

LIVEWIRE

Issue 22 March 2001

UNISON Manweb Branch

Call Centres - Valued Staff or transitional workers ?

The recent UNISON pay questionnaire amongst Call Centre staff indicated the level of membership dissatisfaction with the Company use of fixed term contracts instead of making them permanent contracts after an acceptable probationary period.

Despite many previous requests at Customer Sales & Service Business councils the Company have failed to show their commitment to these members of staff.

The recent Call Centre Update gives the impression that permanent, fixed term and agency contracts are under review.

With that in mind your UNISON reps have approached the Company again, to remind them that several of our members have been on extended fixed term contracts for in excess of two years.

Many more of you have been working for well over a year on fixed term contracts that are being extended three months at a time. We know that many of you are suffering financial and mental stress trying to deal with the uncertainty of this method of working.

A frank exchange of views with the Company's representatives at a meeting on Friday 6th April will be followed up with discussions over the coming weeks.

**Because
we're worth
it !**

The 2001 Pay Claim for Energy Supply was submitted some weeks ago.

Our thanks to all those of you who returned the **Livewire Pay Claim questionnaire**.

You told us:

In addition to expecting a well deserved salary increase, Family friendly issues are important, that you care about discrimination in the work place, that you don't want to work long and intrusive hours and that you feel strongly about fixed term contracts and the use of agency staff.

Based on your feedback the Pay Claim includes:

- Substantial percentage salary increase and flow through to allowances**
- Reduction in working week.**
- Increase in value of childcare vouchers.**
- Increased Annual Holiday entitlement.**
- Long term sickness insurance scheme.**
- Commitment to set up joint working party to discuss an effective equality agreement.**

No response has been received to date, Unison representatives will make the claim an agenda item at the next Manweb Energy Supply Business Council.

Inside this issue

CALANAIS - Pay Offer

UNISON AGM - report

UNISON Living Wage - rally + concert

CALANAIS - Pay Offer

After a series of negotiating meetings between Trade Union representatives and Calanais Management Union members in Calanais (formerly ISD) are voting on whether to accept a recommended pay offer. This includes:

- A 3.5% increase in Base Salaries and grade minima
- A 5% minimum increase in grade maxima
- An average of 1.5% Merit Pay
- A 10% increase in Standby retainers

A number of Statements of Intent to deal with Training and Development, Health and Safety, Family Friendly Policies, Procedural Agreements and Collective Bargaining for new employees are also included. The Trade Unions hope these will provide the opportunity for meaningful progress to be made in each of these areas over the coming months and years.

Secretary of the Calanais Joint Trade Unions, Dave Read (Unison) said that he believed this years deal represented a solid foundation for the future and represents the best that could be achieved by negotiations. The ballot results is due to close on Wednesday 11th April and the results from Queensferry and Scotland will be reviewed by the Trade Unions on Thursday 12th and notified to the Company accordingly.

UNISON AGM

A well-attended AGM held on 28th February in Prenton, heard Dave Watson (Scottish Organiser, Unison) outline the significant changes which could unfold this year across Scottish Power. All businesses will be directly affected by the decisions of the Regulator to push ahead with Business Separation. This is likely to mean each business becoming a wholly owned subsidiary of Scottish Power with all staff affected being TUPE transferred from their current employer (Manweb or ScottishPower) to one of several potential new employers, probably based on existing businesses.

Although all Scottish Power businesses have recorded profits, some are clearly operating in a tight market place. Given the change of personnel at the top of the Group, it is uncertain whether the previous strategy of building a multi-utility Company with operations in Electricity Generation, Distribution, transmission and supply as well as interests in Retail, Water and international utilities will be maintained. Whatever the outcome of the various business reviews and the strategic decisions, Unison will continue to maintain its policy of seeking to protect the jobs and terms and conditions of its members by the most appropriate means.

Most steward vacancies and Branch Officer posts were filled

and a number of new stewards were welcomed including Andy Cronshaw, Bethan Williams and Doris Pritchard. These bring the total number of stewards and Branch Officers up to twenty. There are still one or two vacancies in Power Systems and Corporate, so any member who is interested in becoming a Steward should contact Unison or one of the other stewards who would be only too pleased to help you get involved in the union.

REMEMBER, AN ACTIVE UNION IS THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT YOUR INTERESTS.

Living Wage Rally - MANCHESTER 28th April

As part of UNISON's ongoing campaign for a **LIVING WAGE**. A rally will take place in **Albert Square, Manchester** with speakers and music on Saturday 28th April from 12:30 pm.

A concert will also take place at the **MEN Arena** featuring **Catatonia, Toploader, Idlewild**, etc. Tickets £10 available on 0161 930 8000