DC pension purposes.

Deployment/Assignment/Mobility

Company figures show that using 100km as long-range deployment was very similar to previous year's 0% in low fault volume months. Almost all long-range deployments were during December, due to Storm Barra. So, 1% of possible deployments were long-range across the year. This increased to 4% for the month of December. The Company position is that **faults determine mobility**. There is no advantage or disadvantage being on a local team rather than a NRT team.

Assignment of New Apprentices

The assignment of new Apprentices this year was difficult, as two members resigned from the Company. We always had members who moved long distances, however we have always committed to have them moved back to their home area within 12 months. The CWU has always delivered on this commitment. The fact that no new Apprentice intake happened in recent years added to the difficulties with the assignment process.

Call-Out Procedure

There is now an agreed procedure that must be followed. Key provisions of the new process are where a call to SMC indicates pole down a KN crew **are called directly**. eir Networks Contract Manager is also included in the contact list for escalations and to monitor compliance.

Little or no churn in the Apprentice scheme. Circa 80% of the 2011 intake are now in Managerial roles, demonstrating substantial opportunities for career progression.

eir National Managers' Branch

The CWU acknowledges the importance of the role of professionals and managers is growing, and the pandemic is contributing to its even faster growth. Professional and managerial members have important responsibilities towards companies, and organisations, and employees. Sometimes their role requires them to represent the employer, but at the same time they are employees with their own interests. This may result in them being at the heart of conflicting interests. To address this, the CWU has a dedicated "Professional and Managers" grouping contained within its overall union structure.

The new structure points to an acceptance that:

 There are different requirements for our professional and manager members

- The need to do things differently for our members
- Need to make the Union relevant for our members
- Professional and managers are a growth area for our Union

There are **common issues** across all our management groupings. They can be summarised as follows:

- Pay and Conditions
- Performance Management (process, understanding and transparency)
- Workloads delegation
- Rationalisation/change and amalgamation of roles

We also offer advice and guidance to **individual** members on issues they encounter throughout their professional career.

Telecoms Update

eir Health & Safety

We have come through a particularly difficult time with **COVID-19**. The true impact of COVID will not be evident for some time to come. One positive outcome is the realisation that the services our members supply are vital to the running of our economy and linking our rural communities through telecommunications and our postal services.

Another positive to take from COVID is the realisation by Companies of the need for the involvement of key staff in their decision-making. An example is through the Work Safely Protocol, Return to Work Protocol and the creation of **Lead Worker Representatives and Covid Compliance Officers**. This has demonstrated that, when making decisions which impact staff, staff must be involved.

The CWU understood the crucial role the **Lead Worker Representatives** had, and the National
Executive Council agreed a structure that delivered that

involvement and inclusion in the decision-making at the highest level within the Company.

In the last couple of months, a gradual and phased return to the office was introduced and was implemented in tandem with the **Agile Work Policy**.

Top 5 Accidents During 2021

Road Traffic Accidents, Slips Trips and Falls, Manual Handling, Falling from Height

Ireland – In the 10-year period between 2012 and 2021 – 481 people were killed in work related accidents and thousands more badly injured. Last year 38 people were killed.

At Workers' Memorial Day — listening to the brother of a man killed at work was harrowing as he described the impact his brother's death has had on the family. We do not want any members family to go through that experience. <u>Unions and Companies must do all they can to ensure safe places of work</u>.





Karri Lybek, UNI Global Union, addresses 11th CWU Biennial Conference

Be SunSmart









Slip on clothing that covers your skin, long sleeves, collared t-shirts



Slop on sunscreen on exposed areas using factor 50+ for children



Slap on a wide-brimmed hat



Seek shade - especially if outdoors between 11 am and 3 pm



Slide on sunglasses to protect your eyes







1 in 4 skin cancer deaths in Ireland are in the construction, outdoor and farming industries

Transport & Facilities

eir invested €16m in fleet upgrade in 2019; in addition, from 2020 to date the following vehicles were purchased:

- 46 additional Aerial Platforms
- 26 4x4 Jeeps (mostly into the Field Engineering space)
- 17 new FLM vans

Over next 20-months eir hopes to add the following vehicles (note: numbers are approximate, pending procurement process)

- Replace remaining 4 FLM vans
- 30 new Aerial Platforms (in 2023)
- 45 Hybrid Fibre vans for the Service Assurance
 Team
- 5 Fibre vans for the Build Team

eir has also amended its Company Car Policy so that staff can only order an EV or Hybrid car.

We ask members to continue to log cleaning and welfare issues through the Company website in order to action any such requests.

Apprentice Programme

We know and have heard of the so-called pension cliff, where members reach retirement age. Also, the regular voluntary leaving deals have reduced overall staff numbers considerably, as was seen in recent years in Network Build. Non-replacement of staff does place **added pressure** on members who are left working in the Company.

On that basis, we constantly pointed out to the Company that an Apprentice Programme was a key demand of the CWU. Following our recent meeting with the CEO, the Company announced a new Apprentice intake for early 2023. 40 Apprentices will be recruited.

The intention is to commence recruitment in September this year. The Company has agreed that the recruitment will be based on **where staff** are needed at the time. We await to see how successful this will be, but it should go a long way to resolve the recent assignment issues.

In summary, the intake is a good starting position but there is still a bit to go in developing a continuous Apprentice Programme.

eir Superannuation Scheme

The Scheme is mature with circa 1,200 active members. **The Pension Accord** has worked, as it allowed the fund to reduce risks. We are expecting a 2% pensionable increase this year, following Company and Ministerial approvals.

The overall Fund valuation is circa \leqslant 4,650m at present and the Fund has been in a \leqslant 4,400m - \leqslant 4,800m range over the last 24 months during COVID. The valuation indicates the fund is well insulated to the current market turmoil.

This strong funding position also means that the fund self-sufficiency date of 2035, where it targets to be fully funded as of that date using only bonds (secure assets), i.e. having no requirement for growth assets, is now fully achievable and can likely be brought forward.

KN Branch

The CWU has, on behalf of our members in KN/Circet, lodged a pay claim. Initially there was a kick-back from the Company, due to its COVID and transport costs. KN/Circet is a transport-dependant business and the rise in fuel price has impacted its business. Also, the Company is tied into commercial contracts with only limited possibilities to review.

Discussions have moved on and the Company is reviewing some options with its Senior Management Team. The KN Branch Representatives will update members when there is progress to report.

To demonstrate the importance of the KN Branch to the CWU, the General Secretary made it his business to meet with Senior Management early this year. The purpose of this meeting was by means of introduction and to determine where we, as a Union, can benefit from our interactions with the Company. It's worth pointing out that our members are the main installers of services and builders of networks in Ireland through openeir and NBI.

On the Branch Structure, we need to move away from the idea that Union HQ runs the Branch. We are committed to doing everything possible to make the KN Branch work. Following the AGM, we held a number of Representative/Committee meetings to identify gaps in the structure. It is the intention of the Branch to hold monthly meetings, to help bring members' issues to the forefront through a process of engagement at local level. Currently we have no representation in Dublin or along the east and northeast coast. It is our priority to address this.

Telecoms Update

Further Improvements Achieved in Customer Care Centres

Following ongoing engagement with eir, we are pleased to report further improvements to remuneration for members in the Customer Care centres in Sligo, Cork, Waterford and Limerick.

The new model aims to improve pay and bonuses for existing members, while also improving the attractiveness of eir in the recruitment market.

All Agents and Senior Agents currently in receipt of the attendance bonus will benefit from the new package, which comprises:

The attendance payment of €1,700 introduced

- as part of the pay deal of 2021, is now being consolidated into base pay
- All On Target Earnings (OTE) will also increase as bonuses will now come off a higher base
- Upcoming pay deal increases will apply on top of the base increase set out in the new model and will see further increases in OTE

With these improvements, the base pay for new entrants will rise to €23,700, meaning entry level OTE will be 8% above the Living Wage.

As well as the changes to base pay, there will also be improvements to the bonus model. Previously, the bonus eligibility of 15% has been based on three core KPIs – Average Handling Time, Productivity and Repeat Calls. This will now reduce to two core KPIs – Calls per Hour and Repeats.

Taken in totality, this means that there will be less pressure around workload in conjunction with an improvement in pay.

Conference Update - Core Network

SMC Reorganisation

It was reported at the Conference that a working group of the Union's NEC, comprised of: Ivor Reynolds, Dublin No.1, NEC (President), Tom Sheehan, Cork District, NEC and Deirdre O'Hara, Dublin No.1. had worked through proposals from the Company in relation to the re-organisation of the SMC.

These changes were driven by introduction of new software which will enhance automation and reflects the previous investment made in the Core Network, which is leading to staff reduction and as a result the Company is seeking a reduction in staff to 22.

A voluntary leaving package was opened up to the staff in scope and in tandem with this agreement was reached on changes for the remaining staff as follows:

- Those employees whose 24 x 7 shift pattern is moving from 7 weeks to 9 weeks will retain their 25% Shift Allowance whilst they remain on this rota pattern
- Those shift leads whose liability is moving to 8.00pm, Monday – Sunday, will retain

their 25% Shift Allowance for 24 months, after which a 10% Allowance will apply (inclusive of Sundays)

- On-call or call-out for shift leads will be paid at the agreed rate for the area
- For non-graded staff, a Sunday Premium of double-time for the hours worked has been agreed
- An ex-gratia payment has been agreed for those individuals who do not avail of V/L

In addition to this, agreement was reached on the terms for new Trainee Technicians. The first intake in 2021 led to recruitment of 16 new staff into the scheme and, at the time of writing, the Company had again opened the competition for new recruits with a view to taking on 24 new staff.

This is important to the Company and the Union. Recruitment into this area is long overdue, after a thirty-seven year wait, and the Dublin No.1 Branch has long advocated and pushed for this kind of investment in new staff and of equal importance is the fact that every new recruit has joined the CWU.

Telecoms Update

JCC Conference Update

In addition to the chapter as presented in the Biennial Conference Report 2022, an update was provided to Conference to confirm the composition of the JCC as:

JCC Composition

- Principal Staff-Side Representative Ian McArdle
- Staff-Side Secretary Tom Sheehan
- Staff Members:
 - Carol Scheffer (Diversity Sub-Committee)
 - John Clarke
 - Fionnuala Ní Bhrógáin
 - Denis Keane (FÓRSA)

It was noted that since the publication of the Biennial Conference Report 2022, a number of other claims have been agreed.

Agreed Report No.641 Relocation Agreement

This agreement covers a claim regarding the relocation of employees to the Bianconi & Cherrywood offices, following the introduction of Agile Working. It provided for a payment to some groups of staff who are impacted by the relocation.

Report No.642 Call Centre Agreement

The parties agree to consolidate the attendance payment (€1,700) directly into base pay for Agents and Senior Agents in receipt of the payment. Attendance performance will now be reflected in KPI Bonus.

Report No.643 Subsistence

It has been agreed to increase the Subsistence rates for Day Allowance (Category 1&2) and Night Allowance (Category 1&2) by 10% over 3 years (capped at Revenue rates). In addition, a once-off 10% increase in the current Vouched Meal expenses rate of \in 12, to increase to \in 13.20, has been agreed. These changes will take effect from 01 July 2022.

Conference noted that the JCC claim for a COVID bonus payment has been rejected by the Company, which is a disappointment for those staff, particularly in retail, who represented the Company to such good effect and with such professionalism during a very difficult time, at some personal risk. The Union will review this response and, following discussions with the Executive, decide on how best to proceed.

Jason Larkin — Champion Pitch & Putt Winner



Jason Larkin from Whitehall Delivery Service
Unit with a magnificent -18 was the stroke play
Champion at the Dublin Pitch & Putt competition
held recently in Portmarnock Pitt & Putt club.
Congratulations to Jason on a great performance
from all your colleagues.

Noel Mullaney Retires



One Monaghan Man to Another

DGS, Ian Mc Ardle, presenting Noel Mullaney, Branch Secretary Monaghan Postal, with his Union Scroll at his retirement party recently. We all wish Noel the very best for his retirement.

CWU 11th Biennial Conference May 2022, Athlone



Galway Postal Branch delegation: Jarlath Heneghan, Paul Kennedy, Tom Geraghty, General Secretary, Seán McDonagh, Mary Conroy, Damien Corcoran, Paul Pender, Geraldine Thompson



GS Seán makes a presentation to Mike O'Connor, former President CWU 2018 - 2020



Willie Mooney being presented with a gift to mark his Presidency 2020-2022



Bernard Doyle & John Byrne Carlow Postal Branch



Pictured I to r:
John Barry,
Michael Scully,
Andrew O'Neill,
Mick Dineen and
Donal O'Driscoll
from the Cork District
Branch

Sligo District Branch delegation:

Joe Brennan, Ciara Wade, Pascal Connolly, Deborah Flannery, Joseph Brennan, Damien Duignan, Arron Molloy, & Micheal McKenzie





Cork Postal Branch delegation enjoying Conference with newly-elected NEC Member, Des Hopkins.



Dublin No 1 Branch pictured with newly-elected President, Ivor Reynolds.

Vodafone Branch pictured with former President and Branch Member, Mike O'Connor





Ciaran Reilly & Maurice Clutterbuck Drogheda Postal.



Pat Sheridan & Patrick Duggan, Seán Connolly Waterford District Branch.



Paul Keenan & Pat Hawkins, Dublin Mails Managers' Branch.



William Slevin, Gerry Perry & Andy O'Neill, eir National Managers' Branch.



Good Friends: Paddy Costello, Christy Brannigan & Mickey O'Connor.



Jason Caulfield, Chris Jones & Anthony Horan, Waterford Postal Branch.



Stephen Elliott, Barney Foley & Sive Corrigan, Drogheda District Branch.



Paul Syder DPDB addresses Conference.



Darren Rigney, Alan Dempsey, Paul Davy, Joseph Cox, KN Networks Branch.



Dublin Postal Delivery Branch delegation with newly-elected CWU Vice-President, Frank Donohoe.



Standing Orders Committee
Pat Delaney, Jim McCarron, James Moore,
Davey Stapleton, Danny Hoare, Seán McDermott.



Cormac O'Dalaigh, National Officer addresses Conference



John McCay, Mark Gilmore, Anthony McCrave, Damien Babington.



The CWU Band in action at the Biennial Conference.



12/05/2022

Dear Ivor & Communications Worker Union,

Thank you so much for your incredibly generous donation of €50,000 to the Irish Red Cross.

Your donation is already hard at work. And whether your gift helps to deliver essential food items, wrap a cold and weary child in a warm blanket, or provide vital medical supplies... it will be because of you - Thank you.

I hope you know just how precious that makes you to the Irish Red Cross, and to the people we serve who are touched by your kindness. Your gift will help us continue our important work and is very much appreciated.

Thank you for your kindness and compassion.

With all my gratitude,

Thiam o' Duyen

Secretary General

Irish Red Cross

Humanity Impartiality Neutrality Independence Voluntary Service Unity Universality

Irish Red Cross | 16 Merrion Square Dublin 2

t+353 (0)1 642 4600

fundraisin@redcross.ie | www.redcross.ie |

Mails & Parcels Conundrum

The highs and lows of mail item volumes provided much deliberation at the recent CWU Conference, on the future of the Mails & Parcels business. The volatility in the market and previous miscalculated volume projections by the company make it extremely difficult for CWU representatives to quantify the scale of change required to transform the delivery and processing network. The high volumes throughout the pandemic tested to the limit the operational capacity, but equally placed unreasonable demands on delivery staff to cope. As we move forward from the pandemic, (which may not be an apt description), the seismic impact of Brexit, the Ukraine war and spiralling inflation it is difficult to accurately assess or predict the required or optimum processing and delivery requirements.

McKinsey Consultants, regarded by An Post to be experts in the field, have had two expensive turns at advising An Post how best to proceed, with both recommendations somewhat contradictory. Following their first recommendation regarding mail processing and "independent" review by the Minister for Communications, An Post had to separately engage Accenture Consultants to recover from the debacle surrounding the closure of a Mail Centre.

This experience left senior management somewhat perplexed and pondering as to what route to travel, and at what pace, on the delivery front. McKinsey after some reflection scaled back on plans for major downsizing of the DSU network. Following a recent internal competition, the C&D excellence design team were stood down in favour of a more grounded group of final mile operators. The much heralded prio/eco model was shelved by the Company in favour of a "Test and Learn" approach of a new design model of three Delivery Service Units in Ravensdale Road, Drogheda and Kilmallock.

It is not clear what learnings can be gleaned as An Post ponders its future at a time when so much uncertainty exists. That said, its crystal clear the current set up can't stay the same given letter volume decline and the changing profile of Parcel and Packet mail items together with the changing demands of customers. Neither is the traditional reliance and dependence on overtime the preferred solution for staff or management. Also An Post would do well not to be led on a merry dance by Amazon and be left all alone when the music stops, after facilitating the massive multinational to build its base by carrying less profitable mail at low cost.

On the processing front, the company has been

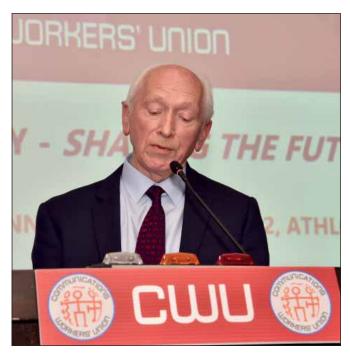
presented with an each-way bet by McKinsey who advise that they have two options to consider. Either utilise its existing processing network, or alternatively put all its eggs in to one basket and have one superduper processing centre. What odds would Paddy Power give for either is anybody's guess. However, in a surprising development, the company took an unprecedented step for a site search, by placing an advertisement seeking landowners with an unwanted field, for a site to accommodate 500,000 square feet to house a new logistics hub. No real hurry though as this is only a possibility for delivery in 2030ish.

From a CWU perspective we have a situation where letter volumes will be around 300 million for 2022 from a figure of 515 million letters in 2015. Parcel volumes have doubled in the same period, but from a very low base. There are 4,000 delivery routes across the country and approx. 6,500 of our members employed in delivery, processing and collecting of mail. The continuing changing mail profile, uncertainty, the decline in mail and revenue, has major implications for both the company, Union and members' conditions of employment.

To further add to the conundrum, the General Secretary outlined at Conference the CWU agenda issues to be addressed in the context of the transformation discussions. He cited pay and pension as key issues to be addressed for the company to retain a green light for change. He reiterated the Union's intention to address the pay disparity - with consolidation of the productivity allowance a red line. An analysis of the earnings model confirms that it tracks the highs and lows of mail volumes and the current operational set up, resulting in periods of potential high earnings but with the base rate remaining low. The challenge is to negotiate an agreement that strikes the right balance that ensures the viability of the company, meets customer expectations, and provides certainty of employment and earnings for our members.

The company declared a more pressing issue that it would disclose in June to the Union, what it wants for Christmas. While this first latest date for Christmas expired without the wish list arriving, indications in early July were the Company maybe favouring a less traditional approach to the Christmas pressure period. Whatever the timeline and sequence for sorting all of the above, the 25th December seems likely to remain the designated Christmas Day, at least for the foreseeable.

11th Biennial Conference Closing Ceremony



Christy Brannigan reads the poem "We Remember Them"



Pat Compton sings "Joe Hill"



The CWU Band plays Conference out on a high note!

We Remember Them —

by Sylvan Kamens and Rabbi Jack Riemer

At the rising of the sun and at its going down

We remember them.

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter

We remember them.

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring

We remember them.

At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer

We remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn

We remember them.

At the beginning of the year and when it ends

We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live; for they are now a part of us as we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength

We remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart We remember them.

When we have joy we crave to share We remember them.

When we have decisions that are difficult to make

We remember them.

When we have achievements that are based on theirs

We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live; for they are now a part of us as we remember them.

© Jewish Prayer Book

An Post JCC Update

As reported to the Biennial Conference, the Union continues to engage with the Company at the JCC to review and progress issues of concern to the Union. These issues are discussed at Sub-Committees and currently the following JCC Sub-Committees or Joint Working Groups are established:

- · Health and Safety Sub-Committee
- Diversity and Equality
- Training and Development
- Communications and Policies
- Pensions
- ASMP
- Joint Accommodation
- · Uniform and Workwear
- Security
- GPO Review

In addition, other committees are set up as required and set out below is an update in relation to some of the issues under discussion.

Health and Safety Sub-Committee

Defibrillators

We have agreed that, over the next three years, the Company will roll-out Defibrillators to all Company offices over a three-year period. The roll-out commenced towards the end of last year.

Cancer Awareness and Sun Screen





Skin cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer. According to the Irish Cancer Society there are up to 13,000 cases diagnosed annually in Ireland and this figure is rising. Outdoor workers are at the greatest risk. The Union and the Company have joined the SunSmart campaign, to highlight the risks from exposure to UV rays and to protect their skin from exposure. As part of this campaign, we are currently

trialling sunscreen dispensers at a number of Company premises. These dispensers have a UV index display, and the purpose of the trial is to raise awareness of the importance of including sunscreen as an essential part of sun protection, when spending time outdoors.

The UV index is important for those who work outdoors, as it indicates the strength of the sun's UV rays so that you know when to protect your skin. If the UV index displays at three or above, skin protection is needed. UV is always strongest during the middle of the day during April to September.

In addition to the above, sunscreen will be provided to all outdoor workers. We are also working on a SunSmart policy which will build on the above campaign.

Driver Rollaways

The Company continues to raise its concerns in relation to significant safety breaches by Postal Operatives which have potential for serious injury or fatalities to either drivers or pedestrians.

The main concern relates to vehicle rollaways, which arise because the handbrake is not applied properly. This has resulted in Company vans either rolling into other vans, colliding with houses, rolling into gardens and in some cases tipping over.

Given the seriousness and potential danger to the public, the Company has advised that the nonobservance of this normal safety measure is a serious cause of concern and that this could lead to the driver being subject to disciplinary sanction, up to and including dismissal. They could also leave themselves liable for prosecution.

Following representations from the Union, the Company has confirmed that it is installing alarm buzzers in the fleet which will remind the Postal Operative to engage the handbrake. There have been difficulties with the roll-out of this initiative, and these are currently the subject of discussion with the Company.

Replacement Footwear

Safety Footwear is part of an employee's Personal Protective Equipment. As such, every employee supplied with safety footwear has an obligation to wear the footwear, as their duties require, and the Company will be strictly enforcing this. This includes Managers and casual staff, as appropriate.

The Union has recently agreed to the provision of a safety shoe in addition to the safety boot. With the addition of the shoe, we are also reviewing the process for replacing safety footwear, as there will be times when for medical or other reasons, the Safety Shoes/Boots provided may not be suitable.

The process, which should be finalised shortly, will include the following:

The employee should wear the safety footwear for

- a minimum of two weeks, to allow for a break-in period
- If the employee is experiencing discomfort after this time, they should report the matter, in writing, to their Manager, setting out the reason why they are experiencing discomfort and including any medical evidence to support their position.
- The Manager will provide the employee with the minimum standards specifications:
 - » CE Marked & Meet the EN 20345:2011 Standard for Safety Footwear.
 - » Meet S3 category standard and Slip resistant to an SRC rating. S2 rating is acceptable for Indoor Staff only.
 - » Shoe/Boot must be predominantly black in colour
- The Company will allow a refund of up to €80, or the cost price, whichever is lower.

Safety Training

The Company has advised the Union of the following health and safety training courses. The list does not include manual handling or power stacker training, which will be organised separately.

TRAINING COURSE	VENUE	DATES
Fire Management Training	Ravensdale DSU	1st June
Fire Management Training	Killarney	15th June
Fire Management Training	Waterford	22nd June
Fire Management Training	Tipperary	20th July
Fire Management Training	Galway	17th August
First Aid Responder Beginners	Ravensdale DSU	24th, 25th & 26th August
First Aid Responder Beginners	Athlone Mail Centre	24th, 25th & 26th August
Fire Management Training	Kells	30th August
Fire Management Training	Ravensdale DSU	6th September
First Aid Responder Beginners	Ravensdale DSU	7th, 8th & 9th Sept
First Aid Responder Beginners	Little Island CDC	7th, 8th & 9th Sept
Fire Management Training	PMC	13th September
Safety Representative Training	Ravensdale DSU	15th, 16th & 22nd & 23rd September
Fire Management Training	Kilmallock	20th September
First Aid Responder Beginners	Portlaoise Mail Centre	21st, 22nd & 23rd September

First Aid Responder Beginners	Portlaoise Mail Centre	5th, 6th & 7th October
First Aid Responder Beginners	Little Island CDC	5th, 6th & 7th October
Safe Pass Training	Venue in Dublin	11th October (possibly)
First Aid Responder Beginners	Ravensdale DSU	19th, 20th & 21st October

Diversity and Equality Sub-Committee

In the past year we have finalised agreement on a Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control Policy, as well as updating arrangement in relation to Parental Leave. The following chart is helpful when looking at what leave is available to Parents.

LEAVE TYPE	WHO CAN AVAIL OF IT?	HOW LONG IS IT?	IS IT PAID?
Parental Leave	Parents and guardians of children under 12 years of age	A maximum of 26 weeks	No it is unpaid
Parents Leave	Parents and guardians of children under 2 years of age	A maximum of 5 weeks	Parents benefit from the state may be available but the Company does not top up this leave
Paternity Leave	New parents of children under 6 months (not the mother of the child) and must be taken within 6 months of the birth	2 weeks	Paternity benefit is payable from the state and An Post will top this up
Maternity Leave	All pregnant employees, including those on fixed term and specific purpose contracts. Casual staff employed from time to time cannot avail if it.	26 consecutive weeks	
Additional 16 weeks' unpaid	Maternity Benefit is payable from the state and An Post will top this up.		
The additional 16 weeks is not paid			

Review of Dignity at Work

In December 2020, the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) published a new code of practice entitled "Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work". In addition, the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) has also published a Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work.

As a result, the Union and the Company reviewed the Company's "Dignity at Work" policy, taking into account the two guidance documents, and a new policy has now been agreed. The new policy, in addition to reflecting the changes in the Code of Practice, also addresses concerns raised by the Union during the discussions.

The new policy stresses the difference between bullying and harassment. Members, at times, tend to use bullying and harassment in the same sentence and this interchangeability leads to a misunderstanding of what each one relates to. They are legally distinct concepts and therefore a behaviour can be either bullying or harassment but not both. It is important members understand this and this is explained in more detail in the policy.

In the policy, there is no change to the definition of workplace bullying, however there is additional information in relation what constitutes bullying. Bullying should meet the criteria of an ongoing series, or accumulation of seriously targeted negative behaviours against a person or persons in order to undermine their esteem and standing in a harmful and sustained way.

The new policy introduces a secondary informal process, which means that that the policy has a three-stage process of resolution:

- Initial Informal Process
- Secondary Informal Process
- Formal Process

Mediation is no longer a part of the investigation process. Instead, the new policy outlines that mediation may be available at any stage of the informal or formal processes or as an outcome of such processes.

The preferred approach of the Company and the Union is to have complaints dealt with informally, where possible. The objective of the informal procedure is to allow scope for resolving issues quickly and with the minimum of distress and restoring positive workplace relations.

A decision on whether a formal investigation takes place is not an automatic first step but will be an evidence-based decision. It will include a formal complaint and a formal investigation. It is a significant step and all parties should be aware of the consequences, as it will make it more difficult to restore normal workplace

relations. It is no longer the role of the investigation team to determine whether the complaint falls within the definition of bullying, as this will be decided prior to the investigation happening.

Once it is agreed that a formal investigation will take place, Terms of Reference will be agreed which will set out how the investigations will be handled. All statements, including witness statements, will be shared with both parties.

At all stages during the process, individuals have the right to be represented by the Union.

The Sub-Committee has scheduled meetings for the rest of the year and we have prioritised discussions on the following:

- Menopause at Work Policy
- Breastfeeding Breaks
- · Review of Term Time
- Sabbatical Leave
- Gender Pay Gap Report

Attendance Support and Management Process

Irregular employee attendance continues to be a significant cost issue for the Company. Each 1% at Company level costs approximately €3m to the Company bottom line each year. The Company does accept that even if they were fully effective in managing all aspects of absence, they would still be incurring a certain level of absence. In terms of absence management, their best year was 4.47% in 2009 and if absence could be reduced to that level, the Company could be saving up to €6m per annum. The Company believes it to be realistic to make savings of €3m by bringing the absence levels to 5.6%. The ASMP process has been in place since February 2013.

Critical Illness Protocol

In 2016 as part of the Labour Court Finding LCR21206, revised sick pay arrangements were introduced. The following limits apply to paid sick leave:

- (i) A maximum of 92 days' sick leave on full pay in a year
- (ii) A further maximum of 91 days' sick leave on half pay subject to a maximum of 183 days paid sick leave in a rolling four year period.

In recognition of the fact that, sometimes, a longer period of sick leave can be required to address a critical illness or serious physical injury there is provision for the following to apply in exceptional circumstances:

- (i) A maximum of 183 days on full pay in a year
- (ii) A further maximum of 182 days' sick leave on half pay, subject to a maximum of 365 days' paid sick leave in a rolling four-year period. Where an

employee has exhausted 365 days' extended sick pay under the Critical Illness Protocol, they may be granted Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR) for a further period of 12 months.

Examples of critical illnesses include:

- Acute life-threatening illness;
- Chronic progressive illness, with well-established potential to reduce life expectancy;
- Major physical trauma ordinarily requiring corrective acute operative surgical treatment;
- In-patient hospital care of 2 consecutive weeks or greater (2 consecutive days in instances of pregnancy).

We raised concerns with the Company in relation to how this was managed as there is a requirement for decisions to be made quickly and without delay. The Company has advised that the difficulties experienced in 2021 were related to issues that they have now addressed with the appointment of a third-party provider and they expect that there will be a significant improvement this year.

For Critical Illness cases referrals are made by the Local HR Manager to Occupational Health and are based on either the:

- employee completing an application for CIP (Application form to be obtained from HR Manager)
- HR Manager forming a view that CIP likely to apply

If anyone is experiencing difficulties in relation to access to Critical Illness they should contact their Branch Secretary for assistance.

Other Issues Under Discussion

Right to Disconnect

The right to disconnect refers to an employee's right to be able to disengage from work and refrain from engaging in work-related electronic communications, such as emails, phone calls outside working hours. It has three main elements:

- The right of an employee to not routinely perform work outside normal working hours.
- The right to not be penalised for refusing to attend to work matters outside of normal working hours.
- The duty to respect another person's right to disconnect (e.g. by not routinely emailing or calling outside normal working hours).

Following discussions with the Company we have now agreed a policy on the Right to Disconnect which is based on the Code of Practice issued by the Workplace Relations Commission.

The Company policy encourages employees to prioritise their rest and personal wellbeing outside of

normal working hours. It recognises that disconnecting from work and work devices is recognised as important for employee wellbeing and helps to achieve a healthy and sustainable work-life balance.

The policy recognises that within the Company some employees may work non-standard patterns of work which means that what is normal for one may be different for another.

The policy covers email communications and sets out that the sender should give due consideration to the timing of their communications and should include a signature disclaimer at the end, e.g. "While I have sent this email at a time that is convenient for me. I do not expect you to respond to it outside of your usual working hours." Employees are also encouraged to use the delay send option.

No meetings should normally be scheduled before or after normal working hours and employees should only be invited to meetings where their attendance is necessary.

The policy will specify the crucial role that Managers will play in its successful implementation and are responsible for maintaining proper safety and wellbeing. Managers should respect the Right to Disconnect of their team members and should demonstrate clear commitment to the policy through leadership and being active role models in this respect.

The policy will be reviewed based on experience.

Guidelines for Dealing with Staff Assaults

The guidelines for dealing with staff assaults were originally issued in 2003 and had limited application Company-wide. These guidelines were out of date and were not applied consistently and as a result we sought a review of the policy and this review is now completed.

The key issues addressed in the new guidelines are:

- The Company has adopted the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) wide-encompassing definition of Workplace Violence. This brings certain obligations, including the mandatory reporting of incidents. This will feed into Risk Assessment & STPSs.
- The scope of the guidelines has been extended Company-wide and now supports all employees; irrespective of their role/location/nature of their work.
- 3) The guidelines are more employee-centric and focus on recognition, awareness and support.
- 4) The guidelines now offer more guidance on supports and details on the Employee Assistance Programme.
- 5) The ex-gratia payment paid to staff is increased from €100 to €250 and will be reviewed on a biennial basis based on CPI in the preceding two years.

- In the case of all robberies on premises where 6) violence is used or threatened, Company employees in the immediate vicinity will be made an ex-gratia payment of €250.
- Where an employee is subject to an assault from a member of the public in the course of their work they may be paid an ex-gratia payment at the discretion of management.
- Sick leave as a result of an assault on duty will be 8) treated as a stand-alone, once off incident and will be viewed as such in the calculation of sick leave triggering entry to, or escalation under, ASMP.
- Employees do not have to provide receipted accounts before paying the hospital fees on initial visit to A & E. Any payments will be made directly to the hospital concerned by the Company.
- 10) Employees on sick leave following an assault on duty will be paid the average of their allowances paid to them in the 13 weeks prior to the assault.
- 11) Signage has been agreed which will be displayed in all offices.

This policy will be distributed to all offices over the next few weeks.

Communication of Policies

The Union has highlighted that not all staff have equal

access to Company policies and procedures. In addition, staff should be able to access policies away from the workplace and in privacy.

We have established a Sub-Committee to examine this issue. The issues we highlighted are as follows:

- Access not all staff had access at all times to policies in a convenient manner.
- **Prioritisation** there is a need to ensure that the most important policies are prioritised for communication.
- **Privacy** some would prefer to be able to access policies remotely and away from the workplace
- Clarity presentation of policies needs to be clearer and policies should be re-written with more summaries, bullet points and have more visual content to make them more engaging.
- Sustainability there is desire to reduce the level of paper notices and documents which need to be sent.

As part of this process the Company has commenced a review of the Company intranet to make it more accessible. They are also examining the possibility of providing external access to it for all employees who do not currently have access to it. The Company hopes to be in a position to demonstrate this to the Union in the next couple of weeks.

Is it a Sweetener or A Political Umbrella to offer €1,000 a month for Postmasters, in an attempt to keep Post Offices open?



Postal Services Junior Minister, Hildegarde Naughton.

- Government subvention plan aims to keep post offices open
- There are around 900 post offices across the State at present most of which are independently operated by postmasters and postmistresses, who are contracted by An Post
- Scheme is expected to operate for a number of years, and could become permanent



Failure to fund GPO revamp for An Post HQ was 'unwise'

© Independent Newspapers

Anne-Marie Walsh

INDUSTRY CORRESPONDENT

HE Government was "unwise" for failing to fund a revamp of the GPO so it could rernain An Post's historic headquarters, it has been claimed.

Seán McDonagh, the General Secretary of the Communications Workers' Union (CWU), said staff opposed the plan to rnove to a new HQ because they felt the historic head office on Dublin's O'Connell Street should be refurbished instead.

But he said the relocation proposal is due to go ahead and a target date has been set for workers to transfer to the EXO Building in the city's docklands in October.

A spokesperson at An Post said it will retain work units, including a public post office and Witness History Museum, at the GPO.

Mr McDonagh was speaking at his Union's Biennial Conference in Athlone recently. Delegates passed a motion tabled by the Dublin Postal Clerks' Branch demanding that they move to a four-day week on a pilot basis when they relocate to the new HQ.

"There isn't any great requirement in my view to relocate out of the GPO permanently," Mr McDonagh said.

"There is a requirernent to do it up. There's no disputing that it has to be refurbished to make it safe and workable, but you know, I think actually the Government has been unwise in not providing the finance. They've not declared what they're going to do with the building. It's owned by the State, and is estimated to cost around €40rn or €50m, I don't know exactly, and we felt that the Government should really have provided for that rather than forcing An Post to go and find alternative premises because they didn't have money to invest in the GPO. It's a good site, it's a good location, it's historical and in any event the Government is going to have to do it up any, way. whoever's housed in it."

Mr McDonagh said work "transformation" changes to accompany the move are under discussion. Staff are due a 2.5pc pay rise next January and will potentially receive a share of productivity savings, he added.

He said the union is not planning to revisit pay deals due to increased living costs.

"We expect employers to honour agreements, as they would with us," he said. "From the Government's perspective, we need them to do something about inflation. It's not solely the job of the employer. We

have to factor in the ability of some employers

to pay."

Government

have not

declared what

they're going

to do with the

building'

He also said it is on the Union's agenda to organise at Amazon, when it opens its fust fulfilment centre in Ireland.

CWU President, William Mooney, warned higher pay rises will be sought unless the Government enters talks with ICTU.

Delegates from eir spoke in support of a motion seeking a special cost-ofliving increase, and said shareholders in the telecoms Company are set to reap major

dividends. How ever, it was defeated.

One delegate said a pay deal was a great move at the time, but we are now in "war times". "I know breaking our word is a tough thing to do." he said, referring to the fact that the pay deal does not have a review clause.

Meanwhile, delegates backed a motion seeking a special allowance for staff using e-trikes for deliveries. Gerry Sexton of the Dublin Postal Delivery Branch said staff did not qualify for a van allowance worth around €27.

He said e-trike training was like training to drive a small car.

Earlier. Mr McDonagh said An Post's future is "gravely uncertain" without government investment. The An Post spokesperson said it had transformed its business without a state subsidy and "we remain firmly focused on this strategy".

Why a Rhodes Scholar's Ambition Led Her to a Job at Starbucks

Jaz Brisack became a barista for the same reasons that talented young people have long chosen their career paths: a mix of idealism and ambition.

By Noam Scheiber © The New York Times



Jaz Brisack, a Rhodes scholar, on her way to work in February at a Starbucks in Buffalo, where she helped unionise co-workers.

OST weekend mornings, Jaz Brisack gets up around 5, wills her semiconscious body into a Toyota Prius and winds her way through Buffalo, to the Starbucks on Elmwood Avenue. After a supervisor unlocks the door, she clocks in, checks herself for Covid symptoms and helps get the store ready for customers.

"I'm almost always on bar if I open," said Ms. Brisack, who has a thrift-store aesthetic and long reddish-brown hair that she parts down the middle. "I like steaming milk, pouring lattes."

The Starbucks door is not the only one that has been opened for her. As a University of Mississippi senior in 2018, Ms. Brisack was one of 32 Americans who won Rhodes scholarships, which fund study in Oxford, England.

Many students seek the scholarship because it can pave the way to a career in the top ranks of law, academia, government or business. They are motivated by a mix of ambition and idealism.

Ms. Brisack became a barista for similar reasons: She believed it was simply the most urgent claim on her time and her many talents.

When she joined Starbucks in late 2020, not a single one of the company's 9,000 U.S. locations had a union. Ms. Brisack hoped to change that by helping to unionize its stores in Buffalo.

Improbably, she and her co-workers have far exceeded their goal. Since December, when her store became the only corporate-owned Starbucks in the United States with a certified union, more than 150 other stores have voted to unionize, and more than 275 have filed paperwork to hold elections. Their actions come amid

an increase in public support for unions, which last year reached its highest point since the mid-1960s, and a growing consensus among center-left experts that rising union membership could move millions of workers into the middle class.



Placards at a Denver rally this month in support of a union push at Starbucks stores.

Ms. Brisack's weekend shift represents all these trends, as well as one more: a change in the views of the most privileged Americans. According to Gallup, approval of unions among college graduates grew from 55 percent in the late 1990s to 70 percent last year.

I have seen this first hand in more than seven years of reporting on unions, as a growing interest among white-collar workers has coincided with a broader enthusiasm for the labor movement.

In talking with Ms. Brisack and her fellow Rhodes scholars, it became clear that the change had even reached that rarefied group. The American Rhodes scholars I encountered from a generation earlier typically said that, while at Oxford, they had been middle-of-the-road types who believed in a modest role for government. They did not spend much time thinking about unions as students, and what they did think was likely to be skeptical.

"I was a child of the 1980s and 1990s, steeped in the centrist politics of the era," wrote Jake Sullivan, a 1998 Rhodes scholar who is President Biden's national security adviser and was a top aide to Hillary Clinton.

By contrast, many of Ms. Brisack's Rhodes classmates express reservations about the market-oriented policies of the '80s and '90s and strong support for unions. Several told me that they were enthusiastic about Senators Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, who made reviving the labor movement a priority of their 2020 presidential campaigns.

Credit: Brendan Bannon for The New York Times

Even more so than other indicators, such a shift could foretell a comeback for unions, whose membership in the United States stands at its lowest percentage in roughly a century. That's because the kinds of people who win prestigious scholarships are the kinds who later hold positions of power — who make decisions about whether to fight unions or negotiate with them, about whether the law should make it easier or harder for workers to organize.

As the recent union campaigns at companies like Starbucks, Amazon and Apple show, the terms of the fight are still largely set by corporate leaders. If these people are increasingly sympathetic to labor, then some of the key obstacles to unions may be dissolving.

Then again, Jaz Brisack isn't waiting to find out.

The fight in Buffalo

Ms. Brisack moved to Buffalo after Oxford for another job, as an organizer with the union Workers United, where a mentor she had met in college also worked. Once there, she decided to take a second gig at Starbucks.

"Her philosophy was get on the job and organize. She wanted to learn the industry," said Gary Bonadonna Jr., the top Workers United official in upstate New York. "I said, 'OK.'"

In its pushback against the campaign, Starbucks has often blamed "outside union forces" intent on harming the company, as its chief executive, Howard Schultz, suggested in April. The company has identified Ms. Brisack as one of these interlopers, noting that she draws a salary from Workers United. (Mr. Bonadonna said she was the only Starbucks employee on the union's payroll.)



Richard Bensinger, left, who was advising unionization efforts at Starbucks, met in Buffalo last fall with Ms. Brisack and two other baristas, Casey Moore, right, and Brian Murray,

But the impression that Ms. Brisack and her fellow employee-organizers give off is one of fondness for the company. Even as they point out flaws — understaffing, insufficient training, low seniority pay, all of which they want to improve — they embrace Starbucks and its distinctive culture.

They talk up their sense of camaraderie and

community — many count regular customers among their friends — and delight in their coffee expertise. On mornings when Ms. Brisack's store isn't busy, employees often hold tastings.

A Starbucks spokesman said that Mr. Schultz believes employees don't need a union if they have faith in him and his motives, and the company has said that senioritybased pay increases will take effect this summer.

One Friday in late February, Ms. Brisack and another barista, Casey Moore, met at the two-bedroom rental that Ms. Brisack shares with three cats, to talk union strategy over breakfast. Naturally, the conversation turned to coffee.

"Jaz has a very barista drink," Ms. Moore said.

Ms. Brisack elaborated: "It's four blonde ristretto shots — that's a lighter roast of espresso — with oat milk. It's basically an iced latte with oat milk. If we had sugar-cookie syrup, I would get that. Now that that's no more, it's usually plain."

That afternoon, Ms. Brisack held a Zoom call from her living room with a group of Starbucks employees who were interested in unionizing. It is an exercise that she and other organizers in Buffalo have repeated hundreds of times since last fall, as workers around the country sought to follow their lead. But in almost every case, the Starbucks workers outside Buffalo have reached out to the organizers, rather than vice versa.

This particular group of workers, in Ms. Brisack's college town of Oxford, Miss., seemed to require even less of a hard sell than most. When Ms. Brisack said she, too, had attended the University of Mississippi, one of the workers waved her off, as if her celebrity preceded her. "Oh, yeah, we know Jaz," the worker gushed.



Ms. Moore and Will Westlake watching the December vote count that gave union supporters a victory at the Starbucks where Ms. Brisack works.

A few hours later, Ms. Brisack, Ms. Moore and Michelle Eisen, a longtime Starbucks employee also involved in the organizing, gathered with two union lawyers at the union office in a onetime auto plant. The National Labor Relations Board was counting ballots for an election at a Starbucks in Mesa, Ariz. — the first real test of whether the campaign was taking root nationally, and not just in a union stronghold like New York. The room was tense as the first results trickled in.

Credit: Joshua Bessex/Associated Press

"Can you feel my heart beating?" Ms. Moore asked her colleagues.

Within a few minutes, however, it became clear that the union would win in a rout — the final count was 25 to 3. Everyone turned slightly punchy, as if they had all suddenly entered a dream world where unions were far more popular than they had ever imagined. One of the lawyers let out an expletive before musing, "Whoever organized down there ..."

Ms. Brisack seemed to capture the mood when she read a text from a co-worker to the group: "I'm so happy I'm crying and eating a week-old ice cream cake."

A black antifa T-shirt at the formal

Ms. Brisack once appeared to be on a different path. As a child, she idolized Lyndon Johnson and imagined running for office. At the University of Mississippi, she was elected president of the college Democrats.

She had developed an interest in labor history as a teenager, when money was sometimes tight, but it was largely an academic interest. "She had read Eugene Debs," said Tim Dolan, the university's national scholarship adviser at the time. "It was like, 'Oh, gosh. Wow."

When Richard Bensinger, a former organizing director with the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and the United Automobile Workers, came to speak on campus, she realized that union organizing was more than a historical curiosity. She talked her way into an internship on a union campaign he was involved with at a nearby Nissan plant. It did not go well. The union accused the company of running a racially divisive campaign, and Ms. Brisack was disillusioned by the loss.

"Nissan never paid a consequence for what it did," she said. (In response to charges of "scare tactics," the company said at the time that it had sought to provide information to workers and clear up misperceptions.)

Mr. Dolan noticed that she was becoming jaded about mainstream politics. "There were times between her sophomore and junior year when I'd steer her toward something and she'd say, 'Oh, they're way too conservative.' I'd send her a New York Times article and she'd say, 'Neoliberalism is dead.'"

In England, where she arrived during the fall of 2019 at age 22, Ms. Brisack was a regular at a "solidarity" film club that screened movies about labor struggles worldwide, and wore a sweatshirt that featured a head shot of Karl Marx. She liberally reinterpreted the term "black tie" at an annual Rhodes dinner, wearing a black dress-coat over a black antifa T-shirt.

"I went and got gowns and everything — I wanted to fit in," said a friend and fellow Rhodes scholar, Leah Crowder. "I always loved how she never tried to fit into Oxford."

But Ms. Brisack's politics didn't stand out the way her formal wear did. In talking with eight other American

Rhodes scholars from her year, I got the sense that progressive politics were generally in the ether. Almost all expressed some skepticism of markets and agreed that workers should have more power. The only one who questioned aspects of collective bargaining told me that few of his classmates would have agreed, and that he might have been loudly jeered for expressing reservations.

Some in the group even said they had incorporated pro-labor views into their career aspirations.



Maggie Carter, a Starbucks barista in Knoxville, Tenn., keeps a stack of union cards with her.

Claire Wang has focused on helping fossil fuel workers find family-sustaining jobs as the world transitions to green energy. "Unions are a critical partner in this work," she told me. Rayan Semery-Palumbo, who is finishing a dissertation on inequality and meritocracy while working for a climate technology start-up, lamented that workers had too little leverage. "Labor unions may be the most effective way of implementing change going forward for a lot of people, including myself," he told me. "I might find myself in labor organizing work."

This is not what talking to Rhodes scholars used to sound like. At least not in my experience.

I was a Rhodes scholar in 1998, when centrist politicians like Bill Clinton and Tony Blair were ascendant, and before "neoliberalism" became such a dirty word. Though we were dimly aware of a time, decades earlier, when radicalism and pro-labor views were more common among American elites — and when, not coincidentally, the U.S. labor movement was much more powerful — those views were far less in evidence by the time I got to Oxford.

Some of my classmates were interested in issues like race and poverty, as they reminded me in interviews for this article. A few had nuanced views of labor — they had worked a blue-collar job, or had parents who belonged to a union, or had studied their Marx. Still, most of my classmates would have regarded people who talked at length about unions and class the way they would have regarded religious fundamentalists: probably earnest but slightly preachy, and clearly stuck in the past.

Kris Abrams, one of the few U.S. Rhodes Scholars in our cohort who thought a lot about the working class and labor organizing, told me recently that she felt isolated at Oxford, at least among other Americans. "Honestly, I didn't feel like there was much room for discussion," Ms. Abrams said.

By contrast, it was common within our cohort to revere business and markets and globalization. As an undergraduate, my friend and Rhodes classmate Roy Bahat led a large public-service organization that periodically worked with unions. But as the "new" economy boomed in 1999, he interned at a large corporation. It dawned on him that a career in business might be more desirable — a way to make a larger impact on the world.

"There was a major shift in my own mentality," Roy told me. "I became more open to business." It didn't hurt that the pay was good, too.

Roy would go on to work for McKinsey & Company, the City of New York and the executive ranks of News Corp, then start a venture capital fund focused on technologies that change how business operates. More recently, in a sign of the times, his investment portfolio has included companies that make it easier for workers to organize.

On some level, Roy Bahat and Jaz Brisack are not so different: Both are chronic overachievers; both are ambitious about changing society for the better; both are sympathetic to the underdog by way of intellect and disposition. But the world was telling Roy in the late 1990s to go into business if he wanted to influence events. The world was telling Ms. Brisack in 2020 to move to Buffalo and organize workers.

Reaching Howard Schultz

The first time I met Ms. Brisack was in October, at a Starbucks near the Buffalo airport.

I was there to cover the union election. She was there, unsolicited, to brief me. "I don't think we can lose," she said of the vote at her store. At the time, not a single corporate-owned Starbucks in the country was unionized. The union would go on to win there by more than a two-to-one ratio.

It's hard to overstate the challenge of unionizing a major corporation that doesn't want to be unionized. Employers are allowed to inundate workers with anti-union messaging, whereas unions have no protected access to workers on the job. And while it is officially illegal to threaten, discipline or fire workers who seek to unionize, the consequences for doing so are typically minor and long in coming.

At Starbucks, the National Labor Relations Board has issued complaints finding merit in such accusations. Yet the union continues to win elections — over 80 percent of the more than 175 votes in which the board has declared a winner. (Starbucks denies that it has broken the law, and a federal judge recently rejected a request to reinstate pro-union workers whom the labor board said Starbucks had forced out illegally.)

Though Ms. Brisack was one of dozens of early leaders of the union campaign, the imprint of her personality is visible. In store after store around the country, workers who support the union give no ground in meetings with company officials.

Even prospective allies are not spared. In May, after Time ran a favorable piece, Ms. Brisack's response on Twitter was: "We appreciate TIME magazine's coverage of our union campaign. TIME should make sure they're giving the same union rights and protections that we're fighting for to the amazing journalists, photographers, and staff who make this coverage possible!"

The tweet reminded me of a story that Mr. Dolan, her scholarship adviser, had told about a reception that the University of Mississippi held in her honor in 2018. Ms. Brisack had just won a Truman scholarship, another prestigious award. She took the opportunity to urge the university's chancellor to remove a Confederate monument from campus. The chancellor looked pained, according to several attendees.

"My boss was like, 'Wow, you couldn't have talked her out of doing that?'" Mr. Dolan said. "I was like, 'That's what made her win. If she wasn't that person, you all wouldn't have a Truman now."

(Mr. Dolan's boss at the time did not recall this conversation, and the former chancellor did not recall any drama at the event.)

The challenge for Ms. Brisack and her colleagues is that while younger people, even younger elites, are increasingly pro-union, the shift has not yet reached many of the country's most powerful leaders. Or, more to the point, the shift has not yet reached Mr. Schultz, the 68-year-old now in his third tour as Starbucks's chief executive.

Mr. Schultz has long opposed unions at Starbucks, but Ms. Brisack, for one, believes that even business executives are persuadable.

She recently spoke at an Aspen Institute panel on workers' rights. She has even mused about using her Rhodes connections to make a personal appeal to Mr. Schultz, something that Mr. Bensinger has pooh-poohed but that other organizers believe she just may pull off.

"Richard has been making fun of me for thinking of asking one of the Rhodes people to broker a meeting with Howard Schultz," Ms. Brisack said in February.

"I'm sure if you met Howard Schultz, he'd be like, 'She's so nice,'" responded Ms. Moore, her co-worker. "He'd be like, 'I get it. I would want to be in a union with you, too.'"



redit: Brendan Bannon for he New York Times



Let's talk AVCs

What is an AVC Scheme?

An AVC Scheme provides you with a tax-efficient way to build up a sum of money that can be used by you in retirement.

The following are broad examples of scope for a Main Scheme member to take out an AVC:

Missing years

If you do not expect to have full service, you could use AVCs to make up part or all of the shortfall.

Non-pensionable earnings

If you have non-pensionable earnings (such as overtime or allowances), you can use AVCs to fund the gap.

Why are AVCs important?

AVCs help protect your financial future after you retire. There are a number of benefit options, depending on individual circumstances:

- a Immediate tax free cash lump sum.
- Purchase an annuity, to provide an additional pension on top of your An Post pension.
- Transfer balance of fund to an Approved Retirement Fund (ARF) for an addtional taxable income.
- Provide or increase dependant's pension.

How do you join the Plan?

Joining is easy. Simply contact the AVC Scheme administrators, Halligan Insurances: 01 87 97 100 for advice and to request an application form link or a new member email pack to be emailed to you.

> **New An Post AVC Lump Sum Calculator and new** Video Examples now avaiable on www.halligan.ie



An Post Managers' Pay

Managers' Pay

The WRC pay agreement and subsequently the recent pay agreement provided for the finalisation of a Company-wide grading structure for CWU managers below Level 2 within 3 months. Currently there are 3 pay models with the scope of staff comprehended by the respective Change Agreements:

- Clerical Admin
- C&D agreement DSMs, etc
- Mail Centre Agreement FOMs and PAMS

Clerical Admin Managers' Pay

Agreement was concluded with the assistance of the Monitoring Group, November 2018. Grades moved to CM1, CM2, CS1 and CS2 with Personal Pay Progression, PMD and Market Movement with bonus ranges of 10% and 15%. The objective of CWU is to encompass the other Managers by the same terms of the Clerical Managers' Agreement.

To achieve this, we have agreed an agenda with the Company, and we will agree a timeline for conclusion of discussions shortly.

The agenda with the Company will also include the

need to resolve DSM3 issues, Working Team Leader CAD, Acting arrangements, Bonus split, PMD process and difficulties, Transport Managers Route optimisers etc. There is also agreement to enter discussions on GTS/PCI realignment.

We will keep Branches updated on any progress.

Retirement Benefits

Co-ordinated or Integrated Pension

If a member pays Class D PRSI, all their pension will be paid from the pension fund. If a member pays Class A PRSI, the pension takes account of the State Pension Contributory Allowance into the pension calculations.

Therefore, **Class A** contributor's pension is made up of the full-time pensionable pay and allowances **at the time of retirement** – less **twice** the rate of State contributory pension payable to the person.

Why is twice the contributory pension deducted?

This is to ensure the **correct payment** between the pension fund and state pension is paid to the member.

See worked example below





AN POST CLERICAL ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE UPDATE

At the Biennial Conference in Athlone delegates were updated on the various issues and developments as they apply to our Clerical Administration members in An Post.

Exo Move

As has been reported, the EXO lease is signed and the Company is still intent on making the move before the end of the year. It was noted at Conference that the Union had objected to the move then and still questions its sense now, but a lack of Government support forced the issue and left the Company with limited options.

The Company sees this move as not just a geographical one, it is a cultural one as well and they hope to use the move to introduce new ways of working in the context of a new culture and new systems. The Company also sees this as an opportunity to reduce the headcount, potentially by up to 100 FTEs.

The Union has its own view on the move and it is keenly aware of the potential challenges this will bring, but there may be opportunities there for us too, to improve the working arrangement and terms and conditions of our members. In any event, the current agreements will apply until discussions have taken place and a new agreement is reached. CWU recognises the very significant challenges arising from a move like this but equally, we will be mindful of opportunity to examine the career development and training opportunities that will and must feature as part of the Company's desire for a cultural shift.

Retail

The lack of recovery in post-COVID footfall is still a cause for concern, based on the decline in Social Welfare and BillPay transactions which are the bedrock for much of the commercial wellbeing of retail.

Whilst An Post Mobile is performing well and there is growth in other areas, namely Foreign Exchange and banking, the overall transactions are down by 20%, compared to 2019/2020 reference period when we last examined this part of the business. It has been reported that every company office has shown losses.

As a result, the Union had been in discussion with the Company on another round of work measurement which was announced in the GS Circular *(GSP Circular 08/22)* on 28th March. The process, which began in April, will allow the Company to engage locally to assess surplus hours and prepare revised working proposals based on an 80% reduction of the identified surplus, leaving the remaining 20% to support sales growth. In tandem with this, 'Great Customer Conversations'

training, with an emphasis on proactive selling, will be taking place to drive an increase in sales revenue.

The fact remains however that there is an obligation on Government to help provide a sustainable Postal Network. Recent announcements in the papers about Government subvention plans to provide €1,000 per month to the contract offices are welcome but fall far short of a long-term sustainable solution to keeping this vital piece of our national infrastructure operational. The threat of further office conversions is still very much there and will likely form part of our future discussions with the Company on the retail network.

International Postal System (IPS) is a system developed by the PTC (Postal Technology Centre), the research & development arm of the UPU (Universal Postal Union); It runs in 160+ countries and is automated between countries that use the system. The Company is planning to introduce this system and it is estimated it will save approximately €3-4m per year in lost revenue leakage, e.g. missing Import Dispatches that are not currently charged for. The rationale being that it will increase automation between international postal operators, decrease revenue leakage and allow for better and more accurate management reporting. The intention is 'go live' no later that Q3 and, whilst the Union thinks this is ambitious, we are committed to participating in the working groups that are in place. Terminal dues are an important source of revenue for An Post and these have been quite badly impacted as a result of Brexit.

In February, it was reported that Revenue could be asked to take on TV Licence collections. Speculation at the time suggested that detailed discussions were required to make this happen but since then there has been no further reports indicating that the plan would proceed. CWU could be forgiven for thinking that this story had more to do with an assumption that Revenue could help resolve an apparent funding crisis for RTÉ and reduce the claimed evasion rate of 15% than anything else. Either way, the work remains in An Post and our members continue to fulfil duties in what can be tough and dangerous conditions and we remain committed to representing them in whatever changes might emerge in the future. It was also reported, and approved at Conference, that the national rollout of a software upgrade on Inspectors' handheld devices to eliminate paper records would proceed, and training for this commenced 17th of May.

General Secretary, Seán McDonagh questions Government's 'inordinate delay'



Eamonn Ryan, TD

In a letter to the minister, Seán McDonagh, principal staff representative of the group of unions, says officials at his department have not confirmed a payment date for the pension hike due since January.

The letter says the "inordinate delay" is causing unnecessary financial hardship.

"You will appreciate that the An Post pensioners are at a loss as to the reason for the delay in the payment of their entitlements," Mr McDonagh states in the letter.

"Such a delay would be hard to comprehend at the best of times, but when the scheme is in such robust health and in the context of such high inflation at this time, the unexplained delay is disrespectful and callous."



GSP Circular No. 12/22

INFORMATION

24th June 2022

Re: Increase due to Pensioners

Dear Colleague

You will be aware that arising from the recent Pay Agreement with An Post and the Pension Accord, a 2% increase in pensionable pay applies from the 1st January 2022. An Post has paid the increase and also applied the pensionable increase to the agreed pay scales.

Separately the company has been seeking approval from the Department to apply the increase to Pensioners. Unfortunately, notwithstanding their best-efforts, approval has not been forthcoming. Following representations made by the CWU, underlining the serious nature of this delay, An Post management had a positive meeting with the relevant Department officials yesterday and a commitment to respond within two weeks was given.

Notwithstanding this, we believe there is no justification for the delay to date and therefore I have made direct representations to the Minister, on behalf of pensioners, which hopefully will result in immediate payment.

I am aware of the financial stress this delay is adding to pensioners at this particular time and wish to assure we will do our utmost to secure their entitlements.

I attach a copy of the correspondence, which you should relay to retired members. I will revert to you further as soon as we receive confirmation of the payment date.

Yours sincerely

8 MBJ

Seán McDonagh General Secretary



23rd June 2022

Mr Eamonn Ryan TD Minister for Communications, Energy & Natural Resources 29-31Adelaide Rd Saint Kevin's Dublin D02 X285

Re: Payments due to An Post Pensioners

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you on behalf of the An Post Group of Unions to alert you to a very serious issue which is causing unnecessary financial hardship to approximately 7,000 An Post Pensioners.

These pensioners, many of whom are in their twilight years, are due payment of a 2% pensionable increase effective from the pt January 2022. Regrettably, approval of the payment, for reasons which are neither rational or understandable, has been subject to unacceptable and inordinate delay.

By way of information, in 2013 the An Post Group of Unions agreed changes to the An Post Superannuation Scheme in arder to address the then deficit in the Scheme and to enable the scheme to achieve the Minimum Funding Standard, by the end of 2023. The changes and curtailment of benefits were agreed by the Trustees, the Board of An Post, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and the Department of Public, Expenditure and Reform and were finally subject to the regulatory approval of the Pensions Authority. The agreement stipulates that any increases in pensionable salary is limited to the lower of:

a. the actual basic pay/salary increase, if any,

or

b. the increase in the Consumer Priee Index (CPt), if any, or

c. 2%.

The above limits also apply to increases to pensions in payment and to deferred pensions. Two previous increases have applied asper the above agreement, as set out below.

Date of Pay Rise	% pay rise	% Pensionable	
1st May 2016	2.5	0	
1st August 2017	2	0.8	
1st May 2018	1.5	0	
1st May 2019	2.5	1.7	
1st January 2021	2.75	0	
1st January 2022	2.5	2	
Total	13.75	4.5	

You will note from the above, the difference between base pay and pensionable pay for bath existing employees and pensioners is 9.25% (inclusive of the 2% owed). Furthermore, since 2008 (12 years) very modest increases totalling 2.5% have applied to pensions. In contrast, primarily because of the sacrifices of staff and pensioners, the An Post Superannuation fund has improved significantly. At the end of 2021 the fund reported a surplus of €580m, campared to a deficit of €241m in 2013. Therefore, the funding of the increase is, without question, available, with the fund now moving towards self-sufficiency.

This very welcome development has been achieved despite the levies Government imposed on the pension fund and a further pocketing of manies owed to the scheme from the sale of the National Lottery amounting to \in 1.5m.

The Group of Unions raised the ongoing delay with An Post management who in turn have raised it with the Department, but for sorne reason the Department Officiais have failed to respond to confirm the payment date. You will appreciate that the An Post Pensioners are at a loss asto the reason for the delay in the payment of their entitlements. Such a delay would be hard to comprehend at the best of times, but when the scheme is in such robust health and in the context of such high inflation at this time, the unexplained delay is disrespectful and callous.

I would therefore request your immediate intervention to ensure the increase due to An Post Pensioners is approved and paid. I would appreciate that you also put in place arrangements that ensures no future delays arise going forward. Should you require any additional information or to discuss any aspect of the above, I am available to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely

Seán McDonagh

Principal Staff Representative An Post Group of Unions CWU, Forsa, AHCPS





Orkers' Memorial Day is an International Day of Remembrance for those who have been killed or seriously injured in work-related incidents. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has taken the lead for many years in marking International Workers' Memorial Day (IWMD) which takes place every year on the 28th April. In Ireland in the last ten years 481 people have been killed in work related incidents with 7 killed so far this year.

The CWU is fully supportive of this International Day of Remembrance, and we have placed a plaque in our Head Office Garden, dedicated to the memory of those killed, injured or made ill as a result of their work which was unveiled on Workers' Memorial Day 2014.

This year, ICTU with the assistance of the Health and Safety Authority, and with support from IBEC and the Construction Industry Federation, joined together and organised a national commemorative event in Dublin.

The commemorative event featured a ceremony at the Garden of Remembrance in Dublin to honour those lost through work-related incidents. Those in attendance included Damien English TD, Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Kevin Callinan, President of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, Dr. Sharon McGuinness, CEO of the Health and Safety Authority, and senior figures from IBEC, the Construction Industry Federation and trade unions.

As part of the ceremony there was a honour guard of workers in their uniform who laid flowers to remember those killed and injured in workplace accidents. The honour guard included representatives from the POA, Connect, CWU, INMO, ASTI, Fórsa and SIPTU. Seán O'Donnell, DPDB, Paul Coleman, Dublin Postal Clerks, and Tony Farrelly, eir Dublin No. 2 Branch, represented the Union, and the Union wishes to thank them for taking part.

ICTU President, Kevin Callinan, in his speech referenced the "zero deaths campaign" which was launched by the European Trade Union Confederation on Workers' Memorial Day and was supported by the ICTU. He said that the achievement of zero deaths is not an utopian dream but is achievable.

The Minister in his contribution praised the positive

role the Lead Worker Representatives played in the response to COVID and he encouraged all employers, business managers and workers to build on that success and to proactively encourage and facilitate the Safety Representative role in their own workplaces to embed safety in all work practices and to truly make it everyone's business.

Seán McDonagh, General Secretary of the CWU, speaking following the National Commemorative event in the Garden of Remembrance stated:

"Today, Workers' Memorial Day, we remember all those, killed, injured, suffer ill health or are disabled as a result of a work-related incident. In unison with other Irish trade unions, the CWU is supporting the European campaign, for zero deaths at work. Each day European Workers, go to work to make a living and support their families. They and their dependents have a right to expect they will return home safely at the end of their working day. Sadly across Europe each working day, 12 workers do not return home. This is a frightful and unacceptably high statistic. Although a reduction in workplace deaths last year is welcome, this year to date seven workers have lost their lives as a result of a workplace incident. The CWU is highlighting this to create awareness to support the campaign as we remember departed colleagues. Working safely together, the aim of zero deaths by 2030 can be achieved."

The Union continues to provide strong leadership in doing everything possible to protect workers throughout the pandemic. Health and Safety has never been more important for us, and Workers' Memorial Day represents an opportunity to remember those we have lost, and to celebrate the contribution of those who continue to work to make us all safer.

As part of the Day of Remembrance we requested all Branches to participate by organising a minute's silence. Safety Representatives also highlighted the day by carrying out workplace inspections. We also used the day to send out various Health and Safety messages through social media.

Is Debs feeling the Cold?



An Post retail managing director Debbie Byrne.

An Post frustrated to be 'outside the tent' on Government retrofitting policy

> by PÁDRAIG HOARE Irish Examiner Online

An Post could assist the Government in the scale of the home retrofitting national programme, but remains "outside the tent" of Government policy, senior leadership figures in its organisation have said.

Appearing before the Oireachtas communications committee, An Post retail managing director Debbie Byrne said it was "very frustrating" that it could help the Government to accelerate the retrofitting of homes, but that it is not involved in the process.

An Post's launched its Green Hub in 2020, which it describes as a one-stop shop for homeowners to organise energy upgrades in their home.



Just 20 firms retrofitting around 500 homes annually will be registered as one-stop shops for the national energy efficiency programme by the end of this year.

However, the Government's €8bn national retrofit programme, which was announced in February, is being administered through the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

The plan aims to carry out 500,000 deep retrofits, or around 30%, of Ireland's housing stock, with different grants.

The SEAI said in April that just 20 firms retrofitting around 500 homes annually will be registered as one-stop shops for the national energy efficiency programme by the end of this year, despite ambitious targets to do 70,000 homes by 2026.

It will scale up year-on-year to "cruising altitude" around 2026 or 2027, it told TDs and senators when questioned.



It's really good example of where we invested a lot of time and energy — we're very close to the consumer, and we're outside the tent on this, which is very frustrating. I think we could help Government accelerate it.

At Wednesday's committee hearing, An Post's Ms Byrne told TDs and senators that its Green Hub allows customers to carry out various levels of retrofitting in a simplified process with SSE as a provider, as well as a so-called "green loan" in conjunction with the European Investment Bank — which it said still has the lowest interest rate in the marketplace.

Despite this, An Post has not been invited to the table by Government, she said.

"We'd like to scale that, and have been talking to other providers about coming on [as partners]," she said.

"The SEAI and Government then came out with their own one-stop shop at the beginning of the year — we've have stand back a bit now and see where we can play.

"For me, we are part of Government, but then we are not. I think we can do more in that space.

"I'd ask the committee that when there are policy things like this happening, that people say: 'What about An Post?'. For the minute, we probably have to reevaluate our strategy in light of that at the moment."

An Post has invested heavily in the digital infrastructure and could be "the front end" of retrofitting, she added.



Unsung Heroes of Ukrainian Postal Service Brave the Shelling to Deliver a Lifeline

Natalia Kuhta was in the post office, getting ready to go out on her postal round, when a Russian shell hit a street corner 600ft away. It turned the stretch of road she was about to walk down into a snarl of blackened metal, gouged asphalt and splintered wood.

The windows rattled and she crouched down. But once the 58-year-old grandmother realised the post office hadn't been hit, she picked up her bag and went out as usual, walking past the gaping wreck of a bus, crunching over glass from blown-out windows.

"I thought, 'That was scary'," she said last week, a fortnight after the shell hit, when I accompanied her on her round in northern Kyiv. Loud booms from fighting on the city's outskirts sounded every few minutes. "But then I thought that since it hit this area once, maybe it wouldn't hit twice. So I'd better go and deliver the pensions."

Kuhta is one of an army of more than 50,000 postal workers across Ukraine, most of them women, who are risking their lives to deliver letters, parcels and pensions — which are often distributed in cash — to people across the country.

Though large swathes of cities have been destroyed

in Russian attacks, the posties continue to walk along bombed-out streets and through darkened apartment blocks, climbing stairs and negotiating checkpoints, to reach the most vulnerable.

For many people, they are a lifeline to survival. "Some of the pensioners don't have anyone except for me," Kuhta said, as we walked into a grey apartment building facing the blast site to deliver magazines. "Some of them act like I'm their daughter. That's the only support they have sometimes."

One older woman, she said, had given her an entire frozen duck — an unbelievable extravagance — as thanks.

"She shared it with me so that I'd have something to eat. Maybe she didn't have enough for herself. But she still shared with me," Kuhta said. "I'll keep it in my freezer and cook it when my children visit."

Since the war began more than four million people have fled Ukraine and 6.5 million have been internally displaced — about a quarter of the population. Yet some people, particularly among the older generations, are unwilling to leave their homes, or too infirm or poor to do so.

Ukrposhta, the state postal service for which Kuhta works, said that despite the enormous challenges, it had delivered 85 per cent of the country's pensions since the war started. Some were even smuggled, at huge risk, to Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia.

Behind the postwomen and men is a logistical machine that, the moment the Russian bombs started falling, immediately set about adapting to work in wartime. Igor Smilyansky, the general director of Ukrposhta, said its offices closed for only the first day of the war, February 24. By the next morning, they had opened again, with deliveries restarting a few days later. Since then, cash pensions have been delivered to three million people, along with food and humanitarian assistance.

"We understood that if we don't deliver the pensions, these people will be without means to survive," Smilyansky said.

Ukrposhta has also battled to keep Ukrainian international exports going — re-routing them from a logistics hub in Kyiv to Lviv in the west, from where they are taken to Poland and flown onwards — to try to help Ukrainian businesses survive. Today, a package sent from Kharkiv, where residential blocks have been reduced to rubble, should arrive in the United States in a matter of days.

Since the war began, Smilyansky, 46, has taken to working almost the entire night, arranging deliveries and talking to his colleagues, then catching a few hours' sleep before waking to check the safety conditions for the morning's deliveries. He does not publicise his whereabouts because he has been told by security services that he is a Russian target.

"I could have left, but I didn't. It's my country," he said. "I have 65,000 employees and millions of clients. And my decisions impact their lives, in some respects whether they live or die, and in many respects how they maintain their families."

His staff have gone to extraordinary lengths to keep the postal service working. They have walked secret paths through forests, guided by local leaders, to bring pensions, humanitarian aid and post to people living in areas under Russian occupation, including the city of Kherson.

Last week, they put on bulletproof vests and helmets to go to the eastern town of Severodonetsk, which lies right by the front lines of the Russian assault and has been shelled relentlessly in the past weeks.

"I wish I could tell you the entire story of exactly how we get cash into these places, but I can't, because it would put people in danger," he said.

Some have paid with their lives. In March, Russian troops attacked a delivery van in the eastern

Zaporizhzhia region, killing two young Ukrposhta employees out delivering pensions.

Some areas remain impassable. In Mariupol, large parts of which have been almost levelled by the Russian assault, postal deliveries were stopped after the first few days of war.

Elsewhere, first-class postage for a letter within Ukraine still costs the equivalent of 75p to £1, with delivery times ranging from three to ten days. From Kyiv to London is about £5 for a similar delivery window.

As well as keeping the economy alive, the maintenance of the postal service, Smilyansky said, provided a dose of stability in the country.

"If people see that the post is working, they can order packages on the internet," he said. "They can order trees to plant, they can order seeds. I think it's important for a country to maintain that: even small pieces of stability, small pieces of normal life or business."

Russia, clearly, sees this as a threat. Early in the conflict, Smilyansky said, someone emailed thousands of people across Ukraine falsely claiming that Ukrposhta would be taken over by the Russian postal networks.

Yet it manifestly has not. On a grey street on the northern outskirts of Kyiv, Natalia Sugakova, 67, plodded towards a rundown apartment block, ignoring the loud bangs from artillery on the front line 12 miles away. "I've heard worse," she shrugged. "I'm busy working. I can't get distracted by noises. I'll do the job and then I'll think about the noise later."

Next month she will have worked at the post office for 20 years. Though her children and 13-year-old grandson worry about her, she has no plans to give it up. "It's scary, but we keep doing our job the way we did it before," she said.

Her job, she said, provided a vital role in wartime, particularly to older people without families. "People hug me and they act like they haven't seen me for a long time. They're very happy to see me," she said.

As another boom sounded, she walked into the stairwell of the apartment building and took the lift up two floors. Lyudmila, 58, who lives with her 90-year-old disabled father, was waiting at the top, shivering in a thin cardigan.

Sugakova had brought them extra assistance money from the government — about £75. For Lyudmila and her father, it meant the difference between eating and going hungry.

"I'm so thankful to her for delivering this money, for doing this job," Lyudmila said in a choked voice, hugging Sugakova. "We don't have any other visitors here."



CWU Officer Board

Back Row: Tom Sheehan Staff Side Secretary eir, Imelda Hyland Admin and Business Development Officer, John Clarke National Officer, Pat Kenny Staff Side Secretary An Post,

Front Row: Fionnuala Ní Bhrógáin National Officer, Ian McArdle Deputy General Secretary, Seán Mc Donagh General Secretary, Carol Scheffer National Officer, Cormac O'Dalaigh National Officer.



Postal Courier Sectoral Executive

Back Row: Des Hopkins, Jason Caulfield, Anthony McCrave, Adrian Scanlon, Tara Ravenhill, Vincent Kilroy, **Front Row:** Deirdre Medlar, Mikey Wall, Paul Kennedy, Jonathon Donnelly, Elaine Cockburn, Ellen Moore



Telecoms Sectoral Executive

Back Row: Tom Hayes, Shane Murphy, Sean Quirke, Gerry Perry, Tom Sheehan, Rachel Carton,
Front Row: Frank Joyce, Stephen Elliott, John Dunleavy, Ivor Reynolds (President), Alan Dempsey, Pascal Connollly.



National Executive Council

Back Row: Elaine Cockburn, Des Hopkins, Anthony Mc Crave, Tara Ravenhill, Mikey Wall, Adrian Scanlon, Sean Quirke, Rachel Carton, Pascal Connolly, Gerry Perry, Alan Dempsey, Jonathon Donnelly

Front Row: Vincent Kilroy, Ellen Moore, Jason Caulfield, Frank Joyce, Stephen Elliott, Deirdre Medlar, Ivor Reynolds (President), John Dunleavy, Tom Hayes, Paul Kennedy, Shane Murphy, Tom Sheehan.

Missing from photo: Frank Donohoe (Vice President), Willie Mooney, Gerry Sexton.

THE ROWLAND HILL MEMORIAL FUND OF IRELAND

Providing Financial Assistance to Workers & Retired Staff

he Rowland Hill Memorial Fund has been part of the fabric of the Post Office since the late 19th Century. The Rowland Hill Fund was set up in 1882 by the Post Office to help "needy Post Office employees, pensioners and dependants."

Postal staff in Ireland were encouraged to support the Fund and were subscribers and recipients of assistance from the beginning.

The independent Rowland Hill Memorial Fund of Ireland was founded in 1928, under a Deed of Trust approved by the High Court of Justice. As times progressed, most staff in the Department of Posts and Telegraphs were subscribing to the Fund.

Today, the Rowland Hill Memorial Fund of Ireland provides financial assistance for serving or retired staff of An Post and eir, and their dependants. It also provides financial assistance for retired staff and their dependants, of the former Department of Posts and Telegraphs, Telecom Éireann and eircom.

Assistance may be given to those who find themselves in need due to age, poverty or infirmity. The Rowland Hill Memorial Fund of Ireland is managed by an independent and voluntary committee of Trustees.

In such difficult times for many, it is crucial that those who may be in difficulty and are eligible to apply for assistance, can do so.

Therefore, if you are aware of such need, please encourage the person in need to contact the Fund either directly through the Secretary of the Rowland Hill Fund, or through your Union Branch. Every application will be considered on its own merit.

I, Liam Kirwan, Secretary, can be contacted by any of the following means:

Freepost: Secretary,

Rowland Hill Memorial Fund of

Ireland,

c/o An Post, G.P.O., O'Connell Street, Dublin DO1F5P2

Website:www.rhmfi.netEmail:info@rhmfi.netPhone:085 1744130

I would strongly encourage all members of serving staff and those retired to become subscribers to the Fund. This is our own staff-supported charity with 140 years of service to those serving and retired and their dependants. The recommended subscription is 65c per week, deducted from your wages or pension.

So, in summary, the Fund is worthy of your support because: -

- It is our own staff charity.
- It is managed by an independent and voluntary committee of Trustees.
- Thousands of staff, both serving and retired and their dependants, have been helped over the years when they were in urgent need of help.
- Your subscription is deducted from your wages.
 A few cents deducted regularly will mean a lot to the work of the Fund.
- The suggested subscription is 65 cent per week.

THE ROWLAND HILL MEMORIAL FUND OF IRELAND

To subscribe to the Fund please complete the form below, detach it, and send it 'FREEPOST' to:

Rowland Hill Memorial Fund of Ireland, c/o An Post G.P.O., O'Connell Street Dublin 1 DO1F5P2

THE ROWLAND HILL MEMORIAL FUND OF IRELAND

I hereby authorise the deduction of:	€			
Please tick (✓) as appropriate:	per week	per fortnight	per month	
Please tick (✓) as appropriate:	from my wages	from my pension		
for payment to the Rowland Hill Memorial Fund of Ireland.				
Name (BLOCK LETTERS):				
Address (BLOCK LETTERS):				
Contact Number:				
Please tick (✓) as appropriate:	Serving	Retired		
Please tick (✓) as appropriate:	An Post	eir		
Signature:				
Date:				

The suggested subscription is 65 cent per week.

EDUCATION UPDATE



Pictured I to r: Carol Scheffer National Officer, Olivia Carpenter Breast Cancer Ireland, and Paula Kennedy-Hogan Head of HR Services

On June 21st the CWU and An Post in association with Breast Cancer Ireland arranged a "lunch and learn" session on breast cancer awareness for a number of staff in the Dublin Mails Centre.

The session was presented by Oliva Carpenter who is a breast cancer survivor and went through the 8 symptoms to look out for as well as the treatments available for those affected.

This was a pilot initiative attended by 30 members and was well received. We are also aware that men are can also be affected by breast cancer and it is our intention in association with An Post to roll out the "Lunch and Learn" session further in other areas.

In the interim, members can also download Breast Cancer Ireland's app called "Breast Aware". The app provides monthly reminders and how to do a self-examination.

We would like to thank Olivia from Breast Cancer Ireland for an excellent presentation.

Further information can be found on www.breastcancerireland.com







1 in 9 women will be affected in their lifetime.

There are currently 3,700 new cases diagnosed annually.

Below are 8 warning signs to look for.



A puckering of the skin of the breast



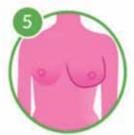
A lump in the breast or armpit



A change in the skin around the nipple or nipple discharge



Dimpling of the nipple or nipple retraction



An unusual increase in the size of one breast



One breast unusually lower that the other. Nipples at different levels



An enlargement of the glands



An unusual swelling in the armpit

The risk of breast cancer increases with age:



23% of women are diagnosed between 20-50 years

34% of women diagnosed between 50-69 years

36% of women diagnosed 70 years and above

Only 5-10%

of breast cancer are hereditary Survival rates are increasing in Ireland due to increased awareness and breast screening. Mortality rates are reducing by

2% annually







One can reduce the risk of developing breast cancer by diet, exercise and control of alcohol consumption

TRADE UNION FEEDBACK SILENDED REPRESENTATIVE CORE SKILLS CORE SKILLS CORE SKILLS CORESSENTATIVE CORESSENTATIVE CORESSENTATIVE CORESSENTATIVE CORESSENTATIVE CORESSENTATIVE CORESSENTATIVE CORESPONDENT CORES CORES

Do you want a quick and easy way to learn more about your Union?

Do you want to develop your knowledge and skills through online learning?

If so, a **UNION** link course is ideal for you.

How **UNION** helps our members

We believe that all our members should have the opportunity to develop their skills at a time and a place that suits them. With **UNION** *link* this is possible as you can complete courses 24 hours a day, be it on your tablet, computer, laptop, or smartphone. All courses are free of charge.

Some examples of the types of courses that can be accessed are:

- Stress Management in the Workplace
- Mindfulness
- Understanding Trade Unions
- Sexual Harassment
- Whistleblowing
- Political Economy
- Digital Photography
- Getting to Know Your Computer

UNION link login instructions

- To complete a course, you first need to register on UNION link as a learner.
- The **UNION** *link* address is unionlink.org
- To sign up for **UNION** with your require a username and password. To get this you will need to create an account by filling out the "create account" form with your details.
- Some of your details will include your membership number so please ensure you have this at hand when creating your account. You can get this from head office as required.
- You will then be sent an e-mail with a web link that you click on to confirm your registration.
- If you need any assistance, then email carol@cwu.ie

You can also download a **UNION** certificate once you have successfully completed your course.

Did You Know?

We are pleased to advise that we launched three new courses, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, and Microsoft PowerPoint. These courses have been produced courtesy of our colleagues in the CWU UK and we thank them for our continued collaboration and partnership. Further details of these three courses are on the **UNION** link website.

Dundalk Postal Branch Retirements

During the COVID pandemic, the Dundalk Postal Branch said farewell to the following members: Dermot Moran, Sylvester Mathews, Raymond Brennan, Jimmy Magee, Terry McCann and Tom Gaskin. A joiny retirement function was eventually held to wish them all the best for the future and they are pictured below receiving their Union Scrolls from Branch Committee members.













North Wexford/South Wicklow Branch Retirements

Kevin Molloy North Wexford/South Wicklow Branch Secretary presents the Union Scroll to the following Postal Operatives, each of whom recently retired. All four worked out of Gorey DSU and celebrated with family, friends and colleagues at a recent function organised by the Branch. We wish them all well in their retirement.



Maurice O Leary who recently retired after 40 years' service. Maurice served at committee level at various times during his career



Liam Leo Fennell, who has retired after 22 years' service.



Ger "The Rang" Murphy, who has retired after 21 years' service.



Oliver Stephens, who has retired after 11 years' service.



At the recent CWU Biennial Conference, Gerry O'Rourke, former Organiser with the Union and Dublin Postal Clerks Branch, was presented with gift to officially mark his retirement from Willie Mooney President and Pat Kenny Staff Side Secretary. Lucky guy!!

Darren Kelly Flies the Union Banner at Spanish Commemoration



Darren Kelly, a postman in Glenageary Delivery Office, was in Spain in February 2022 at the Commemoration of the role of the International Brigades in the fight against fascism in the Spanish Civil War.

CWU PEOPLE



Jerry Duggan Retires

Congratulations to Jerry Dugan on his retirement from eir after long service.

Jerry operated for several years in the Listowel area and will be missed by all for his hard work and dedication.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish Jerry every health and happiness for a long and successful retirement.

CORK DISTRICT RETIREMENTS



Ted O'Connor, Cork District Branch, being presented with his Union Scroll by Tom Sheehan NEC, following his recent retirement.



Eugene Murphy, Cork District Branch, being presented with his Union Scroll by Tom Sheehan, NEC, following his retirement.

DPDB COMMITTEE TRAINING COURSE MAY 2022



Back Row L to R: Mark Moloney, Jade Molloy, Jason Dunne, Jackie Mooney, Dave Thornton, Kenneth Shannon, Gary Conroy, Willie Greene, Greg Mulhall, Andrew Keehan, Joey Ward, Brian O'Kelly, Tony Farrell, Stephen Byrne.

Front Row L to R: Richie Edgeworth, Alan Smyth, Michael Walsh, Frank Donohoe, Daria Dobrzynska

DUBLIN POSTAL DELIVERY BRANCH RETIREMENTS January 2022 to May 2022



Bernie Ward, Tallaght DSU



Robbie Kearns (L), Glenageary



Joan McLaughlin, Dunshaughlin



David Locke, Whiteheather DSU



Tony Clabby, Whitehall DSU



AJ Sheridan, Whitehall DSU

CWU PEOPLE



Pat Wilson, Fortfield DSU



Seán Coultry, Bannow Rd DSU



Brendan Boland, Balbriggan DSU, receives his Scroll from local Representatives Ray Galvin and Paul Barclay, along with Branch Secretary, Frank Donohoe.



John Harris & Joe O'Connor (Clondalkin DSU) being presented with their Union Scrolls by local Branch Representative, John McGuirk (L) and Branch Chairperson, Seán O'Donnell (R).

CWU PEOPLE



John Dwyer (R), Fortfield DSU, being presented with his Union Scroll by local Rep, Gerard Kavanagh



Liam McDermott, Fairview DSU

John McKenna Retires

John McKenna, Monaghan Postal Branch, being presented with the Union Scroll by Ian McArdle, Deputy General Secretary



Anne Loughran Retires



Anne Loughran, Monaghan Postal Branch, who retired recently, was presented with the Union Scroll by Ian McArdle, Deputy General Secretary

John Crieghan Retires



Recent retiree, John Crieghan, Monaghan Postal Branch being presented with the Union Scroll by Anthony McCrave, Dundalk Postal Branch, NEC

MALLOW DSU RETIREMENTS











- 1. Tadgh O'Connell recently retired from Boherbue DSU.
- 2. Johnny Breen recently retired from Boherbue DSU.
- 3. Ger Stack on his retirement with Tadgh O'Connell and Johnny Breen.
- 4. Ger Stack on his retirement from Boherbue DSU.
- 5. James O'Grady who recently retired from Boherbue DSU.
- 6. Donal Murphy on his retirement from Mallow DSU with Tim Noonan.
- 7. Eddie Corcoran on his retirement from Mallow DSU after 43 years' service with An Post.





Christy Jordan Retires



Hugh Quinn, Branch Secretary, Donegal South West, presented the Union Scroll and Gold Badge to Christy Jordan after 35 years in Inver Post Office and Donegal DSU. Christy will be missed by all who have had the pleasure of working with him and wish him well in his retirement. The CWU would like to thank Christy for all his contributions at Branch meetings.

Seán O'Duibhginn Retires



Seán O'Duibhginn, who recently retired from
Citywest after 42 years' service was presented
with the Union Scroll and Badge by Will Meegan,
Dublin No 1 Branch Chairperson,
who thanked him for his support of the Union and
wished Seán the very best of luck for the future.

Frankie Kennedy Retires



Hugh Quinn, Branch Secretary, Donegal South West,
Branch presented the Union Scroll
to Frankie Kennedy after 15 years' service in
Killybegs Post Office and Donegal DSU.
Frankie will be missed by all who have worked with
him, and wish him well in his retirement.

Ann Russell & Catherine Cusack Retire



Ann Russell and Catherine Cusack, members of the Dublin Postal Clerks Branch, receiving their Union Scrolls on their last day of service.

The End of Full-time For Seamus Sweeney!



Seamus Sweeney, Chairperson of the Carrick-on-Shannon CWU Branch, on his last day of service at An Post, Boyle DSU, receiving the Union Scroll from John Tansey, CWU Regional Officer.

Seamus Sweeney, Postal Operative, Boyle DSU, retired from An Post recently after 42 years' service. He worked all his life in Boyle and became active in the Union from an early age, having served as Chairman of the former Boyle Outdoor Branch for many years before becoming Chairman of the Carrick-on-Shannon Branch, an amalgamation of three Branches and a position he

held for twenty-five years, up until this year's AGM.

Seamus has also been very active within the GAA, where he has held the roles of Coaching Officer, County Board Vice-Chairperson and County Board Chairperson in Roscommon over the past fifteen years.

We thank him for a lifetime of service to the Union and wish him good health and happiness for the future.

Kells Postal Retirements



Claire Brady, Equality Officer Kells Postal Branch, presented Maria Dolan with a Frame of Photos of her first and last day with An Post, on her retirement.



Peter Duffy, Kells Postal Branch, presenting Liam Hand with an engraved Glass Plaque from the Branch on his retirement.

CWU PEOPLE



John Whyte Retires

John Whyte, Midleton Delivery Service Unit and member of the Cork Postal Branch who, after 36 years' service, retired on April 14th. He is pictured on left being presented with his Union Scroll by Denis McCarthy, Branch Representative, Midleton DSU.

Bray Postal Retirements





Jacinta Dwyer (photo on left) and Mark Hipwell (photo on right) both received their Union Scrolls on the occasion of their retirement from Bray Postal.



Tommy Nelson, who recently retired from Bray Postal Branch, is pictured being presented with his Union Scroll by Darren Clucas, Branch Secretary.

CWU Supports Alison Grealy



CWU support of Alison Grealy in her quest for European Championship honours in Taekwon-Do. So much hard work, blood (literally) sweat and tears have gone in to make it this far. We have great hope for the upcoming Europeans in Croatia.

Alison is pictured on the left from her most recent domestic tournament, *The Dublin Open,* held in the National Indoor Arena in Abbotstown, where Alison added a silver and bronze to her medal collection.

Pat Kenny is Welcomed to Tralee

On his recent visit to the Annual General Meeting of the North Kerry Postal Branch, Staff Side Secretary, Pat Kenny, was welcomed to Tralee by the Lord Mayor, Johnnie Wall, who also happens to be the father of our very own Mikey Wall, National Executive Council Member.



CWU PEOPLE

Galway Postal Branch Honours New General Secretary, Seán McDonagh



Galway Postal Branch made a presentation to Seán on his well-deserved appointment to General Secretary of the Communications Workers' Union.

The Branch is very proud of Seán and his achievements and we wish him every success in his new role.



Pat Galvin Retires

Pictured from I to r: Jarlath
Heneghan, Regional Officer,
Mary Prendergast Conroy and
Tom Geraghty with Pat Galvin, on his
retirement from Galway DSU after 46
years. Always a great supporter of the
Galway Postal Branch, we wish Pat a
healthy and happy retirement.

Cork Postal AGM



After the Cork Mail Centre closed, the Cork Outdoor Branch and the Cork Drivers Branch joined together to form the Cork Postal Branch.

Photographed is the new Branch Committee from left to right:

Gavin O'Neill, Treasurer; Fiona Quinlan, Assistant Secretary; Eamon Browne, Vice-Chairperson; Jason Radford, Chairperson; and Des Hopkins, Secretary. Also present are Seán McDonagh, General Secretary; Bill Colfer, Regional Officer.

Timmy Kelly Retires

Timmy Kelly, Ennis DSU,
retired after 15 years' service
in An Post. His colleagues wish him a
long healthy and happy retirement.
Pictured I to r: Leonard Coote,
Branch Chairman, Timmy Kelly,
and Flan Enright, Branch Treasurer.





Shortly after Christmas we received an email into the info mailbox from a former pupil of the old Christian Brother School St Canice's who was a pupil there in the 60s. The CWU now stands in St Canice's place. Steven was hoping he might be able to visit the building again, as it would be over 40 years since he last visited. As the restrictions were lifting I agreed to meet with him and show him around. Steven and his brother Pat both arrived full of enthusiasm for the old school. As it turned out Steven was married to my cousin Joanne (thankfully I didn't say no!).

Here are the thoughts from Steven and Pat after the visit.

Many thanks to Imelda for looking after Pat and myself on our visit to the CWU, our former primary school St. Canice's CBS. Although the inside of the building has been changed entirely, we both got a sense of the old school. The views from the windows reminded us of different class rooms. There were 50 pupils to a class back then. The blackboards near the windows, where the Brothers prowled up and down, duster in one hand and the leather in the other, waiting on some unfortunate pupil to make a mistake. All the boys came to school through the backyard gate, but, if you were late, then through the front door, and then there were consequences! Brother Ahern was the head brother and he manned the front door. You always got a whack from him when you were late. Brother Lundy was a stand-out teacher, very inspiring. There was a small sweet shop in the basement at the back of the school, and Frank was the shopkeeper, with a cigarette constantly stuck to his bottom lip. It was 50 years ago when I was last in the building.

DUBLIN No.2 RETIREMENTS









Dublin No. 2 Retirees, Pat O'Connor, Tommy Doran, Brian Treacy and Terry O'Flaherty, receiving their CWU Badges and Scrolls from Dublin No.2 Committee Members.

Fiacre Ryan Retires

Vinny Kilroy presents
Fiacre Ryan, DSM Enniscorthy,
with his Union Scroll.
Fiacre was a member
of the CWU for 42 years
and retired in March 2022.
We wish Fiacre a
long and happy retirement.



CWU PEOPLE

SLIGO DISTRICT BRANCH RETIREMENTS



Gerry Beirne is presented with his Union Scroll from Michael Doherty, Sligo District Branch.



Seán O'Rourke pictured with Michael Doherty, Sligo District Branch on his retirement.



Michael Doherty Sligo District Branch presents Christy Grehan with his Union Scroll.



Chris Gannon is presented with his Union Scroll from Michael Doherty, Sligo District Branch.



Brian Lee pictured with Michael Doherty, Sligo District Branch on his retirement.



Michael Doherty, Sligo District Branch, presents John Sweeney with his Union Scroll.

Tom Pomphrett RIP



It is with great sadness the CWU learned of the passing of Tom Pomhrett. Tom was former Director of Conciliation at the Labour Relations Commission and had a long involvement with the CWU in his capacity as a member of the Labour Court-appointed Monitoring Group, which oversees the various Change Agreements between An Post and the Group of Unions.

Tom's "career" in An Post commenced more than 30 years ago when, as a senior conciliation officer working with the LRC, he was tasked with settling a very serious and protracted dispute between the CWU and An Post, in response to efforts by the company to recruit temporary staff. After a six week bruising dispute, Tom Pomphrett's intervention was timely, intelligent and above all else, fair. He issued acceptable settlement terms, which established his credibility with both sides and saw him become an enduring figure in dispute resolution between CWU and An Post.

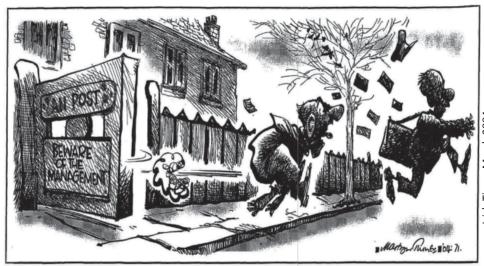
He assisted the Union and the Company in dealing with what were, at times, extremely challenging industrial relations issues. In 2004, he mediated settlement terms to resolve a most vicious dispute that laid the foundation for future productivity agreements. Such was the regard in which he was held, both within and outside of An Post, that he was appointed by the Labour Court, along with Eamonn Ryan and Phil Flynn, to

the Monitoring Group, established to ensure industrial relations' peace and stability at the Company, at a time when An Post was being talked about in government circles a being 'a basket case'.

Tom was a highly skilled operator who worked tirelessly to find reasonable solutions that could be accepted by both parties. He had a great affinity for An Post as well as other semi-states, such as Irish Rail, Dublin Bus and Bus Eireann. Not one to suffer fools gladly, he was affectionately known in the industrial relations arena as The Bear, such was his imposing stature both physically and reputationally. He certainly wasn't a bear of the teddy bear variety! Far from it indeed, as he had a determined and steely approach with both Management and Union negotiators, which earned him great respect. He had the capacity to put the boot in to either side when he felt it was required, but he always managed to do it in a way that maintained the respect both sides held for him. He has been a colleague and a friend to this Union. Those who encountered him were impressed with his grasp of issues and the personable way with which he conducted his business. We who were privileged to work closely with him over the years will remember him fondly and miss the wit and wisdom he brought to our meetings over the years.

We extend our sincere condolences to his family and friends, former colleagues at the WRC and the Labour Court. In particular we extend our sympathies and regards to his Monitoring Group allies, Eamonn Ryan and Phil Flynn. The '3 wise men' as they were affectionately referred to by some, worked closely and cohesively together, providing professional and well-considered recommendations to ensure industrial peace was maintained, even through some difficult times.

Ar dheis De go raibh a anam.

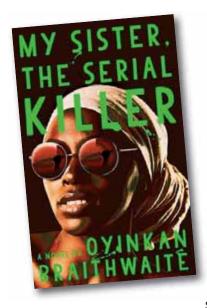


rish Times; page 16, 26 March 2004



Book Review by Adrienne Power





MY SISTER, THE SERIAL KILLER

Author: Oyinkan Braithwaite

Opening:

Ayoola summons me with these words – "Korede, I killed him." I had hoped I would never hear those words again.

Korede is a nurse who lives in Nigeria. She gets a call late at night from her distraught younger sister Ayoola. She has dispatched another boyfriend she claims by self-defence and needs

help to clean up. Korede once again gets her large container of bleach and goes to help her sister.

Korede is besotted with the kind Doctor Tade in the hospital. One day Ayoola comes to see her at work and Tade is bowled over by the beautiful Ayoola and asks her on a date. Korede worries what to do. Ayoola's boyfriends never last long. But she is her family. So, what can she do?

This is such an unusual story. It is a thriller, family saga, love story and full of entertaining black humour.

It fixates on the familial bond between the sisters, the protective older sister and the beautiful spoilt irresponsible younger sister who is also deadly to the opposite sex.

You read on wondering what will happen to Tade, to Ayoola and how can Korede possibly keeping cleaning up after her younger sister.

Quotes:

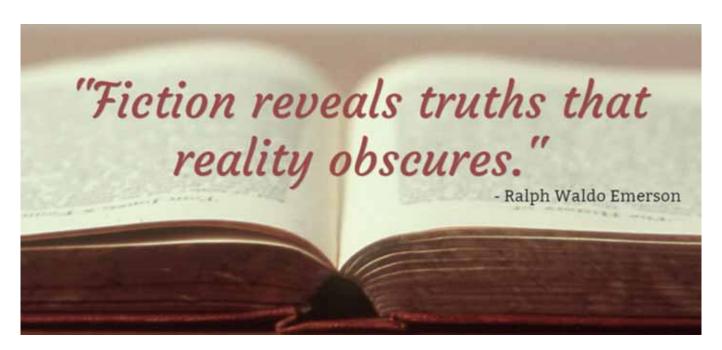
"The most loving parents and relatives commit murder with smiles on their faces. They force us to destroy the person we really are: a subtle kind of murder."

Braithwaite remembers her mother saying to her:

"You must be like a dustbin:

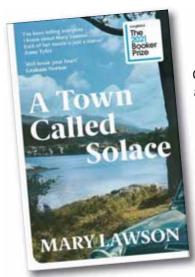
Whatever rubbish comes your way you must be gracious about it."

This is a very entertaining novella, which explores family loyalty, perpetuated by dark secrets from their past.





Book Review by Adrienne Power



A TOWN CALLED SOLACE

Author: Mary Lawson

Clara is seven years old and has been asked to feed her neighbour Mrs Orchard's cat, "Moses", while she is away. Things have become very complicated for Clara. She has used up the money to buy food for Moses and has had to ask her mother for money. There is still no sign of Mrs Orchard

coming home and now a strange man in a blue car has turned up at her house with a lot of boxes. Clara is standing looking out the window at Mrs Orchard's house while her mother is screaming on the phone to Sherriff Barnes about her sister Rose who has run away, that Rose is only sixteen years old. Clara covers her ears.

The story is told through three viewpoints: Clara, Mrs Orchard (Elizabeth) and Liam (the strange man who appears in his blue car to occupy Mrs Orchard's house. There are some wonderful unforgettable characters in the book, as well as the three narrators, like Sergeant Barnes, Jim Peake and, of course, Moses the cat.

The place "Solace" is fictitious, but the setting is Northern Ontario, Canada around the 1970s, where the writer grew up, with lots of lakes and woodland. You can feel the extreme cold and biting wind with the ethereal beauty of this quiet remote redemptive place.

This book is so appealing as it is all about comfort in a time of crisis. I hung on every word of the perfect prose. It is a story which spins such an emotional tapestry of love, loss, endurance, and hope. I love a story where wrongs of the past are put right. It intertwines and ties up beautifully. I don't think I have ever read a book with a more fitting ending.

From the opening scene, it is very hard to put this book down. You are drawn in so completely by Clara's turmoil!

I AM, I AM -SEVENTEEN BRUSHES WITH DEATH

Author: Maggie O'Farrell

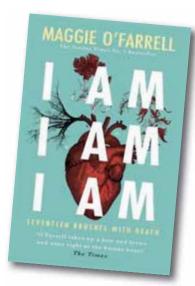
This is a memoir like no other. Seventeen encounters that the writer has had with people in a myriad of different places she has lived or visited, is both terrifying and gripping. You must read it to believe it that one person can have so many skirmishes with the grim reaper!

Maggie O'Farrell is such a gifted writer, so captivating, energetic, and telling her encounters with such openness and a seeming absence of fear, especially her health issues and her children's health issues. Her courage and strength are awe-inspiring. The very first brush with death had me on the edge of my seat. It is an incident I will never forget, completely embedded in my brain.

There is comfort in the fact that someone has endured so much and can still live life so much to the full.

Quote:

"I swam in dangerous waters, both metaphorically and literally.



It was not so much that I didn't value my existence but more that I had an insatiable desire to push myself to embrace all that it could offer."

The drama, practically on every page, is at times enough to make your blood curdle!