



GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

**ANNUAL CONGRESS 2010
FLORAL HALL & CONVENTION CENTRE
SOUTHPORT**

**SUNDAY 6 JUNE 2010 to WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE 2010
9.30 am - 12.30 pm, 2.00 pm - 5.30 pm**

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GENERAL SECRETARY'S INTRODUCTION



Dear Colleagues

Welcome to Southport

I hope this week offers all delegates, whether this is your first experience of GMB Congress or, you are one of the staunch rank and file lay membership, who have helped carry our Union through the dark troubled times of the 80's and 90's out into these last five years which have proved to be amongst the most successful the Union has had in modern times.

Our GMB is vibrant, growing, financially stable, and above all, has a clear vision of what a union should do!

The GMB@WORK strategy which we adopted four years ago, has delivered much for us, and it will deliver much more in the years to come.

GMB@WORK and our determination to never repeat the lazy mistakes of the past has carried us through a year of economic turmoil.

Many of our members and their families have suffered hardship as a result of the bankers recession.

The GMB fought the length and breadth of the land to retain jobs, boost government investment in jobs, get extra spending on capital projects like housing, apprenticeships and skills training.

I write this forward before the general election and I don't have a crystal ball. However the GMB will continue to campaign for our members, where ever they work.

Over the last five years I have been proud and honoured to have been part of the revival of our magnificent campaigning GMB union.

The camaraderie of our Officers, Staff, CEC, Senior Management Team and of course, you our lay membership, has been something we must keep at all costs, moving forward, facing challenges and changes.

This year we are concentrating on enhancing lay members democracy and control, enlarging our Congress base to become more inclusive, to engage more members in our Congress, some which will be drawn from areas of diversity that are under represented at Congress.

If we make these moves this year, we will give ourselves the ability to encourage and include more young members into our structures.

Our future not only looks bright, it is bright!

Have a wonderful time, work hard, relax and enjoy being part of a growing Union.

Feel pride in being part of a process which is strengthening lay member democracy, fighting inequality and campaigning for a fairer society for all.

Not bad really for what Mrs Thatcher called the enemy within.

The GMB will face all the threats from employers and insults from politicians with the same response.

We stand for what is good in this society.

We seek change and improvement for others.

We seek no glory for ourselves, just fairness and democracy for all.

See you at the rostrum.....!!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Paul Kenny'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL KENNY
General Secretary

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A Framework for the Future of the GMB: Update

This report audits the progress that has been made towards implementation of the 23 recommendations set out in the CEC Special Report *A Framework for the Future of the GMB*, and carried by Congress 2005. Where it has been previously reported to Congress that the recommendation has been implemented, the recommendation itself is no longer shown.

1	<i>Implemented</i>
2	<i>Implemented</i>
3	<p>The CEC will establish a special working group on young people, whose terms of reference will be to examine how to raise trade union awareness amongst young people, how to attract more young people into membership of the GMB and how to increase the participation of young people in the Union.</p> <p><i>Two members of GMB National Equality Forum (NEF) were lay representatives specialising in young member issues. They were able to raise concerns regarding young members and potential members. The two young member representatives organised fringe meetings at Congress 09 and the TUC.</i></p> <p><i>We continued to send a full delegation of GMB Young Members to the TUC Young members Conference in Birmingham and proposed topics for discussion ‘free school meals’ and ‘fighting the BNP’. Discussion continued with young members on improving engagement in GMB.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to this a negotiators guide for Officers on young members was drafted</i></p>
4	<i>Implemented</i>
5	<i>Implemented</i>
6	<i>Implemented</i>
7	<i>Implemented</i>
8	<i>Implemented</i>
9	<i>Implemented</i>
10	<i>Implemented</i>
11	<p>There will be a full examination of all nationally serviced branches by the Recruitment & Organisation Committee. This examination will be conducted with full consultation with the members of the nationally serviced branches and the Regions.</p> <p><i>Following discussion by the Organisation Committee and the Senior Management Team this review is currently on hold.</i></p>
12	<p>The CEC will examine the issue of “tidying up” some regional boundaries where any alterations to these could enhance and improve the service to GMB members.</p> <p><i>Further work required.</i></p>
13	<i>Implemented</i>

14	<i>Implemented</i>
15	<i>Implemented</i>
16	<i>Implemented</i>
17	<i>Implemented</i>
18	<p>The CEC recommends that the Finance Committee and Senior Managers review all the financial restructuring issues identified by the Task Group with the aim of identifying appropriate reforms that can be implemented immediately and, in the case of reforms requiring changes to Union Rules, recommending detailed Rule Amendments for the CEC to propose to the next GMB Congress. Senior Managers have already taken preliminary steps so that the financial restructuring review can proceed quickly should Congress 2005 accept this recommendation.</p> <p><i>Financial processes are being kept under review.</i></p>
19	<p>The CEC will look at all areas of expenditure to identify those that are unproductive and to make recommendations that these practices are stopped, to free up resources for direct servicing of members and ensuring the growth of the Union.</p> <p><i>GMB's national procurement programme is still generating substantial savings. For example telephone land line annual credits generate close to £100k per annum savings compared with 2007. Energy savings generate around £127k per annum which will be greatly improved by the energy audit proposed by the Green Working Party and agreed by CEC. Savings can be diverted to our front line services fulfilling our commitment to recruitment and organisation through GMB@WORK.</i></p>
20	<i>Implemented</i>
21	<i>Implemented</i>
22	<i>Implemented</i>
23	<i>Implemented</i>

NATIONAL ORGANISING DEPARTMENT

Our union has come a long way since 2005 and has changed its outlook dramatically on how we build our organisation. We have switched our focus onto sustainable membership growth in every workplace.

We realised that selling the union as a set of personal services in return for a monthly fee produced a level of demand on us we could not meet. Too much of our Officials time was spent doing the Workplace Organisers job representing, advising and supporting individual members.

We put an end to the notion that you could separate the recruitment, the retention and the servicing of members. We no longer believe that some of us should build the union while others maintain it. Every Official is now responsible for both functions. And we now know that the best person to get a new member to join GMB is the Workplace Organiser they work with every day.

In the end we decided to build the union wholesale not flog it retail.

We now see our members as the union - not as mere customers of GMB services.

GMB@Work Organising Strategy has 5 main industrial and political pillars:

1. **The Workplace is the building block of the union.** It's at work, rather than in the community, or in the media that working people are most able to build the collective solidarity they need to tackle the injustice and inequality they face.
2. **Each workplace should be organised as if a ballot for industrial action was due.** We need our members to be match fit and ready, but we also need our organisation in each workplace to be democratic, transparent and accountable every day.
3. **The employers have different interests than our members.** It's our members' employers who are the cause of most of our members problems at work and our job is to stand up for and promote their interests not bury them in partnership agreements.
4. **It is the process of industrial relations that builds a union.** People don't join unions out of gratitude for what we have done for them or their colleagues in the past but out of fear and anger for the present and the hope we can give them for the future
5. **People are strongest when they organise themselves.** Our members must be encouraged to find their own solutions to the problems they face with our support. We must take steps to give our members in each workplace the power and authority they need to make decisions and we must stop doing for our members what they can do for themselves.

Despite years of blaming governments, employers, the media and the state of the economy for our troubles, we have eventually developed an understanding that we got ourselves into our own membership crisis in the 1990's and so it is down to us and us alone to get ourselves out of it. And we have proved since 2005 that whatever gets thrown at us – we can build our union.

The recession that has put so many of our members out of work or on short working, or facing pay cuts and attacks on their pensions was caused by greedy bankers and we must ensure we never let anyone forget this. But it's what GMB does or doesn't do in each workplace over the coming years that will count for our members, not what the bankers do now - or the politicians, the media and the employers they control.

Over the coming months and years we may well face a return to some of the worst aspects of the politics of the 1980's – more privatisation, attacks on public services, and attacks on trade union rights.

The GMB@Work Organising strategy will protect us from repeating some of our own mistakes of the 1980's as we respond to the challenges ahead.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

PRESS

The pace of industrial news in which GMB has an interest increased markedly over the period. Each morning all GMB staff and officers receive an electronic copy of press coverage in which there is a reference to GMB for the previous day. This helps all parts of the union to be aware of what is happening to members across the union. Since the Communication Department's report to GMB Congress 2009 it has issued 527 press releases (at the time of writing) on news events related to the work of the union on a range of issues. All GMB press releases are available at www.gmb.org.uk where members can register to receive releases directly to their email address. 8,000 people are registered and receive all GMB press releases.

Pay – There were releases on the major equal pay dispute at Leeds City Council involving 600 GMB members on strike that faced pay cuts of £6,000. There were similar levelling down equal pay disputes at Brighton and Hove, East Lindsay and Sheffield which also gained press coverage. Press releases were also issued on the pay freeze in Local Government. GMB also called for action against the use of agency workers in the Royal Mail dispute. There were a

number of press releases on the growing dispute at British Gas which is on going as we write. There were releases on pay disputes and their resolution in Trinity School Newham, in the Scottish public services, local government workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, in east Kent hospitals, prisons and FE & HE, at Superdrug, Enterprise Liverpool City Council, Nottingham Trams and Portsmouth shipyard. There were press releases for the GMB's growing membership in private hire drivers were issued as the recruitment progressed from council area to council area. A new area where we have just started press releases relate to the pay dispute at Southern Cross and the fact that the rents on the care home owned by the Qatari Investment Authority are too high.

Job Losses - 2009 was dominated by job losses and terms and conditions reversals resulting from the economic downturn and GMB's press coverage has reflected this. There were releases on household names such as JCB, M&S, Wincanton, Corus, National Grid, Thames Water, Legal Aid Service, Land Rover, Sea Dragon Offshore, BAE, LDV, AVX Devon, Wigan Leisure, Hain Celestial Luton, Diageo, Dorlux, Birmingham City Council, Glasgow City Council, MoD bases, NHS Berkshire, Immigration Advisory Service, British Gas, water industry, John Lennon Airport, Severfield Reeve in North Yorkshire, ShopDirect at Sunderland, Swissport at Stansted, Pinguin Foods, Nottingham CC, MacBrides, Thyssenkrupp Bourn and BAE Systems in Barrow. GMB expressed concern over jobs in the shipyards as the aircraft carrier programme and the submarines are slowed down. GMB has express concern at the prospect for growing job losses in the public services. Some of these are still on-going as we write. There is continuing coverage on the financial crisis at British Airways.

Economy & Industrial News - Reacting to naturally occurring news stories with particular regard to the political agenda allows GMB to promote its policy and position on many issues. GMB reacted to the crisis in the financial sector and the government's response to it, as well as the monthly unemployment figures. Paul Kenny described the return of the bonus culture in the City as 'The Greed Shoots of Recovery'. During this period we commented on the bonus payment to Fred the Shred at RBS, Bob Diamond at Barclays, government bail out of PFI deals, and we responded to the budget. Developments in the energy industry including nuclear power gave rise to a steady stream of press releases; in particular issues relating to Ofgem generate coverage. GMB also commented about clean coal. GMB reacted to the news that Peter Mandleson had said that a lack of UK ownership of industry put the UK at a disadvantage.

Posted Workers Directive – Overall this has been the biggest story of the year for GMB. Once the unofficial strike off engineering construction workers at the Lindsey Oil Refinery reached a settlement the department moved the story on to the GMB engineering construction disputes at the Isle of Grain and Staythorpe construction sites affected by the botched implementation of this law and recent EU Court judgements. We have also put out press release during this period on the dispute in Engineering Construction which resulted in a settlement that provides for pre-award auditing. There were further releases on underpayments at Staythorpe and the national protest action that GMB organised in London on 3rd February. Overall this has been the biggest story of the year for GMB. As we write a new story has opened up regarding fair access and fair pay for 2,000 jobs at the Pembroke power station construction site.

The above story is tied in with the revelations regarding the blacklisting of construction trade union activists. GMB also released that the Union is taking a discrimination case on behalf of an Irish member who was refused a job because he could not speak Portuguese to work for a Portuguese contractor undertaking overhead electricity line maintenance in the south of Ireland and who employed 140 Portuguese out of a workforce of 160.

Legislation & Political Issues – Since the last Congress report releases have been issued on the Queen's speech, the Equality Bill, the National Equality Commission and on council housing. GMB continues to comment on the lack of a coherent energy policy and during this period Ofgem has concluded that the free-market model that the UK has followed will not keep the lights on. As well as issuing releases on the general issue we issued releases on Smart meters, the nuclear industry and Sellafield. GMB is in the forefront of replying to attacks on public sector pension provision and we issue regular press releases on this issue. The public services section issued a major report on PFI debts. During the period we also issued comments on the changing relationship between race discrimination and poverty, and on school packed lunches. GMB also commented on the Prime Ministers speech at TUC and Labour Party conferences.

We have also covered progress on ending the UK opt-out of the Working Time Directive from the European Parliament. We have also responded to increase in the National Minimum Wage (NMW) and the new code of practise that tips no longer count toward the NMW. We have made comments on the new rights to flexible working. We were also extensively quoted on MPs' expenses and on the outcome of the European elections. Other areas covered in the past period have been two releases for the Sex Workers Branch on the policing and crime Bill which set out the views of our

members in the lap dancing clubs for new licensing arrangements and the views of the sex workers to criminalising aspects of the sex industry. The department was tasked with compiling research that could be used to demonstrate the track record of Tory candidates and councils in the run up to the general election. To date the department has put out a total of 57 releases which looked at the occupations of Tory PPCs in each country in the UK. The research demonstrated that 63 Tory candidates come from the banking and financial sector and that all but 1% of them came from the higher occupational groups.

Good news – We continued to welcome action by the Gangmasters Licensing Authority to stop the exploitation of workers by Gangmasters in Scotland the south of England and London. We regularly do releases for GMB members who secure proper PI compensation for injuries sustained at work.

Profile for GMB The department also placed stories with the media to raise the profile, policy and views of GMB on many issues with GMB members and would be members as part of increasing the profile of the Union. The department takes students from the University of Roehampton School of Journalism and train them in writing press releases on a variety of topics. Since the last report we published very detailed reports for each area of the UK on the extent to which almost five million working families benefit from £15 billion of Child and Working Tax Credit to the tune of an average of £70 per week, every year. To coincide with GMB Diversity and Inclusion national conference we published the lists of councils in terms of the proportion of their top 5% earners who come from ethnic minority communities. We also did the percentage of residents in care homes supported by public funds, the average price of a pint of lager and the take up of free school meals and unpaid council and business taxes. These stories gave the figures for all parts of the UK.

Other Issues

During the period we issued press releases on Union Learn in Leeds, care home privatisation in Swansea, temperatures of workplaces in the cold weather, compensation for Morrison HGV drivers in Southern Region and a number of press releases on pleural plaques. We also issued press releases on swine flu, ISS at Kingston Hospital and on Nestle in India. For GMB Scotland we issued a press release on the living wage campaign in North Lanarkshire.

GMB CAMPAIGNS

As well as the up and running campaigns the department has been asked to run additional campaigns. Here is an update of where we are on all GMB campaigns.

British Gas

The campaign aims to discredit the bullying management regime of newly appointed Managing Director Phil Bentley which is all about cutting service and jobs. There is a campaign website (www.gas-leak.co.uk) with information and a forum for British Gas engineers and employees, and customers to leave their experiences of the bullying management regime. Several newsletters and letters to members have been done and delivered to keep everyone involved up to date on developments. See also Campaign websites below.

National Greed

This GMB campaign failed to stop the closure of the Newcastle office and loss of the jobs. See also Campaign websites below.

Pubcos

This is a relatively new campaign relating to the economic wellbeing of 25,000 pub tenants of seven large pubco chains. In a nutshell the tenants are being charged up to 80 pence a pint more for the wholesale of drink than they could buy it in the open market due to a tie to the property company that owns the pub building. The House of Commons business and innovation select Committee revealed that two thirds of the tenants earn less than £16k a year. The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) washed their hands of the issue and said that the issue was a matter for negotiation between the Pubcos and their tenants. The tenants are desperate and are looking to GMB membership to put an end to the tie. As we write the OFT have reopened the investigation and the Select Committee has issued a new report in early March. As we write there is a lobby of Parliament on the 16th March 2010 and a series of meetings in marginal Seats is also planned. A new Pub Revolution Branch has been set up in Southern Region and the Region is promoting a series of GMB road shows to build support for a ballot for action to secure a £12,000 cut in wholesale prices paid by the tenants. See also Campaign websites below.

SafeGuard

The department is preparing materials and a website for the 1st march 2010 launch of this campaign which is designed to address the many attacks of GMB members who work as static security guards and have no protection, sick pay, injury on duty compensation etc. See also Campaign websites below.

Remploy: The contemporary motion at LP conference in 2007 came back in 2009 and James Sibley Remploy worker moved the reference back. We got coverage for the fact that he was threatened by Remploy for attending the conference. The campaign has moved to a new phase of securing public procurement work for the fifty three factories that remain open and there is litigation over the 2,000 job loses. There is also a campaign to re-open the York factory where a survey has shown that less than half of those made redundant has found jobs. We focused attention on the bonuses paid to the directors and the staging of an expensive black tie staff event in Leeds.

Co-op: The April 2008 CEC gave the go ahead for a public campaign to secure re-recognition in Co-op Funeralcare. A campaign under the theme of "The Co-op; Lions led by donkeys" was launched. At the Manchester demonstration the Co-op manager, David Hendry, who de-recognised GMB came out to get his photograph taken with the live donkey. This has been turned into a poster with the slogan "which one is the donkey?" A GMB motion asking the trade union movement to shun the Co-op was carried at the TUC conference with Usdaw seconding it. Talks regarding the future of the Bank are underway. The campaign is seeking a new impetus and suggestions from the committee would be most welcome. This campaign fits in with Paul Kenny's maxim to leave the machine gun running and they will come round again.

AA/Saga: GMB retains its belief that the company must be a candidate to implode as a result of its massive debt burden of £4.9 billion. GMB repeated its call for Bob Diamond, who organised this loan from Barclays Bank to be sacked since his role in the financial sector's downfall became clear. This campaign also fits in with Paul Kenny's maxim to leave the machine gun running and they will come round again.

M&S: Since the last report the Employment Tribunal for Tony Goode has taken place but we are awaiting the outcome. We continue to highlight the poor treatment of M&S staff since GMB member Tony Goode was summarily dismissed by M&S in early September for leaking details of cuts in redundancy pay to the press.

CVIT: We continue to give publicity to the campaign to secure a safer working environment for our members subject to violent attacks in the transport of cash and valuables.

Four Seasons

GMB North West & Irish Region has asked the Department to do the business in public with Four Season which is about to de-recognise GMB.

Terminate The Rate

GMB is involved in the above campaign.

ORGANISATION DEPARTMENT TRAINING/REGIONAL TARGETS MATERIAL

The Department continues to produce dedicated news letters and mailings for national and regional organisation targets.

The department helped to prepare a DVD for GMB Congress 2009 and for distribution to GMB Branches which shows the success and impact of the GMB@Work training programme. The DVD was well received and will be with Branches in the near future.

GMB REGIONAL/NATIONAL MAGAZINES

The 3 editions of the GMB regional magazines since GMB Congress 2009 (July09, November09 and March10) have reached members' homes in increasing numbers. The central 12 national pages focused increasingly on the threat of the return of the Tories to power and raising awareness of exactly what that would mean for GMB members through major articles by Mirror columnist Paul Routledge. GMB campaigns too benefited from his high profile articles. In the final editions (March 2010) before the general election the national pages and many of the regional pages again focus on the threat of the return of the Tories to power and raise members' awareness of exactly what that would mean for them. There was also a major interview with Mary Turner by the Mirror's Kevin McGuire about her lifetime's work for the trade union and Labour movements.

The new GMB national website will also be launched in the March 2010 editions.

The look of the magazines has also been completely revamped in line with feedback from the GMB Members Readership Survey.

Costs and Savings in Production

The economic downturn had a detrimental effect on our advertisers budgets but this income picked up again at the end of 2009. The impact of the loss of advertising income was mainly borne by the magazines producers rather than GMB as our contract with them provides a guaranteed minimum advertising income to GMB.

The July edition included the information regarding the increase in GMB subs and the associated letters to members who pay via Direct Debit thus saving around £25,000 in separate postage charges. During the year the magazines were also used for CEC by-elections and regional mailings, giving further postage savings.

Simply by folding the magazines for mailing saved another £13,000 per edition.

GMB CONGRESS 2009

The department was asked by the Congress Working Party to look into reducing the cost of all elements of the staging of Congress including the cost of lighting and audio visual. The new style provided a saving of around £40,000 in 2009. The 2009 stage set will be reused in Southport 2010 and the strict cost controls will be maintained.

GMB Congress TV 2009 was again webcast live to www.gmb.org.uk and the main speeches, including the Prime Ministers speech and Q&A session, are available to download. All members with email addresses were notified of Congress TV and the various messages we received in response were sent to Regions to action.

GMB NATIONAL WEBSITE www.gmb.org.uk

The new national website was launched on Monday 8th March 2010. The new Members Area and the ability for members to up date their own GMB Profile has added value to their GMB membership. The latest technologies have been used to make the information on the site easily accessible to members and GMB post holders, while driving non-members to the on-line joining if they want to see GMB content.

The site is an essential part of our drive to obtain members' email addresses and mobile phone numbers to improve communications and GMB organising strength.

On-line joining continues to grow apace. In 2009 an average of 1,318 new members joined on-line each month making a total of 15,809 for the whole of 2009 new members joined through the website.

GMB campaign websites

www.nationalgreed.co.uk

www.gas-leak.co.uk

www.GMB-security.org.uk

<http://www.pubrevolution.co.uk/pub-rev-gmb>

GMB PUBLICATIONS

Southern Cross

Meal Breaks Leaflet

Request to leave leaflet

Workplace Organisers Tool Kit

Equality Section

GMB@WORK Section 2.1 boards

GMB@WORK Flags

Engineering Construction Backpacks

Congress 2010

Covers

Programme

Health & Safety

Toxic Shock

Stress

Pubcos

Letter
Posters

DHL

Calling Card

Picket line Paraphernalia

Armbands
Posters
Placards

Public Services

GMB Scotland Mailing

Newsletters

ASDA Tell Andy
Tell Andy letter
Southern Region Professional Drivers
Wilkinsons x 3
Southern Cross
Pubco
Engineering Construction
ASDA
Eurest
British Gas

Re-prints

H&S Handbook
Care homes
Feeling the Heat
Workplace Organisers Took kits
H&S Work related Stress
H&S Handbook
Safety Reps Toolkits
Noticeboard Toolkits

Leaflets/Booklets/Letters

Security recruitment leaflet
School Support Staff Negotiating Booklet
Public Sector Pensions Booklet
ASDA Retention Mailings
Aggregate Industry Letter
Securitas Letter
Southern Cross Ballot
GMB@SCHOOL Autumn 2009 – Welsh Translation
GMB One British Gas Survey
ASDA Letter
Unofficial Accident Report Book
ASDA Postcards & Stickers
GMB@WORK Workplace Organisers Training Toolkit
GMB Your Rights Leaflets translations 11 Languages
CDNA Mailing
Nestles Pension Attack

MERCHANDISE

Car tax disc holders.
GMB@WORK flags

EXECUTIVE POLICY

THE EXECUTIVE POLICY SECTION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT:

1. Supports the General Secretary in matters related to the Governance of the Union. The Executive Policy Section services a number of internal bodies and provides support for the General Secretary, CEC and National Officials at Congress and CEC meetings, TUC and Labour Party Conferences.
2. The Executive Policy Officers support the Central Executive Council and provide the secretariat to the SMT and the CEC Organisation Sub-Committee. They are responsible for ensuring that Actions and Decisions of Congress are carried forward for action by the relevant Departments and Sections at National Office.
3. Develop union policy, raise the GMB profile and strengthen GMB influence by providing specialist advice, preparing proposals, drafting consultations and liaising with contacts in Government and other relevant industrial political bodies in the UK and the European Union.

GOVERNANCE OF THE UNION

Dolores O'Donoghue and Ida Clemo, the Executive Policy Officers work closely with colleagues at National Office, the European office and regional level. They are members of the Congress Working Party and are heavily involved in the planning stages for Congress which commence in July each year.

The Section co-ordinates policy work for GMB Congress and prepares the preliminary and final agendas; advises the CEC on policy stances; co-ordinates compositing of motions; finalises the programme and President's running order; co-ordinates and drafts the President's address and provides support and advice to the President's platform at Congress. They also manage the Congress timetable.

At the time of writing this Report they are in the early stages of the preparations for Congress 2010, and processing the 220 Congress motions submitted by regions.

Review of Congress 2009

In summary, there were 3 CEC Special Reports: Congress Future Arrangements, Equal Pay and Raising the Kids: Stop in-work Poverty plus a CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy.

Dolores worked with colleagues at National Office to draft the CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy, and Tom Hazeldine, Research and Policy Officer in the Public Services Section produced the final document, which was well received at Congress.

Dolores and Ida are involved in ensuring that the other events at Congress are planned, organised and included in the daily President's Running Order, in 2009 this included:

- Regional winners of Regional Outstanding Achievement Award
- Daniel Dennis Health & Safety Rep of the Year: Winner & Runner up
- Schools Healthy Eating Competition Prize Awards
- GMB@ Work: the Movie DVD
- 6 Guest Speakers including Gordon Brown, Prime Minister
- CEC Speakers
- 12 Fringe Events
- Accrington Polish Children's Choir

At Congress 2009 Dolores was also heavily involved in the Children's Event and worked closely with colleagues at North West and Irish Region to organise the schools Healthy Eating competition. This involved organising the judging and contact with winning schools, the children and families visit to Congress, award of prizes and party treats for 129 children, as well as the arrangements for the President's visit for the special commendation award of bicycles and fruit trees to the Acorns Special School in Preston.

Dolores worked with the Child Poverty Action Group on the theme and preparations for the joint report "Raising the Kids" and was involved in the arrangements for the regional visits for Kate Green to carry the work forward in the run up to TUC Congress 2009.

The section dealt with the programming of the Final Agenda which consisted of 17 CEC Rule Amendments, 5 Rule Amendments, 138 motions and 22 Composite Motions of which 115 were carried and 12 referred. There were 7 Emergency motions of which 6 were carried and 1 Referred. In addition there were 20 existing policy motions which were not debated. Executive Policy supported 44 CEC speakers with speech drafts and policy advice, and programmed the attendance of Guest speakers.

The section has developed a number of documents which assisted the smooth running of Congress.

- A summary programme for delegates
- “Congress Explained” which was developed together with Steve Short. This document, which has been revised for 2010, sets out information and advice on the processes and procedures of Congress in a user-friendly format. It is primarily aimed at new delegates and also gives hints and tips on writing motions and making speeches. It was circulated to Regions in advance of the Regional delegation meetings in April 2009 and an updated version will be provided for Congress 2010.
- Delegate Questionnaire
- Combined Preliminary Agenda document produced for the CEC for their March Meeting where stances on 226 motions and 31 Rule Amendments were discussed.

During Congress, the Executive Policy Officers support the President, Vice President, and General Secretary to manage the Congress timetable. They also supervise the recording of decisions. Dolores and Ida wish to express their thanks to their colleague Charlie King who has patiently and ably undertaken this task for some years, and retired at the end of 2009.

Congress 2009 Delegates

The following numbers of delegates spoke (not including CEC, Guest speakers or SOC)

Number of Delegates who spoke	Male	Female
Sunday	28	12
Monday	62	29
Tuesday	62	22
Wednesday	42	27
TOTAL	194	90

Action on Referred and Carried Motions

Following Congress 2009, the Executive Policy Officers implemented changes to the way Actions on Decisions of Congress are followed through. Following the September CEC meeting, motions are now referred in the first instance to the October meeting of the appropriate CEC Sub Committee, SMT member or Section National Secretary. The movers or Branches of Referred motions may now also be invited to participate in the evaluation process prior to final recommendations. The report on referred motions is set out in A. below.

In January each year Executive Policy ask colleagues at National Office to include progress on all motions carried at the previous Congress in their section of the General Secretary’s Report which are set out in B. below.

A. ACTION ON MOTIONS REFERRED BY THE 2009 CONGRESS

14.	Review of Selection Process to National Equalities Forum	A discussion paper setting out proposals will be taken to the March CEC meeting.
26.	New Youth Membership Rate and Promotion	The motion called for a new youth rate and improved youth recruitment. Congress had taken reference on the basis that there was no need for new rates as the CEC already had the power to implement special promotional rates in addition to the grade 2 rate which applied to all members under 18. However, the CEC undertook to consider recruitment initiatives aimed at young people. The Finance Committee agreed that the motion should be drawn to Regions’ attention with the request that they consider their youth recruitment policies.

27. GMB Family Membership	This called for the introduction of family membership. The CEC had asked for reference to look at the possibility and suggested a pilot scheme. The Finance Committee of the CEC agreed that family membership was unlikely to add to total membership numbers, and would be more likely to reduce income by discounting existing members' contributions. It would be complex to administer and deciding on the level of service appropriate to family members would be fraught with difficulty. The Committee agreed not to proceed with the matter.
70. Campaign for Statutory Volunteer's Rights	The GS Department is in discussion with the proposing Branch to investigate ways of taking this forward. TUC have produced a Volunteers Charter which will provide the basis of this work.
71. Tax Allowances for Voluntary Work	The GS department is investigating ways to take this forward. It is a difficult area, and the most likely route to progress is whether this could be integrated into the Tax Credit system.
73. Protection of Children Act (POCA) and Protection of Vulnerable ADULTS (POVA) Investigations	The motion called for GMB to campaign to ensure that POCA and POVA investigations are subject to a fair, transparent process in line with the ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinaries. The motion was referred because a new system for protecting children and vulnerable adults is established, and the transition was not complete. This remains the case. The POCA and POVA lists began to be phased out last October, and replacements brought in. The new system will require all people working closely with children or vulnerable adults on a frequent or intensive basis to register with the ISA to gain clearance. ISA registration for employees moving into a new role opens in July 2010, with other employees to follow. It is still too early to tell how well investigations under the new system will work. The situation will have to be further monitored.
90. PACE Interviews	This motion was referred because of the need to investigate the background and gather information on local authority procedures for investigating complaints made against Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers, before determining the steps necessary for GMB to provide support to members who might be affected. The Commercial Services Section liaised with the branch in the North West and Irish region which submitted the motion, and also consulted the Professional Drivers branch and appropriate branches in other GMB regions to gather evidence of local authority's interviewing procedures. Legal advice was sought to determine the legal status of the procedures in use and their relationship with Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) procedures. As a result, advice is being prepared for members who drive Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicles to advise them of their legal rights in the event of a complaint against them.
160. Mandatory Voting at Elections 161. Compulsory Participation in Elections	These motions were referred for further consideration. Falling election turnouts reflect disillusionment with politicians and the political process and this must be reversed. However, there are concerns and inherent danger in forcing people to vote. It also raises concerns over an individual's democratic right to withdraw from the political process. There are also compulsion issues with regards to what the sanctions would be. On further analysis, we therefore would advise that if this motion is placed before congress again that the recommendation would be to oppose it.
170. UK Membership of the Euro	As the exchange rate has remained high since Congress 2009 (87-94p/€), examination of the case for membership of the Euro is not realistic at this time. This, combined with continuing economic and financial instability, and the fact that many EU members of the Eurozone are currently running deficits way above the Growth and Stability pact levels of 3% GDP, makes it very difficult to assess the impact on our members across all sections with any certainty or confidence. We continue to monitor the situation closely.

198. Government Funding for the Treatment of Lower Back Pain	The motion called for Government to allocate funding so that those suffering chronic lower back pain could choose to access alternative therapy outside the NHS. The motion was referred because GMB policy is as a rule opposed to public funding being used for treatment outside the NHS, and the issue needed to be looked at in that policy context. Alternative therapy was endorsed by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) last May. NHS trusts have been expected to implement the NICE recommendations over the past year. Pending that, the impact has not yet been robustly evaluated. In addition, the NICE initiative on alternative therapy has been overtaken by Government's attempt to move towards personalisation of patient care, inviting further inroads by private healthcare providers. GMB opposes this continued drift towards the private provision of NHS services. For these reasons it has not been possible to reconcile the laudable sentiment to help those suffering chronic lower back pain with a specific proposal to do so via non-NHS provision that remains contradictory to wider GMB policy.
EM 4 Unjustified Expenses	The Labour Party set up a star chamber to deal with this very issue. GMB were involved and supported its implementation. In any decision either regionally or nationally to support constituency campaigns in the run up to the next election this issue has featured in the decisions made. GMB has not and is not in the position where it can organise de-selection campaigns within a CLP as it is their own decision. We have advised members who attend CLPs of our concerns and position on this matter. The General Secretary has also made a number of public statements condemning those MPs who have abused the expenses system.

B. REPORT OF DECISIONS MADE BY CONGRESS ON RULE AMENDMENTS, MOTIONS, REPORTS AND STATEMENTS

The CEC Action on Decisions document below sets out the responsibility for the actions on all motions carried and referred by Congress 2009. It is also available on the GMB National Website www.gmb.org.uk/congress

CONGRESS REPORTS	
General Secretary's Report	GS
Annual Accounts and Auditors Report	GS, Finance Director
CEC SPECIAL REPORTS	
Congress Future Arrangements	GS, SMT, Executive Officer
Equal Pay	CEC Organisation Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
Raising the Kids: Stop in-work Poverty	GS, SMT, CEC
CEC STATEMENT	
CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Organisation Committee CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
CEC RULE AMENDMENTS	
CECRA1 Rule 5.5 Membership	RULE CHANGE
CECRA2 Rule 5.7 Membership	RULE CHANGE

CECRA3	Rule 19.13	Regions and how they are Managed	RULE CHANGE
CECRA4	Rule 20.2	Reserved seats on Regional Councils	RULE CHANGE
CECRA5	Rule 64	Candidates for Local Public Organisations	RULE CHANGE
CECRA6	Rules 65.3, 65.4, 65A.8	Political Fund	RULE CHANGE
CECRA7	Rule 36.9	Branches	RULE CHANGE
CECRA8	Rule 46	Clause 1	RULE CHANGE
CECRA9	Rule 46	Clause 2	RULE CHANGE
CECRA10	Rule 50	Strike Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA11	Rule 53	Victimisation Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA12	Rule 54	Disablement Grants	RULE CHANGE
CECRA13	Rule 58	Fatal Accident Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA14	Rule 59	Weekly Accident Benefit	RULE CHANGE
CECRA15	Rule 65	Political Fund	RULE CHANGE
CECRA16	Rule 65A	Political Fund (Northern Ireland)	RULE CHANGE
CECRA17	Rule 17e	National Officials	RULE CHANGE

MOTIONS CARRIED BY CONGRESS

MOTION		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
EM1	Ban the Blacklists Carried with Statement	CEC Organisation Committee Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
EM 2	National Grid Greed	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
EM 3	Corus Steel Teesside	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
EM 5	ID Cards- Aviation Industry	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
EM 6	Iraq Carried with Statement	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
EM 7	Fighting the Fascists in Elections	
7.	Working Together With Unison Carried with Statement	GS, CEC
8.	Geographical Boundaries of the GMB Carried with CEC Qualification	GS, SMT
C1.	National Migrant Workers Recruitment & Organising Strategy Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Organising Dept)
17.	Environmental Representatives	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
28.	Retired Members Association Contributions Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Finance & General Purposes Committee, RMA
32.	Equalities	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
34.	Young Members Age Restriction	
35.	Motion on Abortion Rights Carried with Statement	

MOTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
36. Health & Safety Carried with CEC Qualification 37. Display Screen Regulations and Cash Registers	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
C2. Final Salary Pension Schemes Carried with CEC Qualification 41. Pensions 42. State Pension Only Carried with CEC Qualification C3. Re-Establish the Pensions Earnings Link Carried with CEC Qualification 48. GMB Campaign for Environmental Investments Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions)
52. European Case Law	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
53. British Jobs Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
56. Exploitation of EEC Workers by Security Companies	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
57. Employment Protection Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
58. Employment Carried with CEC Qualification	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
59. Tips 60. Working Time Regulations and Holiday Pay 62. Public Holiday - Respect our Armed Forces Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
63. Paternity Leave Carried with Statement	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
64. Temps to Permanent Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
65. Redundancy 66. Statutory Redundancy Pay 67. Redundancy Payments Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee CEC Organisation Committee
C4. Employment Tribunal Awards	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal)
72. Controlling the Use of Subversive Surveillance in the Workplace	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
74. Equal Pay	CEC Organisation Committee (Legal) Section National Secretary (Public Services)
75. Undocumented Migrant Workers	CEC Organisation Committee
C5. The Role of Energy Regulators 79. OFGEM Proposals to Regulate the Pension Rights in the Utility Industries Carried with CEC Qualification 80. Campaign to Reform OFGEM 81. Energy Companies Profits 82. Government Regulation of Utility Companies Profits 83. Utility Providers of Energy 84. Utilities Companies' Pre-Payment Tariffs 86. Energy Prices 87. Exemption from Parking Restrictions for CVIT Vehicles 89. Zero Hours Contract in Security	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)
C6. Support for Manufacturing Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Organisation Committee
C7. UK Manufacturing Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee

MOTION		LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
C8.	Remploy Carried with Statement	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
98.	Retain Britain's Jobs in Britain Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
99.	Manufacturing of Windfarms Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	Section National Secretary (Manufacturing)
100.	Scotch Whisky - Safeguarding Our Future	
101.	Manufacturing Carried with CEC Qualification	
C9.	Invest in the Public Sector	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
106.	Economic Climate Impact on Public Services	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
108.	Local Government Reorganisation	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
109.	PFI	
111.	Public Sector Apprenticeships Carried with Statement	Section National Secretary (Public Services) CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
C10.	School Support Staff Carried with Statement	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
121.	Public Sector Pensions	Section National Secretary (Public Services) CEC Organisation Committee (Pensions)
123.	Local Authority Care Homes	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
124.	Private Sector Care Homes	
126.	Staffing Levels in Mental Health and Learning Disability	
127.	Local Government and Equal Pay	
C11.	UK Economy and Public Sector Funding Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
130.	Global Reconstruction Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy) CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
131.	Credit Crisis and City Bonuses Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	
C12.	Short Selling Shares Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	
C13.	Banking and Finance Industry Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	
C14.	House Repossessions and Mortgage Protection Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	
139.	Financial Industry Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing & the Economy	
140.	Tax Havens	
141.	A Council Building Programme	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
C15.	Redundancy & Short Time Working Carried with CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy	
146.	Funding Recycling In The Future	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
147.	Phase 3 European Emissions Trading Scheme Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Health & Env)
148.	Gender Bending Chemicals (Endocrine Disrupters)	
162.	MP's Expenses and the Taking of other Remunerative Posts	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
168.	Europe	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
171.	Cammell Laird 1984	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee CEC Organisation Committee
173.	Police Cautions with Security Guard on Duty	Section National Secretary (Commercial Services)

MOTION	LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
174. "Train to Gain"	CEC Organisation Committee (Nat Organising Dept)
175. ELQ Funding 176. Social / Political Studies Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
C18 Royal Mail & Post Office Closures	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
179. The Morning Star	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee CEC Organisation Committee (Comms)
180. I.C.E	CEC Organisation Committee (Comms)
181. Communications Data Bill Carried with CEC Qualification 182. Financial Elder Abuse Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
183. Safety, Sex Work and Human Rights Carried with Statement	CEC Organisation Committee (Equality)
185. Housing C19. Local Authority Housing Carried with CEC Qualification 189. Community Housing Carried with CEC Qualification 191. Housing 192. Tenants Management Organisation 193. Council Tax	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
194. Work Environments in Community NHS and Social Work	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
195. New Labour's Health Plan – Undermines Founding Principles of NHS	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
199. Hospital Parking C20. Hospital Parking	Section National Secretary (Public Services)
C21. Care of the Elderly C22. Care Workers	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee Section National Secretary (Public Services)
211. Paying Grandparents	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
213. Domestic Fuel to be Zero Rated VAT 214. Severe Weather Payments 216. Winter Fuel Allowance For Families with Disabled Children	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
217. Claiming Unemployment Benefit 218. Unclaimed Benefit	CEC Organisation Committee (Executive Policy)
219. Free Television Licence for Everyone at State Retirement Age	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee
220. Support for Gaza Carried with CEC Qualification 222. Gaza War Carried with CEC Qualification 224. European Trade Agreement with Israel Carried with CEC Qualification 225. Burma 226. Banks & Arms Trade Carried with CEC Qualification	CEC Political, European & Int. Committee

Policy Work

Ida has responsibility for progressing policy on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) which celebrated its 10th Anniversary on 1st April 2009. This has involved co-ordinating the GMB response to two Low Pay Commission Consultations; a general one covering the annual review and one on recommendations for an Apprentice Minimum Wage (written together with Charlie King). We gave oral evidence to the Low Pay Commission in support of both submissions. Ida also attends regular meetings with TUC, BIS (Department of Business, Innovation & Skills), HMRC, Civil Servants and Policy Officers on NMW issues: Tips, Enforcement, Apprentices and Guidance.

Ida co-ordinated and submitted a response to BIS on their Consultation on Service Charges, Tips, Gratuities and Cover Charges in February 2009 and GMB were one of the four Trade Unions who submitted a formal response.

There is long standing GMB Policy to campaign for tips to be excluded from National Minimum Wage and we were delighted to see that when the results of the Tips consultation were published in May 2009, GMB had been successful in influencing the change in the Regulations. As a result the Government made changes to National Minimum Wage Regulations to exclude service charges, tips, gratuities and cover charges in payment of the National Minimum Wage, from 1st October 2009 and this will affect around 60,500 workers.

To follow this through, Ida has represented GMB as part of a Stakeholder Group of consumer groups, unions, (Unite and TUC), employers and Government to produce a cross sector Code of Best Practice on Service Charges, Tips, Gratuities and Cover Charges which was launched on October 1st 2009. As part of this process, Ida had some useful feedback and case studies from Adrian Baker on Casinos and Gill Bigwood (President, GMB London Hotel and Catering Branch) and Raj Gill on practices in the hospitality sector. There will be information made available on the new GMB website and in Regional Magazines and Ida produced the GMB Charter for Fair Tips which can be downloaded from the site (www.gmb.org.uk)

As part of progressing Motion 72 to Congress 2009, Ida is working with the Commercial Services Section on a leaflet on Monitoring and Surveillance.

Dolores has been involved in developing a close working relationship with the Child Poverty Action Group, the leading charity campaigning for the abolition of child poverty in the UK and for a better deal for low-income families and children. Part of this work involved the GMB/CPAG Special Report to Congress 2009 on in-work poverty and policy issues on welfare reform proposals.

Consultations

Ida produced a response to the Department of Business, Innovation & Skills consultation on "Information Sharing between bodies responsible for enforcing workplace rights".

Dolores co-ordinated the GMB response on Reforming Financial Markets and ensured that the policy issues carried in the 2009 Congress CEC Statement on Manufacturing and the Economy were taken forward in this response. She attended the FSA Conference in June on Consumers and the Recession and put forward a number of points for them to take forward in providing advice and assistance for redundant workers.

Central Arbitration Committee Applications and Voluntary Recognition Agreements

The Section produces a regular report for the CEC on Voluntary Agreements. Over the year, GMB Sections and Regions and have reported 35 new Recognition agreements. All agreements received have been scanned and have been added to a shared database which is available to all GMB Regions.

Special Projects

The section assists the General Secretary by undertaking special projects and duties as directed, producing presentations, briefings, statistics, profiles and research intelligence for the General Secretary to use in internal or external meetings. In February 2009 Ida assisted the with the preparations for the third annual Full Time Officers meeting in Edgbaston and assisted the General Secretary at the event which took place on 20th March.

Information Systems and Other Resources for Bargaining & Representation

Ida Clemo continues to monitor and train Regional and National staff in the use of research information systems ensuring that these products are used effectively for bargaining support, recruitment initiatives and company research. This is part on ongoing initiative by the Senior Management Team to provide officers with immediate access to bargaining and information tools. As of the end of the year, training has been completed in 8 regions and to date over 80 staff and officers have been trained. Ida has also rolled out training on the GMB Membership system to staff at National Office.

To support this initiative, Ida updated and distributed a Regional Guide to Information Systems Leaflet to inform them of the resources they have access to for organising and bargaining support and also negotiated GMB member access an online LRD Publications system.

Ida has been part of the National Office Project Team set up to approve the design and implementation of the new GMB National website which will be launched in Spring 2010.

TUC Congress 2009

Dolores and Ida ensure that Congress decisions and GMB policy are taken through to TUC Congress. They are also responsible for supporting the GMB delegation and raising the GMB profile at TUC. They planned and organised (with assistance from colleagues in the General Secretary's office) the GMB stand and office at TUC Congress. TUC Congress was once again successful for the GMB delegation and GMB was again at the forefront of debate.

The team co-ordinated and provided 31 speech drafts for the delegation and liaised with the TUC to ensure that GMB speakers were called. From the GMB delegation of 64, GMB had 26 speakers (18 Male, 8 Female), moved 4 motions, seconded 9 motions, opposed one, raised a question on the GC report and put questions to Gordon Brown and Ed Milliband. Notable highlights were the General Secretary's vote of Thanks to Sheila Bearcroft the TUC President and GMB NPower Branch being presented with the TUC Organising Award.

GMB motions on Quality Pensions and Temporary Agency Workers were carried, as was the GMB Emergency Motion on National Grid and we withdrew our amendment on the Palestine motion in favour of a General Council Statement on the Middle East.

TUC Congress Motion	GMB Position	GMB Speaker
EM 6 National Grid: National Greed (GMB)	GMB Moved	Gary Smith
Comp 2 Temporary Agency Workers (GMB)	GMB Moved	Kevin Flanagan
12 Against racism, against homophobia (TUC LGBT)	GMB Moved	Nick Day
Comp 10 Defending Quality Pensions	GMB Moved	Paul Kenny
6 Bogus Self employment (UCATT)	GMB Seconded	Phil Davies
20 Save our Steel (Community)	GMB Seconded	Keith Hazlewood
36 Transport (URTU)	GMB Seconded	Bernie Taylor
38 UK indigenous coal reserves (NUM)	GMB Seconded	Gary Smith
44 Transport (URTU)	GMB Seconded	Ben Rankin
65 Probation service cuts (napo)	GMB Seconded	Rehana Azam
73 Workers in adult entertainment (Equity)	GMB Seconded	Cathy Murphy
78 Asbestos (ATL)	GMB Seconded	Allan Garley
81 High Heels (SCP)	GMB Seconded	Mary Turner
47 Air passenger duty (Balpa)	GMB Opposed	Mick Rix
16 Agenda for economic recovery (TUC Black Workers)	GMB Supported	Kamaljeet Jandu
17 Discrimination, recession and welfare reform (TUC Disability Conf)	GMB Supported	Elaine Daley
Comp 8 Manufacturing	GMB Supported	Emma Ritch
Comp 9 Reforming the financial and banking systems	GMB Supported	Steve Kemp
25 Attacks on terms and conditions (Community) (speak to Unite amendment on Diageo)	GMB Supported	Harry Donaldson
Comp 16 Defending the NHS	GMB Supported	Sharon Holder
Comp 21 Public Services and the Economy	GMB Supported	Brian Strutton
Comp 4 Enforcement of fair and safe employment rights (NASUWT)	GMB Supported	Edna Rolph
Question to Gordon Brown	Question	Malcolm Sage
Question to Ed Milliband	Question	Lynn Brook
GC Report Para 3.12 Transport	Question	Charlie King

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION DEPARTMENT

The twin principles of organising and bargaining remained firmly at the core of the GMB strategy for the Equality and Inclusion (E&I). Since Congress 2009 there has been greater alignment and integration into the GMB@Work strategy. Our journey for achieving equality through inclusion continued to make progress and this period can be described as 'bedding down'.

There were a number of challenges during the year. One of these was the review of the structure and selection for the GMB National Equality Forum, secondly, lobbying on the Equality Bill and thirdly launching the Respect@Work as well as organising the highly successful first GMB National Equality conference.

At Congress 2009 in Blackpool, a presentation was given to Congress on the progress made in the delivery of the E&I strategy and in partnership with external organisations two successful fringe meeting were organised. These were:-

- Refugees Status - with the Refugees Council
- Migration – with Migration Rights Network

National Equality Forum (NEF)

The National Equality Forum met on six occasions during the year to oversee the work on Equality through inclusion. The members of the Forum were:-

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| • Dotun Alade-Odumosu (Vice Chair) | Race |
| • Nick Day | LGTB |
| • Sharon Harding | Gender |
| • Tony Hughes | Disability |
| • Harpal Jandu | Race |
| • Lorraine Parker | Gender |
| • Emma Ritch | Youth |
| • Alex Sobel | Youth |
| • Brian Shaw, (Chair) | LGTB |

The NEF also established working parties to navigate the delivery of a number of projects. This included:-

- National Equality Conference Working Party (WP).
- Review of the NEF WP.
- TUC Equality Conference WP
 - Black Workers Conference
 - LGTB Conference
 - Young Members
 - Womens Conference
 - Disability Conference
- Workplace Equality Reps WP

Progress on E&I strategic priorities

Strategic Priority 1 - Increase membership

Leadership in Migrant Communities Project

Under the umbrella of this Migrant Workers Project and in partnership with the National Organising Team (NOT), the E&I department developed the 'Leadership in Migrant Communities Project' and successfully secured funding from the Unions Modernisation Fund (UMF3) to take this project forward.

This two year project is designed to break down barriers to employment rights knowledge in particular migrant communities. This will be achieved by working with these particular communities and building up relationships with community leaders and identifying the training needs and providing training that builds skill, knowledge and leadership. A project worker to deliver this project was appointed. This project has a community engagement approach that reconnects GMB to a proud tradition of working with vulnerable communities.

As well as representing GMB at a TUC Conference on developing a network for Polish migrant workers, the Polish booklet 'The How to Live and Work in the UK' was circulated to all GMB Regions.

Recruitment

A presentation about GMB was given to perspective Councilors in the London Borough Newham by the National officer, the local Branch Secretary and a local Officer. Following a question and answer session, twelve perspective candidates were recruited to the GMB. A follow up plan to recruit the other 'non union' candidates were put in place.

In partnership with the Political Department and the local Officers a Workplan has been put in place with Tamils for Labour to recruit the large number of workers of Tamil origin at Katsouris in West London.

Strategic Priority 2 - Bargaining

Respect@Work

Respect@Work project was developed. This incorporated a generic Respect at Work policy, supported by a communication plan and a training package for members as well as a joint training for management and GMB reps. The policy was designed to define 'acceptable and unacceptable' behaviour at work and outlines a clear process for addressing any complaints.

This raises the profile of the GMB and will enhance the potential of recruiting new members. The GMB Respect@Work model agreement has been one of the most download documents from www.gmb.org.uk. Since its launch to GMB members and GMB post holders in the November 2009 magazine it has been accessed 1,910 times.

Industrial

With Regional Officer and local branch reps, a presentation on Respect@Work policy given to the HR and Training Directors at Katsouris, in West London. Further meetings have been arranged to develop a training and communications plan as well as agreeing a policy. This will potentially benefit over two thousand employees of Katsouris and raising the potential for further consolidation of GMB membership.

Civil penalties regime.

A joint GMB and Migration Rights Network Negotiator's Guide was developed. This was designed to -

- To increase the awareness and understanding of trade union negotiators and activists about the policy and legal framework arising from the civil penalties regime.
- To help them understand the practical issues that arise from document checks and workplace raids
- To give advice on collective bargaining strategies to deal with workplace enforcement issues.

Legal Services Commission

A presentation on GMB Equality through inclusion strategy was given to the GMB Reps at Legal Services Commission (LSC) and the HR Director. This resulted in the GMB securing changes to proposed reorganisation by management.

GMB Workplace Equality Reps

A project to developing a network of was launched and funding for a project worker from UMF3 funding stream was secured.

This project is a response to the problems faced by the UK's estimated 5 million vulnerable workers. The aim is to train 45 early adopters from our existing lay equality officers in Birmingham and the West Midlands region to become workplace equality representatives. This will create a network of powerful advocates in the workplace to lead on equalities issues. They will also act as the beacon of innovation for the remaining branches in the region and throughout the GMB.

The specific aims of the project are to:

- Improve the ability of GMB to respond to the needs of vulnerable workers by the development of grassroots networks.
- Develop the professional competence of union officers and representatives, particularly equality reps.
- Develop of new services including: the provision of information services and training to raise awareness of employment rights and enforcement mechanisms;
- Develop the skills and training packages designed to meet the needs of vulnerable workers.
- Creation of leadership development and mentoring services for vulnerable workers.

- Develop of new models for working with employment agencies, enforcement bodies and other organisations to promote the interests of vulnerable workers.

Strategic Priority 3 – Campaigning

The Equality Bill continued its journey through Parliament and at the time of writing, the Bill was likely to go into ‘wash up’ where, due to the time constraint all the outstanding Government Bills are prioritised through consultation with the opposition parties. GMB continued to lobby Government on the Bill, specifically:-

Equal Pay

There was continued engagement with different Government Departments and Ministers on highlighting the GMB concerns on Equal Pay, including meetings with Harriet Harman MP the Leader of the House and Minister for Women and Equality, Barbara Kean MP and Maria Eagle, Minister in the Justice Department.

There was standing room only at a very successful GMB fringe meeting on ‘Can we afford equal pay?’ organised at the Labour Party Conference in Brighton. The meeting was chaired by Mary Turner, the GMB President and the panel of speakers included Harriet Harman Minister for Equality and the Leader of the House; Helen Jackson from the Women’s National Committee; Vera Baird Solicitor General and Angela Mason, Chair of the Fawcett Society and GMB National Officer for Equality.

Equality Reps

A Parliamentary briefing was developed and circulated to key MP’s calling for provision in the Equality Bill to provide statutory support for workplace equality reps (similar to the legislative support for workplace Health and Safety reps.) The Chair of the Parliamentary Human Rights Committee, Andrew Dismore the MP for Hendon North was lobbied directly.

Also a NEF member was the key note speaker at Equality Reps Conference organised by the TUC

GMB also responded to consultation on the proposals for the Specific Duties to promote equality contained in the Bill and continued to respond to the development of Equality and Human Rights Commission’s code of practice on Equal Pay

Other proposals in the Bill included: -

- Applying anti Age Discrimination to the supply of goods, facilities and services and to people over the age of 18;
- A new single public sector duty for equality which would cover six strands of discrimination and be outcome focused;
- Public Procurement – the Government buys in £160 billion of goods and services are from the private and voluntary sectors. This leverage would be used to promote equality.
- A new Public sector duty for Equality, incorporating the existing duties on gender, race & disability and adding duty to promote faith, age awareness and sexuality.
- Transparency in pay structures to highlight the Gender pay gap, EMG Employment Gap and Disability Employment Gap. This would have a Private Sector focus. However there has been little chance of securing mandatory pay audits;
- Limited positive action; and Strengthened Enforcement procedures.

Labour Party

As a member of the Labour Party BNP Task Force and a member of Black and Minority Ethnic Labour (BaME Labour), the National Officer developed:

1. General Election Strategy targeting the ethnic minority community
2. A list of Labour Party achievements for the Ethnic Minority Community.

The National Officer met with GMB young activists to develop a strategy for greater engagement and addressing issue faced by young workers.

TUC Congress

A number of GMB delegates addressed TUC Congress on equality motions, as well as speaking at two popular fringe meetings which were chaired by the National Officer.

Strategic Priority 4 - Enhance Profile

Full GMB delegations participated in the annual TUC equalities conferences in 2009. These covered the following equality strands: - Women, Black Workers, LGTB, Disability and young members.

Three GMB motions were selected by TUC Equality Conferences to be debated at the TUC Congress. GMB NEF members spoke to the motions at the TUC Congress.

The National Officer and the Polish organiser for Southern Region represented GMB at a Polish Embassy Reception to mark the end of the Second World War.

The National Officer was a key note speaker at:-

- Stephen Lawrence Ten Years on Conference
- Barking & Dagenham Black History Month
- Progressive London Conference.
- Bangladeshi for Labour public meeting
- Tower Hamlets campaign for Mayor.
- Institute of Contemporary Ideas on Immigration.
- Launch of the LGTB History month

Press coverage

GMB were able to secure press coverage on many occasions during the year including:-

- Press release on report by John Denham on Ethnic Minorities in Britain
- Interviewed on Sunrise and Asian Network Radio.

Attended meeting of the Labour Party's Women's and Race Equality Committee.

Strategic Priority 5 - Organisational Equality

Monitoring

During the year, two monitoring reports were conducted.

1. Report on Make up of delegation to Congress (09).

A total of 351 forms were distributed to delegates and CEC members. 172 completed forms were returned - A return rate of 49%.

Key findings of the report showed that of the all the delegates to Congress 09:-

- 36 % were women – which is a 6% increase in women delegates/CEC between 08 and 09
- 80% were between age of 45 – 65 in 2009 (increase of 3% on 2008)
- 2% were between the ages of 16 – 34.
- 13% classified themselves as disabled
- 72 % were Christian (including CofE and Catholic)
- 2% of delegates / CEC self identified themselves as Gay or bisexual
- 95% of delegates / CEC self identified themselves as 'White British or White other'
- 5% could be identified as 'ethnic minority'.

2. Report on composition of GMB Employees

In late June 09 all GMB Employee were asked to complete monitoring forms to self classify themselves on job, gender, age, disability, faith, sexual orientation and ethnic group.

630 forms were sent out and 459 completed forms were returned -A response rate of 72.8 %. Of the 459 completed forms, 201 were men and 258 were women.

The results showed that of the GMB employees:-

- 60% were over the age of 45
- 5% considered themselves to be disabled
- 71% said they had a recognised faith.
- 88% considered they were heterosexual
- 2% considered themselves to be from an ethnic minority community.

The findings of the report have been tabled with the Senior Management Team and Human Resources for progress.

Governance

National Equality Forum (NEF)

The NEF put forward proposals for review of NEF structures and widely consulted upon the proposals

Motion 14 to Congress 2009 from Midland & East Coast Region called for a review of the selection process and a revision of the National Equality Forum (NEF) structure to ensure fair representation from all regions and equality strands. The National Equality Conference in May 2009 had also debated this matter and agreed to initiate a review of the work and structure of the Forum.

Following Congress 09, a presentation was made by the National Equality Officer to the July meeting of the CEC Organisation Sub committee on the process and timetable for the review. A number of options for the revised structure were discussed at the July 09, October 09 and December 09 meeting of the NEF. Six options were put forward for consideration to the November 2009 meeting of the Senior Management Team (SMT).

The issues to be addressed included:

1. Representation
 - from all the Regions (motion 14)
 - from the six Equality strands.
 - from the Retired Members Association (RMA)
2. Constitution
 - NEF membership tenure
 - Number of meetings
 - Annual Conference
3. Linkage between Regional Equality Forums (REF) and NEF

It was proposed that:-

- The composition of the NEF will include representatives from each of the six equality strands as set out in the CEC Report to Congress 2007 "Progressing Equality Issues in the GMB"
- Each region will have a representative on the NEF
- The central focus of the Forum's Work will be the integration of GMB@Work across the equality strands
- Regional Equality Officers will not be included on the NEF but co-opted if required

Specifically:-

- The NEF will consist of a maximum of 16 members comprising of:-
 - **1 representative of the six equality strands** (gender, race, disability, sexuality, migrant and youth.) –by a national selection panel based on skills, experience and commitment. (6)
 - **1 representative from each region** - nominated by the Regional Equality Conference, and endorsed by the Regional Committee. (9)
 - **1 nomination from the retired members.** (1)

Further the NEF will:-

- have a membership tenure of 2 years
- meet quarterly
- arrange an Annual GMB National Equality Conference

This proposal is the subject of a report to Congress 2010.

Regional Equality Forums (REF's)

In some Regions managing the change from the old committee structures (Regional Race Equality Committees and the Equal Opportunities Committee) to the new Regional Equality Forums (REF) remains one of the key challenges.

Following presentations of the GMB E&I strategy in the Regions, the following is a summary of status of REF's

Birmingham *	Scotland	South West
East Midlands	London - establishing workplace equality hubs.	Northern
North West *		
Southern *		
Yorkshire		

* donates second Regional Equality Conference.

GMB Equality Officers

The delivery of the E&I strategy and role of regions and Officers, was the subject of two meetings of Regional Equality Officers during 2009/10.

Congress 2011

Since last Congress, though resources have been limited, considerable progress has been made in rolling out and implementing the GMB E&I strategy across the Regions and the Industrial Sections. This period can be described as 'bedding down'.

A significant number of challenges remain for the coming year. These include:-

- Closer working with the National Organising Department and integration into GMB@Work
- Ensuring all regions have Regional Equality Forums (structures) up and running and aligned to NEF.
- Selection of and servicing of the new NEF.
- Regional Equality Officers meeting regularly.

EUROPEAN OFFICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The GMB European office continues to campaign at EU and International level to improve employment and social rights and protections for our members and their families. This includes the national level implementation stages, for example of the Temporary Agency Workers Directive and the recast European Works Council Directive. The economic and financial crisis has dominated the political debate over the past year, and the GMB office staff have been monitoring and contributing to the wide debates at EU and International level, and reporting on the actions and policy that is being developed to tackle the deep problems. GMB has campaigned to ensure that the issues of employment, workers rights and their financial security are given a central focus in relation to the crisis. It has been a year of change and upheaval on the EU institutional front, with damaging results in the European Elections in June 2009. The European Union was not seen in a positive light with its dogged struggle to get the Lisbon Treaty ratified, which involved a second Irish Referendum, and leaving the change of EU Commission in limbo for several months. The European office continues to develop positive working relationships and solidarity with our trade union colleagues across Europe and the world in promoting labour rights, decent work, conditions and pay, and to strengthen trade union recognition and organisation.

CEC Political, European & International Committee – The Committee contributed actively to the campaign work around the European elections, to the discussions regarding the national implementation of the Temporary Agency Workers rights, and a wide range of other policy issues ensuring GMB maximises its scope to influence legislative proposals and policy development at national, European and International level. The Committee oversees the development of solidarity campaigns and practical support for trade union colleagues across the world. Following the recent partnership agreement signed in September 2009 with Costa Rican trade union SITRAP, this is now a permanent agenda item of the Committee.

2. PERSONNEL

European Officer, Kathleen Walker Shaw and European Research and Policy Officer, Sarah King, continue to represent the GMB's interests in Europe. Both are based in the GMB European office located at the centre of the EU decision making institutions.

3. GMB MEP GROUP

The European Parliament elections in June 2009 saw significant losses not just for the UK Labour Party, but for many socialist parties across Europe. The strength of the Socialist Group in the Parliament was considerably diminished, which led to a decision to unite with the Italian progressive democrats to form the Group of Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D), but is still well below the size of the majority centre right party. Clearly, this will affect our ability to gain support for trade union positions on policy in the coming five years. Worse still, the elections saw two BNP MEP's being elected to the European Parliament for the UK, Nick Griffin in the North West and Andrew Brons in Yorkshire, where GMB MEP Richard Corbett lost his seat by a narrow margin. Reflecting the policy of emergency motion 7 to Congress 2009, fighting the fascists in elections, GMB members joined colleagues from the Hope not Hate campaign in presenting a major petition with the message *Not in my name* to the European Parliament in Strasbourg in July 2009 on the day the two BNP members formally took up their positions, emphasising they do not represent us.

The GMB group is now reduced from seven to three MEPs: Stephen Hughes (North East – Group convenor), David Martin (Scotland) and Glenis Willmott (East Midlands). Robert Evans (London) and Glenys Kinnock (Wales) stood down at the 2009 election. Neena Gill (West Midlands) lost her seat together with Richard Corbett. Richard is now working as an advisor to the new EU President Van Rompuy.

GMB has a very positive relationship with our group of MEPs at European, national and regional level. The group continues to meet bi-monthly in Brussels, and our MEPs provide ongoing practical and political support for our campaigns and policy positions. GMB is delighted that Glenis Willmott remains leader of the European Parliamentary Labour Party, where she continues to do an excellent job. GMB MEPs played a key strategic role in ensuring the negative proposals to undermine workers' rights and protections in revision of the Working Time Directive did not succeed, and the proposals fell. We thank them for their solidarity and commitment in what was a very highly politically charged situation.

4. SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION

The GMB European office supports the work of National and Regional Secretaries and officers in organising and recruitment, particularly relating to multinational companies. This work regularly involves the European and International trade union sector federations, ETUC, as well as direct contacts with other European trade union colleagues, MEPs and with the EU institutions.

Comparing terms and conditions – The European office continues to support national and regional officers in comparing rights, conditions and redundancy terms across multinational companies where we have members, to support our bargaining agenda. Support and solidarity from trade union counterparts in other countries in providing information on their social plans, and access to their works councils, can change the complexion of negotiations and strengthen our bargaining position. Support from Finnish trade union colleagues in the ongoing negotiations on the restructuring of Finnforest group in particular, has been invaluable in influencing a more positive approach by management to the threat of job losses for GMB members in one of their UK sites.

Migrant workers – Implementation of the EU Temporary Agency Workers Directive will provide vital protections for both domestic and migrant agency workers in the UK and across Europe. It is clear that enforcing these rights will be difficult for individual workers without the support and resources of trade unions, and it is hoped this will be recognised by agency workers and will lead to further recruitment and organisation in this area.

Information, research and briefings - The European office provides regular briefings on a wide range of policy areas, and a monthly EU bulletin, which can also be accessed via the GMB website. The Brussels based officers also update members, officers and organisers on developments in EU legislation and rights, such as Working Time, Temporary Agency Workers Directive, EWC's and public procurement to assist them in their roles, and support the bargaining agenda.

5. RECOGNITION

Comparing trade union recognition across key target multinational companies is another function of the European office, which has proved valuable in supporting GMB bids for recognition. European trade union colleagues continue to show solidarity in offering support to our members, and raising the issue with management in their national works councils or committees when requested.

6. GMB EU LEVEL CAMPAIGNS AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

GMB has a positive reputation for raising our members' concerns effectively at national, European and International level, and influencing a large number of specific EU policy and legislative issues both within the EU institutions and at the highest level of UK Government:

Working Time Directive Revision – GMB actively campaigned at EU and national level to stop the damaging proposals to revise the Working Time Directive, which would have undermined the rights and protections of GMB members and workers across Europe. GMB and our European trade union colleagues were supported by a significant number of MEPs, our GMB group members being very influential in the decision not to back down on key principles in the conciliation position, which led to a failure to agree, and the negative proposals thankfully falling. GMB remains vigilant on this issue, as it is clear that the EU Commission and Member State governments, many of whom are currently in breach of the existing Directive on the issue of on-call time, will wish to reopen the issue with new proposals, along the same line of weakening rights and protections. The EU Commission has already tried to push through a hasty social partner consultation which was challenged by ETUC and MEPs. Meanwhile, GMB and our EU trade union colleagues are urging the EU Commission to take long overdue legal action against Member States not complying with the Directive.

GMB has also been working with our European Transport Union Federation colleagues to prevent the road transport working time protections being undermined as Governments and the EU Commission seek to undo the agreement in the original Directive that self-employed drivers will be covered from March 2009.

Temporary Agency Workers Directive – The UK Government began the consultation process towards implementing the Agency Workers' Directive in spring 2009. GMB submitted two detailed responses to the two consultation stages by Government, the second one being on the draft Regulations in December 2009. GMB raised concerns that the Government was not providing effective anti-avoidance measures, particularly in relation to calculating the 12 week qualifying period, and was adopting too narrow an approach to definitions on the scope of the provisions, pay and other equal treatment entitlements. In some areas we believed this would put the Government in breach of its obligations under the EU Directive, and we urged significant amendment and improvement in these areas. GMB submitted a motion to TUC Congress 2009 which was unanimously supported calling for strong protections and early enforcement of the Regulations, by spring 2010. A matter of weeks later, the Government announced it proposed to delay enforcement of the rights until October 2011, only weeks before the EU deadline for transposition into national legislation of December 2011. GMB was highly critical of this, considering it was against the spirit in which the TUC and its affiliates had entered into the social partner agreement allowing the Directive to be unblocked.

European Works' Councils – The European office worked closely with European trade union colleagues to strengthen the provisions of the recast European Works' Council Directive, which has now been adopted and must be implemented in the UK by June 2011. Several GMB EWC members attended a major ETUC conference on the new provisions in March 2009. GMB is also preparing a response to the UK Government consultation on draft Regulations launched in November 2009, where we have concerns that the positive progress made at EU level is not being properly reflected in the UK proposals. The European officer also continues to support national and regional officers and GMB EWC members in establishing and developing EWCs in multinational workplaces.

Public Procurement – In line with composite motion C8 on Remploy adopted by GMB Congress 2009, GMB continues to maintain an active campaigning profile in this area. The European officer, together with National Secretary Phil Davies, the Remploy stewards and consortium officers continue to urge Government and public authorities at all levels to use the EU provisions on reserved contracts status for awarding contracts to supported employment workplaces for people with disabilities. Regular meetings continue with Government Ministers and departments (Department of Work and Pensions – DWP, and Office of Government Commerce - OGC), and Members of the Welsh and Scottish Assemblies, with the aim of significantly increasing the number of public contracts being awarded to Remploy and other supported factories and businesses. GMB played an influential role in shaping revised guidance on reserved contracts produced by OGC early in 2009, and South Western Regional Secretary, Allan Garley, took a leading role in the guidance produced by the Welsh Assembly at the beginning of 2009. Further progress has been made with the Welsh Assembly putting out a framework contract under the reserved contract status early in 2009. In autumn 2009, OGC Buying solutions were preparing a major framework contract in four lots, also to be let under the reserved contract status, which is due to be published in January 2010. GMB is actively encouraging public authorities at all levels to use these frameworks and bring more work into supported factories and businesses.

GMB raised concerns about the subcontracting of elements of reserved contracts to non-supported businesses, and is calling for a code of conduct on this issue to be established to protect the integrity and positive intent of the contract status, which is to provide good quality work for people with disabilities. OGC and DWP have signalled support for our initiative.

GMB continues to campaign to ensure that wider social, employment, ethical and environmental considerations are included in public contracting. GMB co-ordinated a joint EU trade union response to the EU Commission consultation on an EU guide to Social Procurement in May 2009, which led to the EU Commission making positive amendments in a number of areas where we had concerns. The final guide is due to be published in spring 2010.

The European officer is a member of a small TUC delegation which meets quarterly with OGC policy officials on wider procurement policy developments to ensure workforce, employment and social issues are properly considered.

Defending trade union rights, freedoms and labour standards – with substantial active support from our GMB MEPs, the European officer continues to support the work of our international trade union colleagues in Costa Rica, in co-operation with Bananalink, in pressing complaints made under the EU's Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) trade agreements regarding breaches of labour standards and freedom of association. Dismayed that the EU renewed Costa Rica's trade status in January 2009 without formal investigation into its human rights and labour standards record, GMB continues to campaign for the EU Commission to act. A number of letters have been sent to the EU Trade Commissioner and President of Costa Rica by Stephen Hughes MEP, and he has convened meetings with senior EU Commission trade officials. As a result of this pressure, the EU Trade Commissioner has intervened in ensuring the EU Commission delegation in Costa Rica meet with the trade unions there as soon as possible. A meeting is scheduled for January 2010. Similar pressure is being brought to bear through the ILO channels.

GMB had also supported investigation and pressure to be put on Colombia in the review process of their GSP+ status, in co-operation with the Justice for Colombia campaign. Again, the EU Commission renewed their trade status without formal investigation.

The European Parliament has extended powers in relation to trade agreements under the Lisbon Treaty, and the European officer is working with MEPs to explore how this can be maximised in challenging breaches of human rights, labour standards and trade union rights and freedoms, and is contributing to reports on these issues which will go through European Parliament in the first half of 2010.

Anti-discrimination – progress on the proposed Equal Treatment Directive which would prohibit discrimination outside the workplace on grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation stalled during 2009. The European Parliament's Employment Committee Opinion included an amendment restricting the possibility of age and disability discrimination in access to financial services which GMB worked with MEPs to secure. Also welcome were amendments to include multiple discrimination within the scope of the Directive, and to use policy such as public procurement to encourage providers to purchase and design products and services that are accessible. In April 2009, the European Parliament adopted its report in favour of the proposed Directive. The amendments regarding the use of age or disability criteria in the provision of insurance, and other financial services, made it through to the final report, though GMB would have preferred tighter restrictions. The Directive has since been blocked in Council by Member States' governments. Several Member States have been resistant to the Directive throughout, including Germany which has said it does not want additional regulatory burdens on business and that its legislation is already adequate. Unanimous agreement is required for the Directive to be adopted.

In July, the European Office responded to the Government Equalities Office public consultation on the draft Directive. We highlighted the issues of concern, particularly in relation to age and disability discrimination in the provision of financial services, and urged the Government to adopt a positive negotiating position which strengthens, rather than weakens, the Directive.

Cross-border healthcare – the European Commission's controversial proposals for a Directive on the application of patient's rights in cross-border healthcare have raised serious concerns that it is an attempt to liberalise the public health sector by the back door, encouraging an internal market for healthcare. The proposed measures are a disproportionate response to the issue of cross-border healthcare, which the Commission admits only affects a tiny percentage of EU citizens. GMB has been working with public sector sister unions and the European Federation for Public Service Unions (EPSU) to raise awareness of these concerns and to try to secure key amendments to the proposals. The European Parliament narrowly adopted its report on the proposed Directive in April 2009. Amendments proposed by Socialist, Green and European United Left MEPs, which would have improved the Commission's proposals, were not adopted and the Socialist Group therefore abstained from the final vote. EU Health Ministers were unable to agree on a common position when they met in December 2009. EPSU and HOSPEEM (the European Hospital and Healthcare Employers Association) are urging governments to assess the draft Directive in the light of the new

public service provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in December 2009. The European Office has been approached by Helen Eadie MSP, with a view to providing a trade union perspective on the issue to other MSPs.

European Court of Justice Cases/Posted Workers - the fall-out from the Viking, Laval, Rüffert and Luxembourg Cases continued during 2009. In line with motions 52, 53, 54, 56 and 57 adopted at GMB Congress 2009, GMB stepped up its long established campaign for the UK Government to implement the Posting of Workers Directive (PWD) more effectively to prevent undercutting of terms and conditions. At European level, GMB and our European trade union colleagues continued to call for a revision of the PWD and the adoption of a Social Progress clause to deal with the effects of the judgments. In January 2009, the European Commission angered Socialist MEPs and trade unionists by rejecting the European Parliament's call for a legislative response to the problem. Instead, the Commission proposed a task group to consider the impact of the decisions, and urged the EU social partners to consider the issue, both seen as delaying tactics, and have made little progress during the year.

The negative effects of the cases became very clear in the early part of 2009 with the refinery disputes in the UK in reaction to exploitation and undercutting of terms and conditions in the sector. GMB played a major role in resolving the disputes, whilst warning that the unrest would re-emerge if the underlying problems were not seriously addressed. GMB is grateful for the magnificent support and solidarity we received from European trade union colleagues during the disputes, which was invaluable in showing that workers will not be set against each other by divisive employers seeking to exploit us.

The European Commission defensively tried to suggest that the disputes at the UK refineries were down to "protectionism". The General Secretary wrote to President Barroso pointing out that the crux of the disputes was, in fact, the imbalance of the social and economic dimensions in Europe, further fuelled by the ECJ cases, and called for the Commission to urgently address the issue. In April 2009, the European Court of Human Rights' (ECtHR) provided a more positive perspective on these issues with the judgment in Enerji Yapi-Yol Sen v Turkey, ruling that the right to strike is a human right and can only be limited in strictly defined circumstances. ETUC and GMB pointed out that the Viking case law is in contradiction with the ECtHR case law and therefore needs to be addressed.

In September 2009, GMB seconded a motion on posted workers adopted by TUC Congress, calling for the urgent revision of the Directive at EU level as well as domestic action. President Barroso, bidding for a second term in office, indicated to the European Parliament he would consider an "implementing" regulation on the Posted Workers Directive. In reality, the proposed regulation would focus only on implementation and enforcement. GMB and ETUC have made clear this would not address the major issues such as the restriction on trade unions' ability to take collective action to secure equal treatment for posted workers.

In December 2009, the Swedish Labour Court gave its final judgment in the Laval case. It ruled that the Swedish unions involved should pay 2.5 million Swedish Krona (£213,000) in damages and costs to the company, though it decided that the unions did not have to pay for economic loss as the company was unable to provide any evidence of financial loss. The Swedish Government has presented a legislative bill which will restrict trade unions' right to take collective action relating to posted workers' working conditions, other than regarding national minimum conditions, which the Swedish trade unions are challenging.

The ETUC's Expert Group on Posting of Workers, which includes the TUC, continues its work, and is expected to present its final report in March 2010.

Financial and Economic Crisis - measures to deal with the financial and economic crisis and recession continued to dominate the EU agenda throughout 2009. GMB and our European trade union colleagues ensured that social and unemployment concerns were also firmly on the agenda, emphasising that workers and ordinary citizens are the innocent victims paying the price for the bankers' recklessness and greed. Unions called for a New Social Deal, highlighting the fact that, even before the crisis, people were faced with rising inequality, with downward pressure on wages (while executive salaries spiralled ever higher), the growth in precarious jobs, attacks on workers' rights and collective bargaining, and the pressure to cut state welfare systems. People were now additionally faced with rising unemployment, massive public deficits and threats to cut public expenditure and/or increase taxes to pay for the bail out. GMB took part in the ETUC *Fight the Crisis* campaign in May 2009 during which some 350,000 people demonstrated in Madrid, Brussels, Berlin and Prague. GMB has worked with European trade union colleagues and MEPs to campaign for strong regulation of global finance at national, EU and International level.

The crisis has rekindled discussions on the establishment of a Financial Transaction Tax, which has been gaining support among several EU Member States.

At the end of the year, unemployment in the Euro zone reached 10% with predictions that it would continue rising until at least 2011. The European trade union movement's New Year's message to the EU Leaders was "You've rescued the bankers, now what about us?"

Hedge Funds and Private Equity – the Socialist Group in the European Parliament was the first political group to act in response to the alarm bells GMB and other European trade unions had been ringing about the dangers of unregulated private equity and hedge funds. Reluctantly, the European Commission was forced to come forward with a proposal for a Directive on Alternative Investment Fund Managers (AIFM), including hedge funds and private equity firms, in April 2009. The proposals were meant to increase transparency and the supervisory mechanisms, but had a major weakness in that they failed to regulate the funds themselves. GMB and our European trade union colleagues called for this loophole to be closed. The main issues for trade unions include: the need to regulate the funds themselves, how workers can be better protected, and preventing asset stripping. The financial services sector has been lobbying heavily for limited regulation. GMB and our EU trade union colleagues are working in co-operation on proposals for amendments reflecting our key priorities, which we hope will be supported by MEPs as the proposals progress through European Parliament in 2010.

Lisbon Treaty – the long running saga of the Lisbon Treaty (formerly the Reform Treaty) concluded with the Treaty coming into force on 1 December 2009. Ireland held a second referendum in October 2009 following a compromise reached in June 2009 between EU Heads of State and Government providing legal guarantees requested by the Irish Government in exchange for holding the second poll. GMB and European unions hoped this process would address the imbalance on the social and workers rights, but were disappointed. Whereas legally binding guarantees on issues such as taxation policy, the right to life, and family and education were incorporated into a protocol to be attached to the Treaty, no more than a token gesture was made to workers' concerns raised by the Irish. EU leaders agreed a "solemn declaration on workers' rights, social policy and other issues" which is not legally binding.

EU Jobs and Growth Strategy – in November 2009, the European Commission launched a public consultation on the future "EU 2020" strategy to succeed the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs, which expires at the end of 2010. GMB responded critically to the approach and weakness of the document, and presented our key priorities for action in this area. A decision on the final strategy is expected at the June 2010 European Council.

7. SUPPORT FOR TRAINING, EU FUNDED PROJECTS, DELEGATIONS

The European office continues to offer support and guidance to GMB regions and sections in developing EU funded projects. The staff participate in a range of conferences, meetings and training sessions relevant to our work, and in support of GMB members and officers.

The European office provided advice and support for a joint GMB/CGT French union project proposal for European funding to develop trade union co-operation in the nuclear industry. The proposal needs further work before re-submitting in 2010.

Assistance was given to Manufacturing Section colleagues for the submission of a bid for European interregional funding for a skills and employment project to rebuild the Medway Queen paddle steamer.

Our links with Danish trade union colleagues continue, and visits by their delegations provide a valuable opportunity to exchange information on industrial relations and organising.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

Introduction

GMB continues to be a player on the international stage as befits an organisation at the forefront of the global campaign for social and economic justice. As well as affiliating to and participating in a number of bodies involved in various activities around the globe, the Union is also pursuing its own agenda by assisting sister trade unions in projects with clear aims and objectives designed to bring tangible gains to their members. GMB's international work is not separate from its domestic commitments, nor is it of secondary importance. In today's globalised economic environment where transnational companies' only loyalty is to their shareholders, GMB's operations cannot be constrained by national borders.

Shipbreaking

GMB's proposal for a joint project on ship breaking with the Mumbai Port Trust Dock and General Employees Union was accepted by the Department for International Development (DFID) in May 2009.

The aim of the project is to lift workers, many of them migrants lacking local languages, out of poverty through trade union organisation and representation. As part of the scheme, the millennium goals on child education, adult literacy and access to health services were prioritised to cover the families of those working in this dangerous occupation. The DFID grant is worth £445,000 over five years and will be used in Mumbai and Alang. There is a delay in disbursement of the funds owing to regulations put in place by the Indian authorities to prevent money laundering.

The project is currently being headed up by London Region's Hitten Vaiyda whose language skills are invaluable. Hitten replaced Joni McDougall who was instrumental in developing the initiative before leaving GMB in the summer 2009.

Costa Rica

GMB signed a ground-breaking agreement with Costa Rican trade union, SITRAP at TUC Conference in Liverpool in September 2009. SITRAP, who organise and represent workers on banana and pineapple plantations, have had a long relationship with the London Region but this agreement moves relations between our two organisations onto a higher level and provides a template for similar link ups along international supply chains. 25% of the bananas sold in the UK come from Costa Rica and GMB/SITRAP can lay claim to representing workers all the way from farm to supermarket. Costa Rican trade unions are under sustained attack from an unsympathetic government firmly wedded to unsustainable neo-liberal social and economic policies within the framework of the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

There will be elections in Costa Rica in February 2010, but the Presidential candidate currently leading in the opinion polls, Laura Chinchilla, has pledged not to support legislation enhancing workers' rights and is instead supporting a bill that would legitimise alternative forms of workers' representation that would place her country outside the ambit of core ILO conventions. Trade unions grouped in the *Central Social Juanito Mora Porras* (CSJMP) have a long standing complaint submitted to the EU asking for a full formal investigation into Costa Rica's persistent failure to honour obligations enshrined in ILO conventions that they have ratified, specifically those relating to trade union rights and freedoms and labour standards, which form the body of conditions for benefitting from the Generalised System of Preferences plus (GSP+) preferred trading status. GMB and our Costa Rican trade union colleagues were bitterly disappointed that the EU Commission announced in January 2009 that it would renew the trading status, which was under review, without the investigation we had requested. GMB's Brussels office continues to assist the CSJMP by mobilising our sponsored MEPs in support of the complaint, and in urging the Costa Rican Government to accept the CSJMP suggested amendments to pending Labour law proposals in Costa Rica in relation to direct settlements and permanent committees. The CSJMP's International Secretary is Gilbert Bermudez who is also General Secretary of SITRAP and Coordinator of the Latin American Banana Workers Unions, COLSIBA.

GMB is preparing to host a visit to the UK from SITRAP young activist, Johana Thomas Rodriguez in January and February 2010, where she will follow a course in English, spend four weeks at GMB Head Office in Wimbledon, and a week in the GMB Brussels office. During her stay, a demonstration is being planned outside the Roman Catholic Cathedral to protest about the Church's participation in anti-trade union activities, and demand the closure of its Juan XXIII School in San Jose, which is dedicated to assisting companies in the techniques of union busting. GMB is also currently planning a five strong GMB delegation to Costa Rica for the beginning of March 2010, where GMB activists will see conditions on the plantations at first hand and participate in meetings with SITRAP.

EUROBAN

GMB is a longstanding member of the European Banana Action Network (EUROBAN), a body composed of trade unions and NGOs active along the banana supply chain. Meetings take place 3 or 4 times a year and attendees include representatives from COLSIBA and WINFA (Windward Islands Farmers Association). EUROBAN is widely recognised as an effective pressure group and advocate for workers' rights in the banana business and played a crucial role in the establishment of a multi-stakeholder forum for the industry at a meeting convened under the auspices of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) in Rome in December 2009. GMB participated in this unprecedented gathering, which brought together trade unions, NGOs, supermarkets and producers in working towards a sustainable banana industry.

Fairtrade

GMB is represented on the board of the Fairtrade Foundation and has a representative on the Fairtrade Labelling Organisation (FLO) certification committee which meets quarterly in Bonn. During 2009, GMB has supported FLO on a part time consultancy basis to assist them with the numerous problems they are encountering on Fairtrade plantations, particularly in Latin America. This was done at the behest of our colleagues in COLSIBA pending the appointment of a full time FLO employee to deal with labour relations in October 2009. In July 2009, GMB was present in Colombia for

the signing of a preliminary agreement between FLO, COLSIBA and the IUF. The “Bogotá Declaration”, as it came to be known, was supposed to herald a new improved relationship between FLO and the trade unions but, sadly, little progress has been made to date.

Guyana

GMB London Region has historic links with unions representing Guyanese sugar workers as a result of organising in Tate & Lyle. In 1977, GMB members refused to handle imports of sugar from Guyana because the unions there had called a strike and two officers from the Region went over to South America to lend support. More recently, GMB applied for a grant from DFID’s civil society challenge fund to assist the National Association of Agricultural Commercial and Industrial Employees (NAACIE) and the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) in training their representatives. The bid was not successful but it will be re-submitted in 2010 and, in the meantime, there is a possibility of obtaining money from another DFID scheme, administered by the TUC, to commence a smaller training programme.

GMB is currently preparing for a meeting with senior officials from GAWU and NAACIE in London scheduled for January 2010. They will be accompanied by Jorge Chullen, the IUF’s sugar specialist. GMB is considering support for the founding of a new network of unions representing sugar workers around the globe with the emphasis on the ACP countries who are in receipt of nearly three billion euros from the EU. The money is supposed to benefit all “stakeholders” and it is envisaged that Jorge will liaise with GMB’s Brussels office to see whether some of the money can be earmarked for the trade unions.

Colombia

The Union affiliates to Justice for Colombia and Richard Ascough sits on the Executive.

Colombia remains the most dangerous place in the world for trade unionists. Since 1986 nearly 3,000 trade union members have been assassinated. GMB Southern Region jointly funds a campaign together with CWU and Thompsons Solicitors to assist families of political prisoners. Martin Sandoval, a trade unionist and human rights activist, has spent the majority of his life working to end the abuses within Colombia and bring those responsible to justice. In November 2008 as a result of his work, the Colombian regime jailed Martin Sandoval. He was never put on trial, never convicted of any crime, nor told when he might be released.

Shortly after Martin’s arrest, British trade unionists, in particular GMB, began campaigning for Martin to be freed. Martin was released from prison in May 2009. Martin visited Britain in November 2009, and Richard Ascough along with others spoke at a meeting to welcome him to the UK. Martin was very clear that his release was a clear example of international solidarity making a difference.

The Union has also been using its influence within the European Parliament to campaign against the conclusion of EU trade agreements with Colombia. GMB wrote to the EU Commission Trade directorate to insist that there was a full formal investigation into abuses of trade union rights and freedoms, human rights, and labour standards in Colombia during the review process of the Generalised System of Preferences plus (GSP+) trade status. We were dismayed when the status was renewed in January 2009 without any serious enquiry. GMB is now working with other trade unions and the ETUC to block the conclusion of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Colombia in relation to the continuing violence against trade unionists and abuse of human and trade union rights and freedoms. The Uribe Government has begun a counter lobbying campaign in the European Parliament where they attempt to mislead the international community by sponsoring unrepresentative “trade unionists” from small organisations like the agro-industrial and livestock sector to promote supposed advances made by the Government in human rights, to promote the early conclusion of the FTA. The exact opposite of the position held by legitimate Colombian trade unions affiliated to the ITUC. GMB and our trade union colleagues in EU are exposing these devious practices.

Venezuela Solidarity Campaign

GMB affiliates to the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign which changed its name in the course of 2009 from Venezuela Information Centre. Richard Ascough sits on the Executive committee.

During 2009, the campaign organisation has concentrated on defending the Chavez regime in Venezuela, which is under threat from outside pressures. In particular, this centred on the crucial discussion on the US militarization of Latin America and the threat to progress this represents. For this reason the organisation also campaigned on the coup in Honduras, which had displaced the democratically elected President.

Cuba Solidarity Campaign

The Union affiliates to the Cuba Solidarity Campaign and Richard Ascough sits on the Executive. Despite the election of Barack Obama in 2008, the US continues to pursue an anti-Cuban line, singling Cuba out as one of the countries described as “state sponsored terrorism”. The UK Government continues to play a significant role in influencing European policy, and plays a negative role in relation to Cuba.

The campaign continues to work on behalf of the Miami Five who remain in prison in US with their families still not able to visit them.

Throughout 2009, the campaign has celebrated 50 years of the Cuban Revolution with a number of exhibitions, concerts and seminars, which GMB has supported.

Middle East

Sheila Bearcroft represented the GMB on a visit to the region in November 2009 as part of a British trade union delegation involving a number of the larger TUC affiliated unions co-ordinated by Trade Union Friends of Israel. The programme was intensive, and the delegation met with both Palestinian and Israeli trade union colleagues and visited both areas, holding discussions on key concerns in the region. Sheila reported that the visit gave an invaluable insight into the complexity of the situation in the region, and the challenges facing trade unions there, and that she was grateful to the GMB for the valuable and unforgettable experience.

GMB put an amendment to the motion on Palestine at TUC Congress 2009. GMB withdrew its amendment on the Palestine motion in favour of a General Council Statement on the Middle East, which was carried and takes precedence over the motion.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Introduction:

This has been a year of change and development for the department. John McClean relocated from the National Office in Wimbledon to the new facilities in Baldock, Hertfordshire, with some new ways of working required as a result, primarily in terms of remote management and closer co-ordination of diaries.

The department has a developing workload across a wide range of areas with environmental issues continuing to take up, understandably, greater time and resources. There is a need to ensure that those industrial and political areas that require support continue to receive it which was unfortunately impacted upon by a long term absence during the summer this last year.

Motions from Congress 2009 which required action are dealt with in the body of the text.

Asbestos

2009 has been dominated by the issue of Pleural Plaques, and unfortunately the year ended as it began with the failure to restore compensation for sufferers of the condition. The department had genuine hope that the decision to withhold compensation would be overturned, but this was not to be. There were a number of solid reasons to expect a positive decision.

The passing of the Damages (Asbestos-related Conditions) (Scotland) Act by the Scottish Government gave genuine hope that the UK Government would follow suit. However, the law was immediately challenged by the insurance industry, though this appeal was dismissed in 2010. This has created a position where those workers exposed in Scotland can claim compensation, but those working for the same company, performing the same type of work, in England and Wales are denied the right to claim. This has created an untenable legal position, which will need to be resolved by the Government.

For this reason, GMB and its MP's supported Andrew Dismore's Damages (Asbestos-Related Conditions) Bill, which was submitted as a Private Members' Bill, and would allow for compensation to be restored. The Bill ran out of parliamentary time in December 2009, but it has been resubmitted in both the Houses of Parliament, and GMB will continue to push for the Bill to be enacted into law.

GMB also brought two important new research findings to the attention of the Government, which we hoped would change the complexion of the debate. Firstly, research from America demonstrated that pleural plaques can cause damage to the ribcage, resulting in excruciating pain. This challenges the current belief that plaques are symptom less. Then a report from Japan showed that 1 in 8 workers with Pleural Plaques went on to develop lung cancer. The previous estimate was 1 in 100. This latter figure has been considered established medical fact and was a key part of the reason why the pleural plaques case failed in the House of Lords.

The department raised these reports with the Industrial Injuries Advisory Committee (IIAC), who agreed to consider it as a matter of urgency. We had hoped therefore that the presence of the Prime Minister at GMB Congress might result in a positive announcement on the issue, but Gordon Brown instead committed to a report by Summer Recess at the end of July 2009. To date, no response to the October 2008 consultation exercise has been received.

As a result, GMB again organised a very successful lobby of parliament in October which was addressed by the General Secretary, many MP's and Ministers, and served as a reminder to ministers that we would not let the issue fade away. To publicise the event, the department appeared on the Radio 5 show "Wake up with Money", as well as the Today Programme on Radio 4.

The department was also involved in filming a short video on pleural plaques for TULO (The Trade Union Liaison Organisation) in order to keep up the pressure on the Government. The video was shown at TUC Congress and Labour Party conference, and can be viewed on the TULO website.

The pleural plaques issue will need to be resolved definitively in 2010. We continue to press for a positive resolution, but are also actively considering our next steps should the right to compensation not be restored.

There was better news on the proposal to establish a dedicated National Centre for Research into Asbestos-Related Diseases (NCARD). Such a centre would help to identify both methods of discovering work-related cancers earlier, and develop palliatives and work towards a cure in the long term. This has been favourably received by ministers and has the potential to help reduce conflict on areas of dispute such as Pleural Plaques.

As with many public buildings, schools often contain asbestos. GMB has joined with the other trade unions within the education sector to raise awareness on this and to ensure that management are properly trained and that the presence and condition of the asbestos material is recorded. Some of the difficulties occur as there is often a reluctance to identify just who is responsible for the maintenance of the school infrastructure.

The department also got involved in the "Asbestos: Hidden Killer" campaign run by HSE in which trades people were specifically targeted. The department was also involved in helping HSE develop materials to raise asbestos awareness amongst trades people and in reviewing the initial outcomes from the campaign. This used the wider media, principally radio, and used trade organisations and builders merchants to issue literature to back the campaign up.

The department also had the sad duty of appearing on Radio 4's obituary programme "Last Word" in February, following the untimely death of asbestos campaigner Nancy Tait. Nancy, who launched and was the figurehead of OEDA, the Occupational and Environmental Diseases Association, was a close friend to the department, and her passing will leave a huge hole in the campaign against asbestos use.

Support to Sections

This has been a year of increased activity, as industry seeks to cope with the health and safety implications of the recession. The department continues to be involved with a number of initiatives on behalf of the Commercial Services, Manufacturing and Public Services Sections.

Commercial Services:

The department has seen the development of positive relations in the distribution arm of Asda over the course of the year. We agreed the terms for a national Health and Safety committee, which has met a number of times, and is beginning to develop a workable structure for consultation on health and safety matters. We also worked closely with the National Organising Team and the Communications department on a number of initiatives, primarily a new Accident Book for Asda members to record details of incidents.

In the utilities sector, the department continues to liaise with British Gas on the direction of 'Project Novo', a trial of new management practices with implications for health and safety. We convened several meetings with senior Safety

Representatives, and have met with management to discuss concerns. Consequently, we attended to discuss the new way of working with safety reps, and the feedback to date has been very positive. As a result, the department has taken a seat on the Project Novo steering group, and we will maintain an oversight role for the duration of the project. We also provided training to senior Reps in British Gas on the safety implications of Change Management Programmes, following a deterioration of industrial relations in the company.

Within National Grid, we met with management to negotiate the terms of new policies on Drug and Alcohol abuse, and wider well-being. The management approach in both cases has been at odds with GMB policy and members interests, and discussions are ongoing to attempt to resolve matters to mutual satisfaction.

In the Security Sector, G4S held their first Manned Guarding National Health and Safety Committee in January 2009. The department has provided advice and support on developing formal constitutions, sub-committees and policies. Early developments included a new policy on stress management, and involvement in a working group reviewing how attacks on members are investigated.

We are also working with G4S on the Cash and Valuables in Transit (CVIT) side of the business, on the development of an audit process to obtain ISO 18001 Certification, which covers the management and operation of health and safety systems. We have also been involved with the development of training on attack management, and have negotiated on the creation of a health and safety toolkit for all CVIT branches.

Within Loomis, the department has been involved in negotiations to curb a pilot scheme using lone workers instead of teams to deliver cash. We are now members of a working group to develop agreed terms of reference for a future trial, looking at new working methods, introducing new technology, and addressing ergonomic issues from one-person delivery.

The department has also been heavily involved in the development of the GMB SafeGuard campaign in the static guarding industry. We have been particularly active in developing campaign messages and materials to address the lack of investigation and support to members following attacks. The campaign will be rolled out in early 2010.

Aside from this, the department provided advice and support at a meeting with management, Reps and HSE Inspectors at London City Airport. The meeting sought a way forward on the management of fumes from aircraft at the airport, which are affecting staff working in the terminal building.

Manufacturing Section:

The department helped to negotiate a Drug and Alcohol policy for Hanson Heidelberg. Again, the management approach significantly diverged from GMB policy, and the department worked with the National Officer to rectify matters and publicise the nature of the disagreement. As a result, Hanson has reviewed their Drug and Alcohol policy, and increased the limits within the policy in line with the law on driving and blood alcohol levels. This is a significant victory, and the department thanks Allan Black for his considerable efforts in negotiating with Hanson management to effect this policy reversal.

Within the construction sector, we continued to provide support and advice to assist with recruitment of members in Bouygues, though the planned joint project with Bouygues and Construction Skills on Health and Safety and apprenticeships was put on hold due to the downturn in construction activity.

The department also assisted Keith Hazlewood in preparing GMB's argument to the IMF Congress that defeated a motion proposing relaxation of the international ban on asbestos use.

Public Services:

For Public Services section, the department spoke at a Veolia Waste H&S day, where the issue of proper consultation and worker involvement was emphasised. Veolia have been acquiring a number of companies in the waste and recycling area and as a large company it is important that we establish a good working relationship with them, involving the local reps.

As a part of developing this relationship, the department developed a joint bid with Veolia for HSE funding to operate a worker involvement project. At time of writing, we are still awaiting the outcome of this bid, and are hopeful of a positive result.

The department continues to play a leading role in the HSE WISH (Waste Industry Safety and Health) forum. The department has also met with the HSE and other public sector unions with a view to re-establishing a Local Authority Forum to raise health and safety issues.

There has also been a meeting with the HSE on re-establishing the Local Authority Forum, where health, safety and welfare issues were discussed on a national basis. Again this involved all the public service trade unions, including those in the education sector and at the time of writing we are still waiting a response from HSE. The upcoming year, where local authorities face the prospect of a tight financial squeeze, will need vigilance from our reps to ensure that H&S standards do not slip.

At the tail-end of the year, we were made aware of a significant issue in the ambulance service, concerning the use of Tetra Wave communications equipment. Tetra Wave has been linked to a number of health issues, though research into the health effects is scarce. As a result, the department has attended several meetings to discuss the nature and scope of the issue. We expect this to rise up the agenda in 2010.

Environment

This has been a year of activity on both the policy and practical levels on environmental matter.

Issues around the environment continue to move up both the political and industrial agendas. The “credit crunch” has forced the Government to look at creating green and sustainable jobs but many trade unions feel that more could be done, particularly at local level. The department continues to represent GMB on TUSDAC – the Trade Union Sustainable Development Action Committee – which continues to inform on Government policy and other trade unions position. In particular, the department played a key role in ensuring that worker involvement was a core part of the Government’s Carbon Reduction Commitment.

The department contributed to a chapter of the Green Alliance booklet, “Working on Change: The Trade Union Movement and climate change”. Our focus was on the opportunity for change in the public sector, particularly spotlighting the value of worker involvement and the critical contribution that Green Reps can make.

The department attended the launch of the NHS Sustainable Development Unit, where the issue of workplace environmental reps was raised. If these are accepted in the NHS this will give some leverage in getting these green reps into other workplaces.

We also responded to an ACAS consultation document on Time Off for Trade Union Duties, highlighting that the reference to environmental representatives in the consultation only acknowledged their voluntary existence and did not appear to offer statutory rights. No response had been received at time of writing.

The department spoke at the Trades Unions Against Climate Change event in London in February. John McClean addressed delegates in an opening speech, and then debated Heathrow expansion with John McDonnell MP in an afternoon workshop.

We sent a delegation to the TUC’s “Green Growth Conference”. TUC President Sheila Bearcroft chaired the event, and contributions were made by National Secretary Gary Smith, who spoke on Green Energy; and CEC Environmental Sub-committee member Jane McCann, who raised a question on renewable energy during the panel debate. The event was very worthwhile, and the lessons learned will be fed into the development of future GMB environmental initiatives. The department sent a delegation to the Anglo-German Trade Union Forum on ‘green jobs’ held at Frankfurt-am-Oder in Germany. The delegates, Ian Barrett, Jane McCann and Dan Shears, spend two days discussing the merits of environmental jobs, the creation of the green economy in mainland Europe and the differences between German and British practice on green issues. The event included a site visit to an assembler of wind turbines, and provided real food for thought on future ways to develop GMB’s organising agenda on environmental issues.

The department played a leading role in a series of meeting on low-carbon manufacturing and carbon leakage (Motion 147) in the run-up to the Copenhagen global summit in December. The department has been in close contact with civil servants in DECC and BIS to ensure that the issue is raised at the highest levels of Government. We are particularly concerned with the potential for the ceramics and steel industries to be negatively affected, with manufacture at risk of relocating to Northern Africa, and have worked hard to ensure that these sectors are given priority consideration in the formulation of Government environmental policy.

We have ensured that carbon leakage is on the agenda of the Just Transition Forum, on which General Secretary Paul Kenny sits, and the Trade Union Sustainable Development Action Committee (TUSDAC). We will also be writing to the relevant Government Ministers, Lord Mandelson, Ed Milliband and Hilary Benn, urging them to ensure that Government action is well-coordinated and safeguards British interests from carbon leakage.

The Green Working Party continued to meet during the year with a remit of keeping up with environmental developments externally, and seeking improvements internally. At the December CEC it was agreed that the programme for the coming year would include an audit of GMB to see if efficiency savings could be made by measuring energy output and possibly identifying wastage.

Policy Development

The year began with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) consulting on its' future strategy. The department attended the national launch and a number of regional events to ensure that there was a consistent message with particular reference to workers consultation and involvement. The strategy is relatively worker friendly, but is pitched at a very general level, and can be summarized as "motherhood and apple pie". The issue of resources for adequate enforcement remains high on our agenda and we press for proper HSE funding in our response.

The department also regularly attends meeting with other trade union specialist H&S officers under the TUC umbrella, where a cohesive approach to industrial health, safety and welfare problems are discussed and common positions reached.

The department contributed to the GMB response on the DWP Paper –"No-One Gets Left Behind", which is looking at the area of welfare reform. This followed the Dame Carol Black review last year which looked at occupational health provision and the return to work of those with disabilities. Frankly, unless there is proper provision of resources, sufferers from upper limb disorders (often classified as RSI) may well be forced back into the workplace only to injure themselves again.

We also provided evidence to Rita Donaghy's review of fatalities in the Construction sector, and were pleased to see so many of our suggestions included in her final report, "One Death is Too Many". We are hopeful that the Government will act upon the recommendations in the report, particularly on formal legal duties for Directors, and will continue to campaign for this objective.

The department responded to many consultation exercises in 2009. We submitted a response calling for the formal recognition of International Workers' Memorial Day by the Government, and this was achieved in January 2010 – a huge boost for health and safety campaigners across the UK. We supplied evidence to the Sentencing Guidelines Council on proposals for sentencing in Corporate Manslaughter cases, as the initial draft was less hard-hitting than GMB had hoped. We also replied to an HSE consultation proposing a register for all Tower Cranes, though no outcome to this exercise has been announced yet.

The department has also undertaken lobbying of policymakers and Ministers in order to advance motions from Congress. The CEC Environmental Sub-committee has explored in greater detail the skills, knowledge and experience needed for an Environmental Representative to work effectively, and are influencing the Department for Energy and Climate Change in developing a number of tools to help develop the role.

We have also continued to lobby DEFRA, DECC and BIS Ministers on the formal, legal recognition of the Environmental Representative role, with function comparable to those of a Health and Safety Representative (Motion 17).

We have discussed the issue of reportability of stress (Motion 36) with our fellow Union Health and Safety Specialists, many of whom share similar concerns, and have raised the matter with the Health and Safety Executive. The current HSE line is that there are no proposals to alter the RIDDOR regulations, following an aborted review of the Regulations in 2005-7; in addition, HSE does not consider "stress" to be a reportable disease, as it is an umbrella term for numerous conditions, including depression, fatigue and anxiety.

We have contacted Health and Safety Minister, Lord McKenzie, in order to formally raise these concerns and personally lobby the Minister.

We have discussed the application of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations and checkout equipment (Motion 37) with colleagues in USDAW, to look at previous campaigns, and have raised the issue more widely with sister unions to gain broad support for a possible campaign.

In our dealings with HSE, they have stated that cash registers do not fall under the DSE regulations, but should be subjected to ergonomic risk assessment under general health and safety law. We will again be contacting Lord McKenzie to formally object to this approach.

GMB has been heavily involved with the development of the UK approach on the REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) Regulations, and the department has been vocal at a number of stakeholder events in calling for HSE to work with their EU and international counterparts to ensure that all due steps are taken to restrict the use of endocrine disrupting chemicals to the lowest level possible (Motion 148).

The department has been heavily involved with the negotiation of a European Framework Agreement on the control of Sharps (needles) in the workplace. This was achieved in a period of six months, when the norm for developing agreements is several years. The department is very pleased with the scope of the Framework Agreement, which will see employers taking responsibility for the safe management of needlesticks and other sharp implements at work.

The department also represented GMB and the UK at an international meeting in Rotterdam to discuss how to tackle the issue of worker poisonings from fumigated freight containers. The department will be working with the Dutch union FNV and various regulators to develop solutions.

The project to support the dockworkers of Mumbai and Alang, emphasising the health & safety aspects relevant to ship breaking down stream industries has been submitted to the Department for International Development (DFID), and the response to the application from the civil service has been encouraging. Hiten Vaidya from London Region has joined the project team to add specific insight and language skills going forward.

Finally, the department also attended a meeting in Brussels on Third-Party violence to workers. We raised the issue of violence in the static guarding and CVIT sectors, and provided some feedback on the success of multi-agency approaches in Britain in tackling crime and reducing incident numbers. We supplied a detailed response to the European trade unions involved, and participated at a follow-up conference in Brussels in October.

Publications

The department published a number of new and revised guidance leaflets in 2009. These included the new Toxic Shock Syndrome leaflet, revised guidance on work-related stress, and a new version of the Care Homes leaflet.

We also contributed to the development of the GMB unofficial Accident Record Book, which was distributed widely across GMB, and is also available to download from the GMB website.

In addition there has been a regular production of electronic newsletters covering a wide range of topics.

This year they have been:

1. Drug and Alcohol Policies
2. Personal Protective Equipment
3. Swine Flu
4. Workers' Memorial Day
5. Review of Workplace Temperature – Call for Evidence
6. Towards Copenhagen – Trade Union Priorities
7. Pleural Plaques – Where are we now?
8. Sentencing Guidelines on Corporate Manslaughter
9. First Aid in the Workplace - Update
10. Lead – Evidence of Increased Health Risks

These newsletters are now placed on the website for Reps to access. Any ideas for topics are always welcome.

Conclusion

Many GMB representatives and members will be under increasing pressure at work in the coming year to deliver a satisfactory performance with diminishing resources and covering for redundant colleagues. It is important that any gains made in workplace health, safety and welfare standards over the years are not eroded. In particular there may be pressure to extend hours to dangerous levels, use equipment that is not properly maintained or be the victim of bullying and harassment. GMB safety reps are trained in dealing with relevant workplace issues and will continue to play their part with the backing of the department.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

PERSONNEL

The Department comprises Maria Ludkin, Legal and Corporate Affairs Officer, and Barry Smith, Legal Officer. Maria is currently on Maternity Leave. Sarah King, Legal Research and Policy Officer, is currently on secondment to the GMB European Office in Brussels.

GMB @ WORK: THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL OFFICE LEGAL DEPARTMENT

GMB is a campaigning Union for justice and rights for workers. The Legal Department aims to support the Union's campaigns and in particular the strategy in GMB @ work. The Department is now far more closely involved in co-ordinating and developing strategy to support the Union's industrial and organisational objectives than before.

The Department has been heavily involved in organising and developing the multiple actions regarding equal pay litigation. GMB continues to set the agenda, which other unions have followed. The Department is extensively involved in cutting edge legal cases, which are laying new ground in employment law.

The Department has continued to be more involved in political campaigns, as so much more of our work now has a significant political dimension. This activity continues to expand into areas such as GMB's campaign over private equity, rights for pub licensees, intensive campaigns in relation to staff at ASDA and Marks and Spencers.

The role of the Department has expanded to facilitate the co-ordination of legal, political, media and GMB @ Work campaigns which serve to keep GMB at the forefront of issues which are of importance to our members. This has assisted in increased membership growth and our political strength as a Union.

ACTION ON CONGRESS 2009 MOTIONS

Composite 4 – Employment Tribunal Awards

GMB has lobbied for an increase in tribunal awards generally. Following extensive lobbying by unions generally the amount of a week's pay for the purpose of calculating redundancy, unfair dismissal awards etc was increased from £350 a week to £380 a week in October 2009.

74 – Equal Pay

GMB continues to press the campaign for equal pay to be achieved through the process of collective bargaining as being the only way to achieve equality. GMB continues to work to develop the strategy including putting forward alternative proposals to the current litigation process including: the use of a single judge to oversee the tribunal process, using the Central Arbitration Committee to consider larger multiples, and a practical Code of Practice on equal pay. In the meantime GMB continues to litigate hard on behalf of members.

SUPPORT FOR RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISATION

The Department continues to give priority to supporting recruitment. Equalities remain, as ever, a crucial organising issue and features strongly in the work of the Department.

A significant part of the Department's work continues to relate to equal pay issues in the public sector, and in particular in local authorities and the NHS. We have continued to support National Officers in developing our equal pay strategy, and we work closely with GMB solicitors.

We contributed to the CEC Special Report to Congress 2009 on Equal Pay. We work to support the Union's aims and the action plan set out in the Special Report:

- Build on GMB's successful campaign launched at Congress 2005, which has already recovered over a billion pounds in compensation for GMB members
- Campaign for equal pay through collective negotiation and litigation where necessary. GMB supports over 30,000 equal pay claims in the public sector, both at tribunal and appeal level in the higher courts. GMB remains at the forefront of the struggle for equal pay.
- Press for full implementation of Single Status in local authorities with equal pay and compensation, and for equal pay compensation in the NHS
- Demand proper funding for equal pay, for collectivism to be brought back into the process of securing equal pay, and for access to justice including reform of the law and procedures.

The Department has provided legal and strategic advice in respect of campaigns for pub licensees and in relation to employees at Marks and Spencers. Working with the organising teams, GMB has seen significant increases in recruitment within these industries. This has been as a direct result of a combination of legal action, good organising strategy, and the work of the press office.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

We have continued to be heavily involved in developing a legal and political strategy to support the GMB campaign to draw attention to the negative aspects of the unregulated private equity industry. We have continued to contribute widely to publications and conferences arguing the case for greater regulation, as well as interaction with relevant politicians to bring about changes in the regulatory framework.

We have continued to support the campaign for Trade Union freedom, and the removal of the legal shackles placed on trade unions. We remain committed to the repeal without precondition of Section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

We assisted the GMB European Office with the responses to the public consultations on the implementation of the EU Directive on Agency Workers into UK law and the Agency Workers Regulations.

We responded to the public consultations on the following matters:

- The revised ACAS Code of Practice on Time Off For Trade Union Duties and Activities
- The proposed new rules on Blacklisting of Trade Unionists
- The Interim Report of the Civil Litigation Costs Review (the "Jackson Review")

We continue to work with the TUC and other affiliates on a wide range of policy matters.

We have been actively lobbying at national and European level for a review of the "pub tie" which gives the Pubcos the opportunity to unfairly exploit their licensees, driving many publicans out of business. Working with industry organisations we have presented evidence to the relevant sub committees and meet frequently with the government departments to advance the debate on the impact of this restrictive trade practice.

We have also been actively working with other unions to change government policy in relation to compensation for pleural plaques which is an indicator of asbestos exposure and a frequent advance indicator of the onset of mesothelioma. Working closely with our "ladders" branches we have been seeking both a political solution and searching for alternative legal options to get justice for members suffering from asbestosis and related lung disorders.

PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION PROVISION

Each year continues to see the introduction of a raft of new employment-related legislation. We aim to keep up with the changes, and to disseminate this information in an accessible and user-friendly format for Officers.

At the time of writing this report, we are updating the GMB "Most Asked Questions" to produce the 14th edition. This consists of a series of one page answers to questions covering a wide range of employment issues including Health

and Safety, Contracts, Pay, Maternity Rights, Paternity Rights, Flexible Working etc. The aim is to provide a document which Regions can easily send on or hand to members with common enquiries, and for this document to form part of the GMB @ Work Workplace Organiser's Toolkit. The document is posted on the GMB intranet and an amended version (which excludes Region-specific benefits) is posted on the GMB website.

SUPPORT FOR RECOGNITION

The present statutory recognition scheme has now been in place for almost ten years. We campaign for improvements to be made the scheme, including the removal of the twenty-one workers threshold.

GMB continues to meet with considerable success across a wide range of companies, both in terms of new sites and sites where GMB members have remained loyal through years of employer hostility. GMB continues to make good use of the legislation, both as a framework for voluntary agreements, and as a procedure for achieving recognition in the face of employer hostility.

We continue to provide support, advice and assistance to Officers in considering and preparing applications to the Central Arbitration Committee. We provide standing guidance to Officers on the CAC procedures. We provide a regular report on the progress of applications to the GMB Central Executive Council. Barry Smith is available to act as "devil's advocate" on applications and to run briefings on the procedures.

SUPPORT FOR INDUSTRIAL ACTION

We continue to provide day-to-day support to Regional and National Officers on industrial action issues and industrial action ballots. This represents a significant part of our work.

We provide standing guidance to Officers on the statutory balloting procedures, and we continue to update our guidance to reflect changes in legislation and case law. We have noticed a hardening of judicial attitudes in recent case law. Barry Smith is available to run briefings for Officers.

We remain committed to Trade Union freedom, and the removal of the legal restrictions placed on unions to call upon members to take industrial action. This includes the repeal without pre-conditions of section 127 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

We also remain concerned about the impact of the European Court of Justice cases of Viking and Laval which pose a major threat to trade unions. We have provided legal advice and strategy in dealing with the challenges that have arisen as a result of this particularly in the area of the engineering construction industry. We are hopeful that recent decisions of the European Court of Human Rights on the Freedom of Association will provide a counter balance to these restrictive decisions.

DISCIPLINARY, DISMISSAL, AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The statutory disciplinary and grievance procedures were repealed in April 2009, and replaced by a revised ACAS Code of Practice and further Guidance. We are monitoring the position closely and would welcome any comments from Regions on their experiences since the repeal of the procedures so that we can reflect these in further submissions to the Government in due course.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT LAW

We continue to provide day-to-day support to Officers on individual employment law matters, though as previously collective issues and policy matters remain our priority.

We have provided support to Officers in respect of collective redundancy consultation and changes to terms and conditions, both of which are of particular concern for the Union in the present economic climate.

TRADE UNION LEGAL SERVICES

We remain committed to playing our part in defending trade union legal services. We continue to lobby to prevent any adverse impact on services arising out of Government initiatives on legal services. We responded to the public consultation on the Interim Report of the Civil Litigation Costs Review – the "Jackson Review". The report was published in February 2010 and contains a number of recommendations which, if implemented, would have a serious adverse impact on the provision of trade union legal services. We will keep Officers advised of developments.

We welcomed the Government Inquiry into the activity of no-win no-fee lawyers. We will keep Officers apprised about developments in this area.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Barry Smith was Secretary to the Congress 2009 Standing Orders Committee (SOC). He is Secretary to the Congress 2010 SOC.

PENSIONS DEPARTMENT

ACTIONS TAKEN ON MOTIONS CARRIED IN CONGRESS 2009

Motions 39 & 40 Final Salary Pension Schemes

Pensions Department continue to support Industrial Officers and members defending defined benefit pension schemes.

Motion 41 Pensions

Pensions Department and Industrial Officers continue to advocate consistent pension provision for each workforce opposing both preferential terms for senior executives and unfavourable provision for new employees.

Motion 42 State Pension Only

Pensions Department continue to lead the trade union participation in the public debate and discussion of state pension reform.

Motions 43 & 44 Re-Establish The Pension Earnings Link

We have maintained pressure on successive DWP Ministers and the Treasury to abide by Labour Party Conference and National Policy Forum policy to restore the indexation of the basic state pension to the higher of inflation or average earnings.

Motion 48 GMB Campaign For Environmental Investments

Training materials are being developed in conjunction with the Health & Environment Department and are due to be rolled out during 2010.

Motion 121 Public Sector Pensions

Pensions Department and Public Services Section continue to work with other unions and interested organisations in campaigning for the best possible occupational pension provision for the public sector.

INDUSTRIAL ISSUES

GMB's Pension Department continues to support national and regional officials with negotiations throughout the union on pension issues that arise in the workplace. As in previous years, the trend has generally been one of worsening occupational pension provision. However, in many cases we have been able to reduce the cuts proposed by employers, ensuring greater security and fairness for members' retirements.

Commercial Services

The Pensions Department has participated in or assisted negotiations in the following companies in 2009: BA, BMI, Centrica, DHL, Magnox, National Grid, Wincanton and ASDA.

In 2009, OFGEM stepped up their plans to pressurise companies in the gas and electricity supply sector to reduce their occupational pension provision. In conjunction with the National Secretary for Commercial Services the Pensions Department mounted a concerted campaign to resist the industry regulator's attacks through the production of three formal consultation responses; participation in three seminars with trustees, company representatives and OFGEM themselves; discussion with the Pensions Regulator over regulatory jurisdiction over pension scheme trustees' actions; a meeting with the DWP Minister for Pension Reform on the conflict between the government's stated occupational pension policy and OFGEM's actions. We have also produced briefing material and a presentation for members on the progress of the campaign.

The Pensions Department also worked with employers in the Security Industry to develop a new benchmark pension scheme for premium security contracts. In an area where pension provision often does not exist this represents a significant step forward for a key group of members.

Manufacturing

Unfortunately pension schemes in the Manufacturing section have been particularly hard hit by the economic climate as more companies have closed their defined benefit pension schemes to future service for existing employees. In conjunction with the relevant National Officers, the Department has put forward alternative proposals to these companies and has, through negotiation achieved less drastic cuts to members' pension provision. This trend however, shows no sign of abating. In many parts of the sector members have been faced with a choice between jobs and future pension provision while in others members have been balloted for industrial action to protect their retirement prospects. The Pensions Department has participated in pension and redundancy negotiations in the following companies in 2009 as well as providing generic guidance to the section's officials: Air Products, Akzo Nobel, Burtons, Crown Paints, Dairy Crest, Lafarge, Nestle, Remploy, RHM, Shipbuilding, Tarmac.

Public Services

The Pension Department continues to devote significant resource to the Local Government Pension Scheme, the occupational pension scheme covering nearly a half of all GMB members. In 2009 we produced 43 documents relating to the scheme including a number of formal consultation responses and material for members. New schemes were launched in Scotland and Northern Ireland following several years of negotiation. As in England and Wales, the new schemes are supported by members and introduce better benefits at fairer cost than had been the case under the old schemes. In all areas of the LGPS the work to ensure the schemes' ongoing sustainability continues with the department attending 26 meetings in 2009 on issues including cost sharing, ill health and scheme governance. In light of the increasingly vitriolic attacks on public sector pensions, the department has been building up GMB's campaign materials to counter the ongoing threat.

The joint GMB-T&G Local Government Pension Conference was held in Eastbourne in November providing a valuable opportunity for 100 delegates to discuss developments over the last year and the campaign to defend good quality public sector pension provision. Speakers at the conference included: Angela Eagle, the Minister for Pension Reform (DWP); Tom Powdrill, the Head of Communications at the Pensions Investment Research Consultancy; and Terry Crossley, Deputy Director of Workforce Pay and Pensions (Department for Communities and Local Government).

In the NHS, we continue to contribute to the Pensions Governance Group and advisory sub-groups which oversee the day to day running of the NHS Pension Scheme in England and Wales. The main focus of these groups in 2009 has been the development of the Pensions Choice Exercise which will see members of the 1995 Section of the NHS Pension Scheme given a chance to join the 2008 Section, which was open to new employees from 1 April 2008.

In the run up to the NHS Pensions Choice Exercise, the department has, in conjunction with the National Officer, written 5 briefings for activists and an article for the GMB magazine and spoken at employers' roadshows on the Pensions Choice Exercise. In addition we have also developed, and are continuing to deliver, ongoing briefing sessions for officers and activists on the NHS Pension Scheme and Pensions Choice Exercise. This is supplemented by the GMB Guide to the NHS Pension Scheme which the department has produced.

In the civil service, 2009 has been dominated by a year long negotiation over changes to the redundancy scheme. The Pensions Department has represented GMB at more than 30 meetings and producing ten briefing documents on the reforms.

In the Higher Education Sector, 2009 was spent raising the GMB's profile in pension provision for the sector, and we represented members in meetings with the two main pension schemes: USS and SAUL, as well as meeting with employers and other unions to discuss a long term review of provision.

In addition, the Pensions Department has participated in or assisted negotiations with other employers in the section: Environment Agency, Legal Services Commission, The Rent Service, Compass, Southern Cross and the Royal British Legion.

Regional

The Pensions Department has also participated in or assisted negotiations at regional level in the following companies in 2009: Dunlop Goodyear, H&R, Groundwork UK, TRW, Fujitsu, AGA Rangemaster, GCHQ, Rhodia, Prestolite Electric, Christian Salvesen, Thyssenkrupp, Bayer, CWU, Anglian Water, RCOG, Social Housing Pension Scheme, Emcors, Meggitts, Amcor, Aquascutum, the Building and Civil Engineering Industry, Cleveland Bridge, BHS, Harrison and Harrison, Interfloor, Brooks Belfast, Morgan Est, HJ Berry, NILGOSC, LGPS (Scotland), NHS (Scotland) Pension Scheme, HPSS (NI Health Service), Thwaites Brewery, Marley, Eternit, Salton, PPG, North British Distillery, Amey,

Basford, Moonweave, Chivas Brothers, the AA, Babcock, Melton Medes, Ineos, May Gurney, Travis Perkins, P&O, Herman Miller, Carlsberg Tetley, BSW, Welsh RFU, Veolia, Tate & Lyle and IKO Holdings.

Many of these changes reflected closures of defined benefit schemes, but some employers have bucked the trend and retained such schemes, albeit in a less generous form. Common detrimental changes include increasing member contributions, reducing accrual rates and changing definitions of pensionable salary and how this increases.

POLICY

In addition to the work outlined above on progressing specific GMB Congress motions, the department has been heavily involved with the DWP and The Pension Regulator on a number of issues:

- Pensions Department has had regular meetings with successive Pensions Ministers at the DWP during 2009 and has used these opportunities to progress GMB pensions policy and address other issues that have arisen during the year.
- GMB has led the discussions with government and other stakeholders developing employer compliance safeguards in the context of the new Personal Accounts framework (NEST) that is to be introduced in 2012. This has involved a series of meetings with the Personal Accounts Delivery Authority, DWP and the Pension Regulator as well as working with pension lawyers and scheme practitioners on the detail of implementation legislation.
- We have continued working with The Pension Regulator on improving the communication and governance practices of defined contribution schemes.
- We have been working closely with DWP, the TUC and Unite on improving the anti-avoidance rules applicable to employers trying to avoid pension obligations through manipulation of insolvency rules and associated legislation.
- Pensions Department has continued to work with the DWP and BIS on the reform of age discrimination legislation in particular the removal of the default retirement age.
- GMB led the debate on pensions at TUC Congress this year and have followed that up with meetings with TUC and government to address the issues raised in the GMB motion.
- We successfully persuaded the Pensions Regulator to issue guidance for scheme trustees discouraging them from supporting employers' efforts to offer inducements for workers to give up their pension rights.

The department works directly with government and the pensions industry on policy issues. In 2009 we had regular meetings with the Secretaries of State and Pensions Ministers at the DWP and also with senior civil servants in The Pensions Regulator, Pension Protection Fund, Financial Assistance Scheme, Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), Department of Health and Cabinet Office totalling 63 meetings. In addition, the department formally responded to more than a dozen government consultations in 2009 (copies of all these responses were published on the GMB website).

CASEWORK

We continue to receive a large number of requests for advice from national and regional officers, with nearly 350 new requests (not including ongoing cases) being received in 2009. Roughly 40% of requests are related to industrial matters and these are highlighted in the Industrial Issues Section of the Department's report. More than 200 new requests however related to advice on individual requests, such as queries and disputes. The Department aims to advise on such requests within two weeks of receipt, and the average turnaround time for replying in 2009 was just over 3 days. More complex cases can take considerably longer to advise on however.

In all cases, the Department acts in support of full time officers and will advise or take on casework as appropriate. As such, individual and industrial cases should be submitted from a regional officer in the first instance. The Department will keep regional officers advised on case progress at all times. Some members do contact the Department directly and in such instances we deal with these members fairly, but do advise them that their first point of contact should be their regional officer.

We deal with pension cases on all pension schemes operating in the UK: occupational, state, personal and stakeholder schemes. The cases worked on within the Pensions Department can be exceptionally complex and frequently involve Internal Disputes Resolution Procedures, the Pensions Regulator, Pensions Ombudsman, Financial Ombudsman, and/or the Financial Services Authority.

Some of the more complex cases, particularly those concerning individual pension rights can take a significant length of time to resolve, particularly when ill health pensions are being disputed and medical evidence is required. The Department recognises the anxiety that uncertainty and grievances relating to pensions can cause and aims to deal

with all individual queries in an efficient and sensitive manner. In particular we have noticed a marked increase in the length of time it is taking the Pensions Ombudsman's office to investigate and make determinations on pension disputes. However the Ombudsman's office remains the main arbitration point for pension disputes and we have had to exercise and encourage patience when faced with lengthy delays.

In the more complex cases, the Department will recommend that regions or industrial sections will benefit from legal advice and we have good working relationships with solicitors who specialise in pension matters.

COMMUNICATIONS

As in previous years the pensions department has continued to develop pensions understanding and the profile of GMB through numerous press releases, member bulletins, Pension Q&As, trustee updates and magazine articles as well as targeted briefings for example to Councillors and MPs. We also participate in the wider pensions debate through speeches and participation in conferences and seminars on a range of pension related topics.

Reflecting motion 121 from Congress 2009 and the growing pressure on public sector pensions from Opposition parties, the press and pensions industry, the departments has produced a range of material for members' use in countering the most common attacks. Latterly this material has also been taken up by the other local government unions.

Many of the issues listed in the Industrial Issues section of this report have resulted in member communications being developed by the department. On top of these, we continue to provide bulletins on themes that are common across the union. In 2009, bulletins were written on Redundancy and Pensions, Salary Sacrifice and Pension Contributions, TUPE and Pensions, Inducements to Give Up Pension Rights and Actuarial Valuations.

The majority of our communications are posted on the GMB Pensions Webpage (www.gmb.org.uk/pensions). The website also contains the campaign materials the department produces to defend public sector pensions.

In recent years GMB has been developing a trustee based website in conjunction with Unison under the umbrella of their Capital Stewards project. Unfortunately, there appeared to be little appetite for use of this facility, and so we have reverted back to e-mailed and posted communications aimed at trustees, activists and officers. GMB's first Pensions News was published in December 2009 and aims to give a quick update on developments within the pensions industry and an overview of the industrial issues being faced. Members can sign up to receive this by e-mailing pensionsdeptwi@gmb.org.uk.

CO-OPERATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

GMB Pensions Department continues to work with other organisations where appropriate to promote GMB's pension agenda. This year we represented GMB at a number of public and industry events held by: CBI, Conservative Party, Department for Work and Pensions, NAPO, OFGEM, Personal Accounts Delivery Authority, The Pensions Advisory Service, The Pensions Regulator, Pensions Management Institute, TUC and Unison.

We also hold seats on a number of committees on behalf of GMB (or TUC), these include: The Pensions Regulator Advisory Panel, LGPS Policy Review Group, LGPS III Health Monitoring Group, TUC Capital Stewardship Steering Committee, NHS Technical Advisory Group, NHS Governance Group, CCSU Pension Reform Group, Deregulation Review Body and FAS Stakeholders' Committee.

TRAINING

The SMT agreed in mid 2009 that all GMB Officers would be required to attend a training session on pensions aimed at ensuring all officers have a consistent basic pensions understanding and be aware of the role pension issues can place in organising activities. By the end of 2009 one third of GMB Officers had attended a one day course with further sessions scheduled for 2010.

The re-focus of training upon delivery to full time officers means that at present there is no GMB provision for member training on pensions. The Department has however worked with the TUC Education Department to analyse their Pension Champions course. We have tailored this course to meet GMB's needs and are currently recommending it to Regions who have members interested in receiving training on pensions.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

The Political Department has had a very productive year and has supported numerous campaigns, meetings, along with the European Elections. We have also enhanced GMB's profile at all levels of the political process. We have ensured that GMB's policies have been heard throughout Westminster.

1. ACTIONS TAKEN ON MOTIONS CARRIED IN CONGRESS 2009

Motion 58: GMB has raised this issue throughout Westminster, through discussions with MPs and Ministers. It has also been raised in the Labour Party manifesto discussions.

Motion 64: GMB has continued to raise the issue of agency rights and numerous meetings have been held with other trade unions, MPs and the TUC.

Motion 65, 66 & 67: GMB has continued supported the campaign to increase redundancy pay and capitalise on the increase we secured in the Budget 2009.

Composite 6 & 7: This issue has been raised across Government with Ministers, GMB is involved in a number of manufacturing lobby groups where the points made in these composites have been raised. We have gone further and working with a number of leading manufacturers set up a new Manufacturing Group.

Motion 98: Discussions have taken place with BIS Ministers where we have argued against outsourcing. Lately the mantra of the free market is being replaced with a more protectionist approach.

Composite 9: This motion has been at the forefront of many discussions between GMB, other unions and the Government.

Motion 106: In all our work in relation to public services we have actioned and supported the sentiments of this motion.

Composite 11: GMB has supported the Government's fight to stop the recession worsening. GMB is also involved through the Department of BIS in the Regional Economic Forum.

Motion 130: The sentiments of this motion have shaped discussions with Government and Ministers.

Motion 131: GMB lobbied on this issue and has achieved part of this motion. A commitment for a 50% tax on all finance companies paying bonuses was announced in the Pre Budget Report 2009.

Composite 12 and 13: Correspondence has taken place with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regarding the practice of short selling shares, as well as on the issue of controlling and limiting the bonuses paid to city fat cats.

Composite 14: GMB has campaigned alongside Defend Council Housing to ensure that the issues in the composite are raised. GMB has written specifically to the Housing Minister John Healy on matters raised in the composite.

Motion 139: We continues to campaign for the restructuring of the financial system. Some progress has been made, for instance with the taxation of bank bonuses at 50%, and the G20 agreement on sanctions on tax havens.

Motion 141: GMB have campaigned alongside Defend Council Housing for the government to support a council house building programme. GMB is also working closely with the Government on the expansion of investment on new affordable housing.

Composite 15: The Treasury have been approached on this subject, people whose income falls, because of shorter working hours, cuts in pay, or unemployment, can often benefit from additional support.

Motion 146: This was raised in Labour Party Policy discussions with Ed Milliband, who is pulling together the manifesto.

Composite 16: GMB pressed this point at Labour Party Conference 2009, after much discussion and debate a vote was taken and the sentiments of this motion were carried.

Motion 151: The General Secretary and TULO raised a number of policies in line with this motion. Discussions are ongoing.

Composite 17: GMB pushed this position and it was passed at Labour Party Conference 2009.

Motion 156: GMB nationally and regionally have been reminded of this motion and what is said within Rule 2 Clause 8 of the rule book.

Motion 157: GMB has considered the sentiment of this motion when discussing where resources should be directed in the run up to the next General Election.

Motion 162: GMB stated clearly its abhorrence at some MP'S behaviour in claiming expenses and in particular on the issue of MP'S 'flipping' homes. Press work was also done on this motion.

Motion 171: The Political Department has continued to pursue this campaign within Government and has also organised meetings with specialist lawyers. Meetings have also taken place with the Jack Straw and the Prime Minister.

Motion 175: A letter has been written to the relevant Minister responsible, asking him to reinstate the ELQ funding.

Motion 176: Social/political education already exists in key stages 1-4 which is known as Citizenship.

Composite 18: GMB continues to fully support the CWU's campaign to keep the post office in public hands and to prevent any part of the organisation from being privatised.

Motion 179: GMB has contributed articles to the Morning star including during the TUC and Labour Party conferences.

Composite 19 & Motion 185, 191 & 192: We have continued to campaign on this up to and including sponsorship in support of the House of Commons council housing group and Defend Council Housing. Supporting a lobby and campaign for the need to provide investment for more public housing.

Motion 189: GMB have supported and campaigned for the Government's fiscal stimulus during the recession.

Motion 193: Letters have been written to relevant Ministers in England and Wales asking them to launch a review of the current council tax system.

Motion 194: There has been correspondence with the Minister of State at the Department of Health asking him about the status of older NHS building and the Department's future new building and refurbishment plans.

Motion 195: A letter has been written to the Minister of State at the Department of Health asking him about the availability of personal budgets and the rationale behind it.

Composite 21: The General Secretary has been involved in discussion with the Secretary of State on the issue of care; arguing to stop the current practice where many are required to sell their homes to fund the cost of their care.

Motion 213: We have been in correspondence with the Chancellor of the Exchequer to ask him to review the VAT rate on fuel.

Motion 214: A letter has been written to the relevant Minister at the DWP to urge him to consider the issue of severe weather payments and the seven day rule leading to entitlement.

Motion 216: This issue was raised with the Labour Party in formal discussions on the manifesto. We are still awaiting feedback.

Motion 219: A letter has been written to the Minister to request that they review the age requirement for free television licences.

Motion 220, 222 & 224: The General Secretary and GMB delegation raised a number of the issues raised in these motions at TUC Congress. Through discussions in the Labour Party policy process we have also raised concerns.

Motion 226: GMB is continuing to support War on Want's campaigns including their campaign to push all banks to publish the full details of their loans and other services to the arms trade.

Emergency Motion 4: The Labour Party set up a panel to deal with this issue and GMB were involved and supported its implementation.

Emergency Motion 6: GMB supports the public inquiry which was launched in late 2009 and is being televised on the internet.

Emergency Motion 7: GMB has campaigned against the far right and GMB in regions across the length and breadth of Britain.

2. WESTMINSTER OFFICE

The House of Commons office in Portcullis House has supported various receptions, lobbies and meetings. Two receptions were held in the House of Commons. A reception was held for members of the CEC in March 2009 and a reception was arranged in conjunction with Centrica to promote Green Collar Britain in July 2009. Two lobbies have also been held in Westminster: a pleural plaques lobby and an energy sector lobby focusing on Ofgem's attacks on pension schemes. A large number of meetings have also been organised in the House of Commons with MPs where GMB representations have been made. For example, meetings have been held for members of the Professional Drivers Branch and to discuss issues such as statutory redundancy pay and Southern Cross.

3. LABOUR PARTY

Debbie Coulter has been replaced as GMB NEC representative by Andy Worth, Regional Secretary for GMB Midlands & East Coast Region in September 2009. Mary Turner continues as the other NEC representative.

GMB's NEC representatives have continued to play a significant role in holding the Labour Party and the Prime Minister to account. Various issues have been raised during 2009 and these include: temporary and agency workers, asbestosis and free healthy school meals.

We have continued to take a central role in policy discussions. Towards the end of the 2009, the Political Department began dialogue with the other trade unions about priorities for the next General Election's manifesto and selection of candidates.

4. LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

GMB made a significant contribution to the Labour Party Conference in September 2009. The GMB motion on Free School Meals was passed by Conference and has now gone into the National Policy Forum process. There were 6 GMB speakers, including the General Secretary moving a motion on Sri Lanka .

5. PARLIAMENTARY PANEL

There have been 13 rounds of interviews for the Parliamentary Panel. 53 people have been successful and have been put forward to the Labour Party. GMB Parliamentary Panel candidates have been successful in a number of constituencies which include:

- Swansea West
- Nuneaton Bedworth
- Wimbledon
- Bristol North West
- Brentwood and Ongar
- Kensington and Chelsea
- Guildford
- Kettering
- Sunderland Central
- Rochdale
- Wansbeck
- Rutherglen and Hamilton
- Wolverhampton

In addition, three panel candidates stood in the European Elections 2009.

6. GOVERNMENT

During 2009, a number of regular meetings have been arranged with Government Ministers and Departments. There has been a mix of meetings with Ministers and the General Secretary to National Officers, Regional Officers, Branch Officers and members.

Gordon Brown	Prime Minister
Harriet Harman	Leader of the House of Commons and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party
Peter Mandelson	Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills
David Miliband	Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs
Jack Straw	Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor
John Denham	Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Ed Balls	Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families
Ed Miliband	Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change
Jim Murphy	Secretary of State for Scotland
Yvette Cooper	Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
Liam Byrne	Chief Secretary to the Treasury
Peter Hain	Secretary of State for Wales
Nick Brown	Chief Whip
Jim Knight	Minster for Employment
Pat McFadden	Minister of State, Department of Business, Innovation and Skills
Sadiq Khan	Minister of State, Department of Transport

7. EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

The Political Department worked closely with the European Office to assist in the European Elections throughout the country in 2009. The Political and European pages on the GMB website were extensively used to highlight the profile of GMB candidates.

Various campaigning methods were used. 250,000 automated telephone calls were made to members in key regions. The message was recorded by the General Secretary to encourage members to vote to protect workers rights and stop the BNP. Text messages were also sent to 13,000 members in Midland & East Coast Region and 8,000 members in Northern Region to push members to vote.

In addition, GMB produced 250,000 leaflets for distribution and a letter went to all post holders. Finally, two direct mail letters to GMB members living in target regions were also sent.

8. REGIONAL POLITICAL OFFICERS

There have been numerous meetings throughout the year with the Regional Political Officers to exchange information and to coordinate political work. This has allowed the continued sharing of best practice and an opportunity to highlight regional experiences.

The Regional Political Officers are:

Paul Maloney	Southern
Vince Maple / Gary Doolan	London
Pamela Drake	South Western
Martin Hird	Birmingham & West Midlands
Les Dobbs	Midland & East Coast
Steve Jennings	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire
Colin Priest	North West & Irish
Julie Elliot	Northern
Richard Leonard	Scotland

9. POLITICAL EDUCATION

The Political Department has continued organising Westminster events so organisers and members can hear presentations from MPs and political advisers.

However, a more extensive political education programme is now planned. A one day course has been designed for new activists with the aim of highlighting the importance of the political wing of the GMB and encouraging new members to get involved. There will be two trial days in January 2010.

10. CAMPAIGNING/LOBBYING

Pleural Plaques

The Political Department has continued the campaign to overturn the Law Lords decision and lobby strongly for the reinstatement of compensation for those suffering with Pleural Plaques.

We organised a second successful lobby of Parliament on 28 October where over 150 people and over thirty MP's were in attendance along with the support of other trade unions.

The Department has also supported EDM's on Pleural Plaques and have held meetings with both MP's and Ministers as well as supporting debates on Pleural Plaques in Westminster Hall.

GMB MP Andrew Dismore's bill (Asbestos - Related Conditions Bill) received its second reading and has gone through to the Lords. GMB campaigned for the support of MP's for this bill.

Agency Workers

The Department has been at the forefront along with other trade unions in the campaign to extend the rights of people employed in agency work.

In September the TUC congress in Liverpool adopted a GMB motion specifically requesting that the implementation of the regulations should be adopted by Spring 2010.

Numerous meetings have been held with MP's, TUC and other trade unions.

The Department has worked closely with the European office and continues to do so in particular to the current government consultation on Agency Workers.

The Department supported and lobbied MP's for them to sign the EDM submitted by Andrew Millar which called for legislation to come into force before the end of the current Parliament.

Statutory Redundancy

The Political Department has worked closely with the other trade unions to campaign to increase the statutory redundancy payment. Both an Early Day Motion and a Private Members Bill were used to lobby the Government to increase the amount payable to those members made redundant. This was led by Lindsey Hoyle MP and supported by many GMB MPs. The payment was finally increased by the Budget 2009 to £380.

National Organising Team

The Political Department has supported the National Organising Team's key campaign on Southern Cross as well as assisting on casinos. In both cases, the Department supported lead Regional Officers meetings with Councillors and where appropriate MPs. For example, a meeting was held in Solihull between local Organisers and Councillors to discuss the potential casino expansion there. In addition, meetings are being held with MPs and Officers to discuss Southern Cross.

CEC Political Project

The main political project to drive up GMB involvement in the heart of Constituency Labour Parties is continuing to expand. Luton North was used as pilot during 2009. GMB members living in the constituency received a survey; a number of letters from both the General Secretary and local Organisers, and an event was also arranged.

In addition a number of other constituencies have also been targeted. The GMB members living in Great Grimbsy, Middlesborough, Halesowen, Cardiff South & Penarth, Rutherglen & Hamilton West, Mansfield, Derby South, Lewisham Deptford and Newport West have also received a survey. The Political Department is now trying to work with Branch Secretaries and Regional Officers to develop more GMB activism in these key seats. Political events and meetings are currently being planned in Great Grimbsy, Middlesborough, Cardiff South & Penarth, Halesowen and Rutherglen & Hamilton West. Finally, through conversations with GMB Branch Secretaries in Rutherglen and Hamilton West two new delegates have now been generated for this Constituency Labour Party.

Free School Meals

The campaign to boost healthy free school meals was given a much needed boost by the Labour Party Conference Contemporary Issue submitted to Conference in 2009. Along with the Public Services Section we are working closely with Unison and a number of MPs to develop an interim report on the two trials currently being undertaken in Newham and Durham.

Anti BNP

Throughout the year the Political Department assisted GMB regions in campaigning against the British National Party and the far right in conjunction with Searchlight.

Before and during the 2009 European Election the department contributed to GMB regional campaign meetings.

The Department also worked closely with the European Office to ensure that on leaflets sent to GMB members the message of voting against the BNP at the European Elections was loud and clear.

The Department continues to work closely with Searchlight / Hope Not Hate on both a regional and national basis.

Councillors Network

The Political Department has worked throughout the year to start to identify GMB Labour councillors. Due to this we now have on GMB database with over 200 GMB Labour Councillors.

On a quarterly basis the Department has sent mail shots out to Councillors on issues such as pensions, public services and equality and we are working to engage better with our councillors in Town Halls across the length and breadth of Britain.

Gangmasters Licensing Authority

GMB continues to sit on board of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA). The GLA is a government agency set up to protect workers from exploitation in Agriculture, Horticulture, Shellfish gathering and processing and packaging.

GMB seeks to ensure that people employed in the industry are both represented and that Gangmasters comply fully with employment law and Health and Safety Procedures. Where there is abuse of these laws and procedures GMB works with the GLA to make sure that Gangmasters are held fully to account. GMB also attends GLA workers representatives meetings.

APPOINTMENT AND ELECTION OF OFFICIALS

1 JANUARY 2009 – 31 DECEMBER 2009

APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL SECRETARY

London Region - Paul Hayes

APPOINTMENT OF SENIOR ORGANISERS

London Region
- Shaun Graham
- Warren Kenny
- Dave Powell

ELECTION OF ORGANISERS

Birmingham & West Midlands Region
- Colin Griffiths
- Lisa Howard
- Mo Khalik
- Sharon Wilde

North West & Irish Region
- Karen Atkinson
- Eddie Gaudie
- Dave Hulse
- Michael Mulholland

APPOINTMENT OF ORGANISING OFFICERS

Birmingham & West Midlands Region - Karen Leonard
Midland & East Coast Region - Michael Ackroyd
- Paul Carroll

North West & Irish Region - Sue Lee
- Jim McDermott

Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region - Tristan Chard

TUC CONGRESS AWARDS 2009

As agreed by the CEC its Finance & General Purposes Committee selected recipients of Congress 2009 Regional Outstanding Achievement Awards to go forward for TUC Congress Awards.

The Northern Region NPower Branch, the recipients of the Northern Region Outstanding Achievement Award 2009, was nominated for the TUC Organising Award 2009. The nomination was successful, and Michael Hunt, the Branch Secretary attended TUC Congress 2009 in Liverpool to collect the award.

Sharon Pickstock, the recipient of the South Western Region Outstanding Achievement Award 2009, was nominated for the TUC Women's Gold Badge 2009.

SECTION REPORTS

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

Section National Committee

Kevin Flanagan (President)	North West & Irish Region
Malcom Sage (Vice President)	Midlands & East Coast Region
Brian Adams	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Dave Clements	Southern Region
Kevin Crummey	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Elaine Daley	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Roy Dunnett	London Region
Gwyn Evans	South Western Region
Jean Foster	Southern Region
Peter Kane	Northern Region
Kath Manning	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Cathleen Murphy	GMB Scotland
Benjamin Rankin	GMB Scotland
Lena Sharp	London Region
Kathleen Slater	Midlands & East Coast Region

Section National Officers

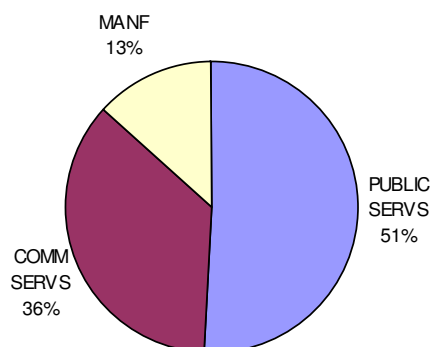
Gary Smith (National Secretary)
Jude Brimble
Mick Rix

Introduction

During 2009, the focus of the Commercial Services Section's work has been firmly based upon the GMB@work organising agenda. Workplace organisers in DHL, G4S, ASDA and British Gas staff have undertaken GMB@work initial training or follow-up courses. Progress reports have been provided to the Senior Management Team which have identified the measures needed at national, regional and workplace level to ensure the Union successfully pursues our organising and recruitment objectives within these companies.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the activists who have undertaken the training find GMB@work an essential tool, in terms of both developing workplace organisation and gaining a better understanding of the cultural changes that are taking place within the Union. Training courses are also being planned for key workplace organisers in a number of other target companies, as the Section further embraces the need to employ the GMB@Work approach to develop the strength of our workplace organisation and build membership within a wide variety of companies.

The Commercial Services Section membership stood at 162,333 in December 2008 and had risen to 164,925 by December 2009. This net increase of 2,592 members represented a membership growth of 1.6% for the Section during the year. The rate of overall GMB growth during the year was 0.1%. A total of 28,062 new members were recruited to the Section in the 12 months ending in December 2009, from a total of 78,375 new GMB members recruited during this period. The graph below shows that this represented 36% of the total number of new members recruited by GMB.



Sectional Recruitment for 12 months ending December 2009

2009 was a particularly difficult year for many working people, as the UK economy suffered from the effects of a recession caused by the greedy, reckless and selfish behaviour of senior bankers. Much of the Section's work was therefore focused on mitigating the effect of this economic turmoil upon GMB members. Many employers sought to impose pay freezes on our members as a result of the recession, regardless of whether their company's financial situation justified this. Where there was no justification for such a course of action, GMB negotiators resisted these management attempts to exploit the recession in order to attack the terms and conditions of our members, and some very successful pay deals were negotiated throughout the year.

Most of the year was also spent fighting to protect members' security of employment. In view of the recession, a very significant achievement was that compulsory redundancies were not an issue in many of the industries within the Commercial Services Section. Particularly in aviation, and the road transport, logistics and distribution sector, the hard work of officers and shop stewards ensured that there were relatively few job losses, and those that did occur were achieved through voluntary means.

ASDA Distribution

The campaign to gain recognition at ASDA distribution depots had some very notable successes throughout the year. In the autumn of 2009 we successfully undertook a further recognition ballot at the Wakefield distribution site. As referred to at last year's Congress, but which occurred too late for mention in the written report, GMB also secured recognition at the Bedford site in the spring of 2009. The success of these recognition campaigns is a tribute to all those who worked so hard to build GMB organisation within these workplaces. At the time of writing this report, we are about to commence the recognition process at IDC Lutterworth in the Midland & East Coast Region.

The progress that has been made over recognition in the last 2 years, along with the collective discipline shown by the shop stewards at site, NSSF and NJC level, has had a significant impact on our relations with ASDA distribution management. The NJC is functioning as a far more cohesive body and in the past year we have seen the establishment of a National Health and Safety Committee, which in ASDA terms does represent a significant breakthrough.

In line with the policy and approach developed by the distribution shop stewards, we have continued to push for national bargaining in ASDA Distribution. We undertook a consultative ballot of all our members in distribution on whether members would support national as opposed to site bargaining. The campaign exercise that the shop stewards undertook on national bargaining was welcomed by the membership and we had a resounding 95% vote in favour of the move to national pay bargaining.

At the time of writing this report, we have submitted a national pay claim for the first time in ASDA distribution. After protracted discussions, the company has agreed to move forward on national bargaining. In Wal-Mart terms, this represents an almost revolutionary development. Progressing national pay talks will be very challenging and it will take time. However, the fact that the company has finally agreed to open talks is testament to all the hard work of the shop stewards and officers over many years.

ASDA Stores

At ASDA stores, the recruitment figures for 2009 suggest that, in particular, we are continuing to see the benefits of GMB@work training. Great credit goes to the stores shop stewards, who despite the lack of proper access under the current agreements, continue to build the membership throughout stores. It is also heartening to see a new layer of activists starting to come through in some regions as a result of our campaigning work. There is no doubt the direct mailings which have been distributed to members centrally have had a significant impact on recruitment too.

The theme of the ASDA stores conference was organising around safety. As in distribution, health and safety remains an area of significant concern. In 2009 we saw the establishment of a new National Forum for stores. Under the new structures the National Forum has been up-weighted from the company side, and the Operations Director now attends the forum, which was not the case previously. GMB now has an additional seat on the forum too. The efforts of the shop stewards on the National Forum have ensured that the level of consultation, whilst far from perfect, has improved.

A major campaign for ASDA stores in late 2009 was around the issue of how the Boxing Day bank holiday was designated by the company. After a high profile campaign, through which we recruited members, the company changed its position on the Boxing Day bank holiday issue, which resulted in members receiving premium pay for that day which would otherwise have been denied to them. At the time of writing, we are continuing to progress the night pay campaign. The company unilaterally changed night pay provision. A national grievance will be submitted and

progressed on behalf of ASDA stores night workers, who are due to lose out significantly over the next few years as a result of the changes to how they are paid.

Energy

Energy continues to be a major issue facing the country. There is a real and growing threat of energy shortages, and the debate about the country's energy needs is likely to intensify over the coming year. The Commercial Services Section makes a strong and influential contribution to the energy debate, through political lobbying, correspondence and meetings with Ministers and the regulator (Ofgem), through the press, and in response to the consultation documents that are regularly published. The Union has persistently called for action to be taken, in accordance with Congress policy, to curb excess profits, regulate the energy market more effectively, and control prices for energy consumers.

Unfortunately, the slavish adherence to a laissez-faire approach to energy has placed energy companies into a very strong bargaining position with Government - the threat being that if Government interferes in the profits enjoyed by energy companies, they will take their money elsewhere and refuse to invest in the UK's energy infrastructure.

Smart metering and the development of the smart grid pose huge opportunities for the development of so called green jobs. GMB is supporting the investment in smart metering and the electricity infrastructure. The Union has made strong representations to the Government and Ofgem, which will oversee the smart metering programme. However the full implications for electricity prices from the planned investment, as well as subsidies for renewables, have yet to be fully explained. There remains a risk that the full planned investment and subsidies could be jeopardised by soaring price increases to consumers.

GMB has been consistently and particularly critical of the lack of a strategic plan for gas. The vast majority of homes in the UK use gas for both heating and cooking. We have been critical in public of the obsession by some Government officials about "clean electricity" whilst failing to properly consider the future role of gas. A delegation of gas distribution shop stewards met with the Energy Minister to press the case for gas. The lack of storage capacity combined with our increasing dependency on imported gas means the country is in desperate need of a strategic plan for gas.

Whilst GMB has consistently argued for the development of clean coal technology, there is now a chance for a serious debate about the use of the country's indigenous coal reserves to again produce gas.

Ofgem

Members in the regulated energy sector will be aware of GMB's high profile campaign, in accordance with Motion 79 of Congress 2009, concerning Ofgem (the energy regulator) enquiring into pension provision across the industry. As part of our campaign, every GMB Member of Parliament was contacted and we also met with all the Ministers at the Department of Energy and Climate Change. GMB moved motions on the issue of Ofgem and pensions at both TUC Congress and Labour Party Conference. GMB also made a presentation at an Ofgem seminar on pensions, submitted robust responses to all the consultation documents that Ofgem issued on pensions, and took up the issues directly in meetings and correspondence with the Ofgem Chief Executive.

In compliance with Composite Motion 5 and Motions 80, 81, 82, 83, 84 and 86 of Congress 2009, GMB has continued to be very outspoken in our criticisms of Ofgem in relation to energy prices and the regulator's failure to take effective action to protect energy consumers. After years of dismissing GMB's concerns and claiming the market was working well, early 2010 saw an incredible about-turn by Ofgem, as the regulator published a report that finally admitted that the liberalisation and the privatised energy market has not delivered, either in terms of price or security of supply. Ofgem also opened up the prospect of a state-owned company being used to purchase gas from abroad. Ofgem has tacitly accepted the position put forward for very many years by the Union and has opened up the opportunity for a radically different debate about how we meet the country's future energy needs.

British Gas

In the past year we have seen the announcement of the creation of One British Gas. This represents the coming together of British Gas Business, Energy and Services, which will have profound implications for jobs. There have been several hundred redundancies at the time of writing, but we believe that many more are planned. The company has rubbished GMB claims that massive redundancies and site closures are in the pipeline. However, senior management have failed to respond to the Union's demands to rule out any compulsory redundancies or site closures.

As a result of a GMB@Work course for British Gas staff workplace organisers, it was decided to carry out a questionnaire survey of members' opinions and views. The company has always made great play of the fact that their own employee engagement surveys say that British Gas is great place to work, but GMB workplace organisers believed that the company's survey did not reflect the reality of working for the company. The questionnaire was subsequently extended to cover the industrial membership too.

The response to GMB's survey was massive, with almost 3,000 British Gas employees returning questionnaires. The survey clearly identified a problem with the growing bullying management culture within British Gas which is in line with the Managing Director's style. Nearly 300 respondents also expressed an interest in becoming workplace organisers. The survey gave the Union a very clear indication of the depth of feeling amongst engineers about the way that the British Gas performance management process, and other changes to working practices, were putting the engineer workforce under intolerable pressure.

At the time of preparing this report, we are about to ballot our engineer membership for industrial action. It is clear that the Managing Director of One British Gas is vehemently anti-union and anti-GMB in particular. He does not like the type of challenge an independent union poses. We have produced a number of direct mailings to our membership seeking support for a campaign against the management culture introduced by the Managing Director, Phil Bentley. The campaign is high profile, with a specific GMB website launched for gas engineers and meetings taking place around the country.

Our campaigning activity has meant that GMB has seldom had a higher profile amongst British Gas employees, and amongst staff in particular. We are making good progress on developing the membership and workplace organisation both on the staff and industrial side.

The pay talks for British Gas Industrials are due following the 2 year deal reported on at the last Congress. The formula for staff delivered a 1.8% pay increase, although the company has unilaterally sought to change the anniversary date which would diminish the value of the deal. GMB is opposing the company's attempt to make this change.

Gas Distribution: National Grid

The gas distribution industry has had a difficult year, due to the Ofgem funding formula of RPI minus, as well as the costs of servicing debt and borrowing for investment. United Utilities have signalled their intent to pull out of the industry altogether. United Utilities did have a significant stake in Northern Gas Networks.

The most significant campaign with National Grid was in relation to their planned changes to their Shared Services operations. The company announced its intention to offshore hundreds of jobs with the greatest impact being felt at Newcastle. In accordance with Emergency Motion 2 (National Grid Greed) at Congress 2009, GMB launched a high profile campaign in defence of the Newcastle site which employs around 189 workers. Motions under the slogan "National Greed" were moved at TUC and Labour Party Conferences in defence of the Newcastle workforce and a website was launched in support of the campaign.

The campaign received local and national media attention. A half-day of strike action and a demonstration was held in Newcastle city centre. The Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA), which represents National Grid workers in Massachusetts, also offered the campaign terrific support. Unfortunately, despite all our efforts the closure is to go ahead. However, we did manage to negotiate significantly enhanced terms for the Newcastle workforce. The fight that GMB put up was well received by the members involved.

GMB has also submitted a formal complaint to the Information Commissioner about Ofgem's failure to respond to our request, made under the Freedom Of Information Act, to provide the Union with copies of correspondence between Ofgem and the Chief Executive of National Grid regarding the future of the Newcastle site. The result of this complaint is currently awaited.

The Transmission side of the business, which includes our staff membership, PMC and electrical industrials, settled for a 1.3% pay increase.

On the gas operations side of the company we have continued to bed in the GO21 agreement which has been in place for a few years. Whilst the winter period has been exceptionally busy we have ongoing worries about workloads. The loss of meterwork is a major concern. There were significant periods of time throughout the summer when our members had no work. The focus in our negotiations continues to be protecting direct labour and the enhanced pension provision enjoyed by many of our gas industrial members.

The membership in gas operations settled for a 1.25% increase for each of the next 3 years. If inflation is a significant issue moving into 2010 there is an opportunity to re-open talks. There are also improvements to payments for those who are required to work in higher uplift areas. Very significantly, a number of long-term contractors were given permanent contracts of employment under the deal. There will be a fundamental review of the position with long-term contractors involving GMB in the spring of this year.

The Nuclear Industry

Throughout the last year, GMB has continued to make the case for a balanced energy policy that includes nuclear power as a low-carbon source of energy supply. In addition to supporting the need for nuclear new build in our responses to consultations on the UK's future energy needs, Ministers were specifically lobbied on the need to ensure for a future role for Sellafield.

Wilkinson stores

Responsibility for negotiations at Wilkinson stores passed to national level during 2009. This is testament to the success of the activists and officers in building the union membership throughout Wilkinsons. There have been some radical changes to the way the business operates, bringing the company into line with how most other retailers now operate. This change had significant implications for jobs, but due to the hard work and influence of our workplace organisers, the vast majority of the potential job losses were avoided.

A pay rise of 3.6% was negotiated for members in Wilkinson. This was one of the best pay deals of 2009, not only in retail, but across the whole economy. As we move forward and build membership throughout Wilkinsons, our goal during 2010 is to strengthen our current agreements and deepen our workplace organisation. At the time of writing, industrial relations with the company are positive. Given the ongoing tough economic environment, and the challenges that will no doubt emerge in a very competitive retail sector, a commitment from the company to working together will be important.

The Security Industry

The security industry remains a high priority for GMB, with massive membership potential, despite the fact that over the last six months we have seen companies in the industry not taking on new starters. This has meant refocusing our organising work to consolidate the existing workforce. Work is ongoing to secure new recognition agreements, and discussions are well developed in two major 'blue chip' companies, each employing some 3,500 security officers. Securing new agreements will not only increase potential membership but will also ensure GMB broadens our influence within the industry and retains our position as the lead union within security.

Across the whole security sector we have seen significant contracts being won and lost as customers pursue aggressive price reductions. A number of companies are clearly engaged in a price 'war' in an effort to win and keep contracts. Whilst we have not yet seen significant job losses, there are signs that this will start to impact during 2010. Many members have already been affected by a reduction in working hours and changes to working practices, and whilst this has ensured job retention it has also meant significant loss of income for many members.

At the time of writing, a new GMB national campaign is due to be launched at the House of Commons called SafeGuard. Initiated by activists in the security industry, the focus of the campaign will be to reduce attacks against security officers undertaking traditional guarding roles. The campaign is a result of the sharp increase in the level of abuse and violent attacks taking place against security officers in public buildings.

The campaign is very much member-led and has been developed by a number of reps from the new National Negotiating Committees within G4S and Securitas. Members are calling for employers to improve their employment and welfare practices in static guarding as, unlike the CVIT sector, such provisions are woefully inadequate. Many GMB members, having been hurt in violent attacks, all too often find themselves abandoned by their employer and incurring financial hardship whilst unable to work, with little support or counselling to deal with their physical injuries and trauma.

New organising materials have been launched for the security industry, and at the time of writing a new national security website is in the final stages of development. The website will be a major improvement in how we communicate with security members, who often work in isolation. 60% of our membership also work nights, and therefore we need a 24/7 communication base. The majority of security officers work electronically and many will have easy access to the internet; so we must harness the use of electronic communication to maximum effect within all areas of security.

In line with Motion 173 of Congress 2009, a new GMB 'pocket' guide on the issue of police cautions and contacts for legal advice is currently being developed for all security workers. As the SIA consider cautions as part of the licensing process, members may inadvertently exclude themselves from passing the vetting process by accepting a police caution without being fully aware of the possible consequences.

The issue of exploitation of EEC workers within the security industry has been looked at within GMB organised companies (in line with Motion 56 of Congress 2009). Although we have not found any specific evidence that workers from EEC countries are being employed on lower pay or terms and conditions, we remain vigilant over any attempts to exploit such workers and undermine existing agreements.

G4S Secure Solutions

Secure Solutions remains the largest sector of G4S, currently employing some 20,000 security officers across eight divisions. The workforces are spread across some 5,000+ sites. After two years of consistently focusing on the collective bargaining structures within the company, these are now all established. Some are more developed than others, but all are now underway. Importantly, many more of our members are now having a real say about their pay and conditions. However, challenges still exist on achieving this in the small regional contracts, where the majority of pay is still linked to uplifts in the contract price mechanism.

National negotiations continue on implementing sick pay and injury on duty schemes, with some contract areas achieving this during 2009 as part of various pay deals. As negotiations develop on these two areas of work they will be a central part of the organising strategy, along with the SafeGuard campaign, and present a significant opportunity to grow the membership as some 70% of the workforce would benefit. The organising strategy here needs to ensure the success of our negotiations will be matched by the success of membership growth.

In regard to national pay negotiations for the Trillium contract, which is the largest and covers security at job centre plus sites, the two-year pay deal secured early in 2009 was pulled by the company, after a change of ownership and massive price reductions being demanded by the new owners, Telereal. Following a number of disputes hearings, a new deal was secured which delivered a 2% increase for 2009 plus a further 0.5% in 2010, and the opening of pay talks. A sick pay scheme was also agreed. The new offer was overwhelming accepted by the membership.

Other national pay negotiations resulted in the following outcomes: in Monitoring and Response, a one-year deal for 2010 resulted in a pay increase of 1.8% and improvements to the Injury on Duty Scheme, which were overwhelming accepted by members in a ballot; RBS received the second year on a long-term deal which resulted in a 2% increase for 2010; The Olympics site was balloted on and accepted a 1.5% increase.

Within Aviation we have seen significant loss of contracts, with G4S losing Bristol, Norwich, and London City airports, and some work at Manchester airport. This division of G4S is still currently in a loss-making situation and members are under extreme pressure to change working practices and deliver greater flexibility, in a very demanding area of airport security. Aviation Services are due to move back to airport contract-level negotiations on pay for 2010. Within G4S events, discussions are underway to address the issue of zero hours contracts. GMB has also registered opposition to plans within G4S Aviation Services to introduce zero hours contracts. At the time of writing, letters were also going to the BSIA to open talks on this issue (in line with Motion 89 of Congress 2009).

The network of shop stewards within G4S Secure Solutions continues to grow, and we are now represented in every division with over 130 workplace organisers. The NOT team also continues to support the organising agenda with a GMB@Work course and follow-on training now completed by 30 senior workplace organisers. New recruitment materials for the security industry have been developed, and national and regional organising strategies are now in place.

A new monthly GMB@Work organisers briefing has now been set up and is run by the National Negotiating Committee. This briefing is circulated to all workplace organisers and is designed to share best practice, promote organising and keep the divisions informed on negotiations across the company.

At the time of writing a national briefing was also being developed, with the aim to having a quarterly mailshot direct to members during 2010. All mailshots will include a membership form, to encourage existing members to sign up a work colleague.

G4S Care and Justice

GMB continues to be the lead union in this division following the acquisition of GSL, currently represented in prisons, court services, inter-prison transport, police custody suites and electronic monitoring.

In court services and inter-prison transport a pay freeze was implemented during 2009. However, the NJCC were able to secure a one-off lump sum payment and improvements to the linked sick pay scheme.

Specific recruitment materials for this division of G4S were being developed at the time of writing, as a significant opportunity exists for membership growth through consolidation. A GMB@Work course is also planned for workplace organisers in this division. GMB does have access to induction sessions, but no significant numbers of new starters are being taken on. When they have been, sign-up rates through induction sessions have remained high.

Within the private prisons, the second year of a three-year deal has been honoured. This delivers a 4% pay award in 2010 and a further 3% will follow in 2011.

In line with Congress policy, we have continued to work on the issue of Section 127 of the Criminal Justice Act. There has been a series of meetings with the Justice Secretary and Special Advisors. We are also now looking at the recent developments in the European Court of Human Rights, where there have been some favourable decisions on the right to strike. We are also currently looking at the ILO recommendations for Governments to establish compensatory measures for workers covered by Section 127, to see if this offers some movement to our members bound by the constraints.

G4S Cash and Valuables in Transit (CVIT)

GMB continues to take the lead on the high profile campaign about attacks on security personnel in the CVIT Sector. The overall level of attacks remains too high but, as a direct result of our campaign and the political pressure brought to bear on police forces, some of the specific areas with a history of high attacks have seen a reduction in the number of attacks. Due to the economic downturn, the overall number of attacks rose again in the last quarter of 2009, but in recent months we have seen those figures fluctuate quite dramatically. GMB continues to participate in the Home Office roundtable meetings, which are chaired by the Minister, as part of the strategy to deal with attacks, and play an active part in the sub-groups that link into those talks.

Through these groups GMB has continued to make representations on parking restrictions for CVIT vehicles (in line with Motion 87 of Congress 2009). As a result of our work, the Home Office Minister and the Transport Minister have written to every local authority reminding them of their obligations relating to parking for CVIT Vehicles. Memorandums of Agreement have now been signed with Transport for London, City of London, and Westminster Council. Draft agreements are in place with Camden and Newham Councils. Work is ongoing on this issue and GMB has recently sent out a further joint letter with the BSIA to all local authorities nationwide to ensure the focus on this issue spreads outside of the London Boroughs. GMB also submitted a document to the Government calling for better consideration of the need to protect CVIT workers from attack when planning the location of ATMs.

A further successful CVIT Conference was held on 12/13 January 2010. This was attended by 76 delegates, senior police officers, industrial speakers and Under Secretary of State from the Home Office, Alan Campbell, MP. This was the first year that all the key companies in the sector attended, and is a reflection on how GMB is now getting wider engagement and commitment from employers within the industry on this issue.

The first compensation/welfare scheme set up in G4S continues to go from strength to strength and is well supported by members, who contribute directly to the scheme. The rules governing the scheme have recently been changed to allow for more members to benefit following attacks, which may still result in serious injury, but may not in themselves be life-changing. At the time of writing, the scheme had funds of just over £1.4 million, which is money that will go directly to members injured in CVIT attacks.

National pay negotiations in 2009 delivered a 2% pay increase with new agreements on flexibility, and redundancy mitigation. At the time of writing pay talks were just about to open for 2010.

Despite the redundancy mitigation process, we are now seeing job losses in CVIT. A further 300+ crew are currently at risk as a result of HBOS taking some elements of work in house, as part of their own cost-cutting exercise. In addition to this, G4S has already imposed a pay freeze across all admin, clerical and managerial grades within cash services for 2010.

Securitas

The national dispute in relation to the payment of SIA licenses was finally resolved with all GMB members having their money reimbursed and Securitas now agreeing to fund all SIA licenses and training. Despite this important win, this did not deliver as many new members as it should have done, and we still need to develop GMB@Work within this company.

On a positive note, the National Negotiating Committee has now been established, with local committees in the process of being set up, and discussions are now taking place on how we develop pay negotiations across the various contracts.

At the time of writing 3,500 GMB recruitment letters were being distributed as a direct mailshot to every employee, via the companies mailing house. GMB continued to have access to the company induction sessions. Although the number of new recruits has reduced significantly, again where inductions are taking place our sign-up rate remains high.

The focus during 2010 will be to develop the shop stewards network, map out the workforce and develop the negotiating and organising strategy, and deliver GMB@work to key activists. We will be using best practice established in G4S to ensure strong focus is maintained here via the workplace organiser network.

Loomis

Loomis remains the second largest CVIT Company in the UK. The business environment for Loomis remains very challenging. As a result, there have been job losses and the Company has restructured further, with the loss of a cash centre and supervisory grades within the depots. Despite the company looking to withdraw the last part of a long-term pay deal in 2009, this was eventually secured with crew operatives now on £10 per hour.

The company is currently trialling new ways of working in ATM areas, which they believe will deliver greater safety for workers, but are seen as controversial in the industry. GMB members are involved in two depots; a ballot will take place on the new working practices in April 2010.

Loomis has responded favourably to GMB's request to establish an attacks fund, similar to that operated in G4S, and talks are due to start later this year.

Our membership penetration needs to be drastically improved and the opportunity to consolidate from the existing workforce needs to be realised. The company has agreed to support a national GMB@Work course for all GMB workplace organisers and we are aiming to deliver this later this year.

Security Plus

Security Plus remains a family owned business, but is now the third largest operator within the industry employing some six hundred people, whilst growing its business in Scotland and South West. The economic impact on the retail industry continues to take its toll, as this is the main focus of the company's cash in transit work. 2009 saw a pay freeze imposed and our members reduced to core contract hours, as a way to ensure job security.

At the time of writing, pay talks were in the early stages, with a long-term deal being looked at. Negotiations were also taking place on drastically improving conditions of employment, to bring them into line with the industry 'norm'. Security Plus are about 25% behind the rest of the industry in terms of pay rates and their employment conditions are poor. Again, any success we achieve in these negotiations needs to be linked to the organising strategy, so that it is GMB members who gain and not the vast majority who have still yet to join the Union.

Skills for Security

GMB continues to maintain a high profile on the skills body, and has actively engaged with the SIA through this avenue. We have attended a number of national conferences and have ensured that the GMB agenda of raising standards, training and pay has been repeatedly brought to the attention of employers within the industry.

Road Transport and Logistics Sector

The newly formed Road Transport & Logistics national committee has met and agreed its work and organising programme for the next year. Issues of concern to the membership across the different companies in the sector include the increase in casual and owner-driver status within the industry, amendments to the Working Time Directive for road transport employees, CPC training, health and safety and issues of sleep deprivation and driver fatigue, VOSA medical

conditions, along with the way that companies are resisting unionisation and representation. A work programme has been agreed by the committee to help our members and stewards.

It is further intended to undertake a mapping exercise of our members employers. This will help to identify and formulate future organising activity in this sector.

DHL Express Domestic & Hubs (HDNL – DHL Domestic Parcelpoint)

The company has a cumulative deficit of around a quarter of a billion euros. In 2008/09 a further 86m euro deficit was recorded. The company still faces an uphill struggle in the domestic market, due in part to massive competition (the UK market is the most competitive in Europe, and the fourth largest market globally). Also, the vast increase in internet shopping has brought a huge increase in small home delivered volumes, as opposed to bulk business delivery volumes to the high street. This is leading towards further casualisation of employment for the last mile drop, as small, single, light packages delivered to homes are very costly, as opposed to bulk delivery to the high street, retail parks or homes.

In early 2010, DHL Express decided to sell its UK domestic business to HDNL. Which is part of the private equity owned portfolio of businesses of the reclusive Barclay Brothers. This will mean the transfer of 71 service centres and 5 hubs and a call centre. Around 5,500 employees in total are affected. Full consultation has taken place.

Protecting member's employment has been a priority in this company. Due to company restructurings, around 350 posts have been reduced. These were dealt with in a number of ways. Some members did take advantage of the voluntary severance terms. We created a new agreement for reduced hours, which paid employees 1.5 times weeks per year, plus 15% of their salary, if they cut their hours, or changed shifts, allowing the company not to make redundancies and retaining skills and jobs in the right place for the business.

After seeking approval from members, the 2009 pay and conditions agreement was only part implemented. The 2.5% basic pay increase element of the package was deferred until 1st January 2010. All other allowances and scheduled increases were paid. At the time of this report being prepared the membership were being consulted on the 2.5% increase in allowances for 2010, a 1% cash bonus by way of a thank you for their efforts in 2009, and increases in sick pay periods for those with qualifying service for a further 26 weeks.

The review and regrading process of Managerial, Admin and Clerical grades is now under way. Along with the review of the PRS bonus agreement for couriers, aimed at bringing increases in payments to drop rates for our members.

DHL Freight

During the latter part of 2007, DHL Freight was created as a delineated company from DHL Express, which transferred two of our national bargaining units, DHL Domestic ECO and DHL Connect into this sector. The coupling of the DHL ECO sector with the DHL ECO international sector brought new groups of LGV drivers for the other parcel distribution networks of DHL International division. As previously reported to Congress 2007, the main focus was to tap into these new growth areas of DHL business. As a result we have just secured recognition in one of these areas, and we are now also near to securing recognition in DHL ECO International, which is the distribution network for DHL Express International in the UK.

At the time of compiling this report, pay negotiations for DHL Freight ECO and DHL Freight Connect were underway.

DHL Express International

It remains the case that we would like to be the union of choice for those that work in the whole of DHL Express International. However, until we have properly consolidated the membership levels in the Express Domestic and Freight businesses, our priority must remain the union-recognised parts of the business.

GMB@Work in DHL

The early part of 2009 saw membership levels increase, due in part to a new stewards network. However, due to a variety of reasons, membership then fell during the third and fourth quarters of 2009. This was very disappointing, and undermined the splendid work of the first and second quarters of 2009. Since then we have undertaken various measures to rectify this disappointment. At present, a new robust organising plan has been agreed with our senior stewards. The main targets of this plan are the domestic hubs and call centre operations.

Wincanton AP contracts

Conditions for both the cylinder and bulk contracts were affected in 2009. Although it was clear that the company was having problems with its contracts due to the downturn, its management started to display some characteristics that were quite unpleasant. Some of our Reps, we believe, were targeted by some of the management team.

The company could not agree how and what it wanted to do for the future, in respect of the 2009 pay negotiations. This resulted in the Union withdrawing our claims, and refusing to discuss the company's proposals. The company also acted in bad faith by placing an incorrect interpretation onto the national agreement on redundancy pay. This resulted in various applications to employment tribunals. As a result of various incidents of industrial unrest taking place, we held a consultative ballot of our members. There was a 100% turnout, with 98% voting in favour to take industrial action. This brought the company back to the negotiating table, where the company reintroduced the correct payments, and paid those individuals correctly, but also agreed to some valuable changes to other important national agreements with the company.

At the time of writing this report, the arrangements for the 2010 pay and conditions were still being finalised and subject to member and steward consultation.

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Changes to the national agreement were agreed by the company in 2009. We now have a proper stewards national negotiating committee, with a defined agenda for meetings. However the private equity owned company had started to cut its number of depots due to a downturn in demand for its goods. The company also announced its intention to re-open the agreed pay deal of 3.25%, stating it could not afford to pay. This has resulted in a number of meetings, which resulted in the company putting forward alternatives. At the time of writing this report a consultative ballot of the members was underway.

The Aviation Sector

Aviation has become a soft target for those who are misguided enough to believe that a complete end to flying will solve the global warming crisis. This has included various extreme groupings, from both ends of the political spectrum, having an alliance with the Tories, and so-called greens forming direct action groups against the planned new runways for Heathrow Airport and Stanstead. Both of these projects are fully supported by GMB, and the thousands of GMB and other trade unions' members that earn their living at these locations.

We clearly recognise that there are issues with CO2 emissions and noise pollution. However, the better companies (usually unionised) in the industry are working towards meeting international and national targets to reduce emissions. One example of this is British Airways placing orders for the Airbus A380 which has greatly reduced CO2 emissions, and lower engine noise. Recently, companies have run test flights which are powered using biofuels, which could lead to further reductions and cleaner flights.

The industry, working in conjunction with our stewards, has introduced new methods of ground transportation for employees that help reduce the carbon footprint of the company. We continue to meet with industry and the Government on these matters, and we also meet with those that are politically opposed to aviation and modernisation of our airports' infrastructure. We do see the sense in Government taking the initiative to ensure the development and use of public transport to airports to further reduce carbon emissions from excessive road usage at the airports. This will improve the environment surrounding airports, notably Heathrow, and help to create cleaner air quality for those local communities. To enable these initiatives to become a reality, we believe that sustained investment is needed in public transport, to create new public transport links to our airports, most notably high speed rail, and other heavy and light rail developments.

GMB@Work in Aviation

At the time of writing this report, an Aviation Sector national committee is at last being created. This committee will concentrate on working to a defined national work programme for improving conditions for our members, as well as campaigning against the race to bottom and the neo-liberal conditions of cut-throat competition causing contract changes and continuous TUPE transfers. The national committee will also be concentrating on creating "airport workplace stewards organising committees" to map out membership growth potential and identify organising opportunities. Despite recent redundancies in the aviation sector, a huge potential for membership growth still exists.

Identity Cards

In accordance with Emergency Motion 5 of Congress 2009, GMB continued to oppose the Government's plans to introduce compulsory ID cards for aviation workers. Several meetings were held with Ministers and Home Office officials to successfully put our views forward. As a result, although the Government is pressing ahead with the roll-out of ID cards, these will no longer be a compulsory requirement for airside aviation workers.

From 30 November 2009, identity cards became available, purely on a voluntary basis, to all airside workers at Manchester and London City airports. The Government and industry in partnership will assess the benefits of these through an 18 month evaluation period. During the evaluation period airside worker identity cards will be issued at no charge and a fund has been made available to support pre-employment checking and airside pass issuing infrastructure and process improvements.

Ground Handling

In recent years low-cost ground handling companies (prompted by the carriers) have created a race to the bottom approach which is bringing about major potential issues of conflict, and job insecurity, for our members. Contracts negotiated by these companies based on lowest price, and undercutting, have resulted in ground handlers negotiating contracts that are huge loss-makers, thus attacking our members terms and conditions. The price wars have caused major problems for unionised companies such as Aviance and Servisair.

Towards the end of 2009, Aviance announced that it was selling two-thirds of its business to Servisair. This involved contracts at regional airports and Heathrow (except T1). This has caused worry and anxiety to our members in the former Aviance. However, due to our national recognition agreement and long standing relationship with Servisair, we have worked hard to try and dispel those worries.

Servisair

At the time of writing this report, meetings of our stewards were being convened to begin preparing the 2010 pay claim. Meetings with the company on the further integration of the former Aviance members into the national agreements are to continue.

British Airways

BA has continued to receive high profile news coverage, much for the wrong reasons. BA is a much loved iconic and UK flag-flying institution. However, it has lurched from financial crisis to financial crisis in the last twelve months. As a premium airline, the downturn in the economy and the reduction of premium paying flyers and business travellers has resulted in cumulative losses close to £1 billion.

The company's cash-burn situation resulted in many scaremongering stories, and resulted in concerns being expressed by GMB that the company was talking itself down. We had a very successful lobby of the shareholders meeting, and produced a very good letter which was handed to shareholders. So successful was the handout to shareholders that many of them raised our concerns in the meeting, which resulted in the Chairman of BA publicly agreeing with many of the points we raised. Our shareholders event received very high publicity here in the UK and globally, due to the efforts of GMB's communications department to acquire some lemmings as part of the publicity stunt.

The company wants to introduce drastic cuts in staffing levels at terminals, and amongst cabin crew. Cuts and reorganisations have already taken place in its head office. New orders for aircraft have been deferred, along with thousands of contracts being looked at to introduce reductions in price and charges. The company pensions deficit has grown, with its pension schemes having a £3.5bn deficit. At the time of writing this report, negotiations were continuing on the pension scheme deficits. Negotiations, which have now lasted for over 12 months on staffing levels and reductions (including T&C's), were still ongoing with the company. A few mass meetings of members have taken place, with one particular meeting attracting over a thousand terminals based staff to the meeting.

The proposed merger with Spain's major airline, Iberia, may pose some challenges for the future. In particular, over £400m of synergies have been studied. Although this may cause further worry and uncertainty to our members, the fact that BA is being strangled by cut-throat competition, and the "open skies" agreement, plus the downturn in the economy and the shift from premium travel to lower-cost forms of travel should help secure its future as a company for the next 20 years.

Our stewards continue to self-organise themselves to a high standard. We have had increases in new stewards at both the terminals in Heathrow and Gatwick. Our terminals branch now has a very good website, twitter and more traditional

communications process for our members. By increasing our levels of representation and communication, we will hopefully create new increases in membership.

BMI

BMI, the UK's second-largest premium carrier, has also suffered many problems. Early in 2009 the airline withdrew from many UK regional airports.

In 2009, we agreed to defer the pay rise until 2010 due to the severe economic problems of the company. This helped the company parade itself for takeover, which resulted in Lufthansa taking full control of the struggling airline. The airline's new owners agreed to an immediate cash injection of £95m, if a restructuring plan was introduced, to save the airline from going under. This meant that 500 redundancies were sought, with many coming from the engineering, flight deck and aircrew communities, with some reductions in the terminals, offices and operations communities. Our stewards worked very hard to ensure no compulsory redundancies took place. As a result of the companies finances the final salary pension scheme was closed to new accrual. Negotiations did take place on the creation of a DC scheme.

The GMB regions have increased our organisational capability in the company. We now have reps at both of Scotland's principal airports, along with new stewards at Heathrow. The company are continuing to develop a closer relationship nationally with GMB.

British Energy / EDF

Despite efforts by the company to undermine the unions in British Energy, we sought the views of our members in a ballot, who voted overwhelmingly to undertake industrial action. As a result, the company came back to the negotiating table, and eventually, in conjunction along with the other unions, we concluded a one-year pay deal with no strings which included 3% on base pay and all flow throughs.

To enable better organisation to be developed, a meeting took place early in 2010 with all the senior stewards from the different companies within EDF. A future programme of GMB inter-union activity and meetings has now been agreed.

Water

The water industry continues to attract huge profits. In 2009, the companies collectively made operating profits of over £3 billion. Yet when the industry regulator (Ofwat) proposed to look at consumer interests and bring bills down, the howls of protest signalled a break-down in the traditional consensus between Ofwat and the water companies, with the industry as a whole publicly criticising the regulator. The industry also claimed that if it were to put in place the regulators proposals this would entail companies outsourcing and downsizing.

GMB secured meetings with the Secretary of State, Hillary Benn, where we put forward our views. We also took the Government to task for its support for the recommendations of the Cave Report for increasing competition in the water industry, which was being consulted on by DEFRA. GMB is the only trade union operating in the water industry which consistently calls for the return of the industry to public ownership, in line with GMB policy.

A very successful water conference was held for shop stewards. The first day of the conference was held in Parliament. The Minister for Water was the keynote speaker, and there were other speakers from Ofwat, the Parliamentary All-Party Group on Water, CC Water (representing consumers) and Greenwich University. The second day focused on identifying the organising and industrial priorities for the water industry and included an introduction to the GMB@Work organising agenda.

Our stewards helped to create an enthusiastic conference. As a result of such a successful conference, a national water shop stewards combine was created. A work programme has been looked at, with an emphasis on mapping the industry and looking at infill opportunities.

MANUFACTURING SECTION

MANUFACTURING SECTION NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Martin Shaw	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
John Dolan	GMB Scotland
Ann McLaren	GMB Scotland
Brenda Fraser	London Region
Audrey Harry	Midlands & East Coast Region
Paul Wheatley	Midlands & East Coast Region
Mark Bartlett	Midlands & East Coast Region
Edward Marnell	North West & Irish Region
John McDonnell	North West & Irish Region
Andy McGivern	North West & Irish Region
Ron Waugh	North West & Irish Region (Section President)
Gerry Ferguson	Northern Region
Mary Hutchinson	Northern Region
Bernard Taylor	Northern Region
Sheila Bearcroft	South Western Region
Brian Farr	South Western Region
Don McGregor	South Western Region
Ann Leader	South Western Region
Brian Burton	Southern Region (Section Vice President)
Michael Laws	Southern Region
Tommy Hall	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region

MANUFACTURING SECTION NATIONAL OFFICERS

Phil Davies - National Secretary
Keith Hazlewood - National Secretary
Allan Black - National Officer

PHIL DAVIES, NATIONAL SECRETARY

Introduction

The Manufacturing Section continues to bear the brunt of the deepest recession for over 50 years. Steelworkers, construction workers, furniture workers and many more have lost their jobs or are on short time working. Those people who are in work have had to endure a prolonged pay freeze.

During the last year members within the Manufacturing Section have had to accept cuts in pay and conditions which were fought for over many years and which are now being put under threat or drastically reduced. The employers have taken full advantage of the current economic situation. National collective bargaining has suffered as a consequence and workers' basic rights have been taken away. Throughout the economic crisis the government has poured billions of pounds into the banks and financial systems but little or no finance has been put into the British manufacturing industry. Even the mighty arms industry has struggled to see new investment.

UK manufacturing workers are the most skilled and productive in the world and of course quite rightly they demand decent pay and conditions.

The obscene rush to exploit the poor of the world has resulted in a race to the bottom. China, India and many other parts of Asia have become the new slave countries of the 21st Century. High investment in low wage economies keeping the workers in conditions that are only fit for the 1850s and keeping trade unions out of the workplace is totally unacceptable.

It will end one day. The world is going to change in the next 20 years. Low pay and slave conditions will eventually disappear. The world trade unions will see to that. When it does change what will the position of UK manufacturing be. Will the skills still be available and what else will we lose over the next 20 years?

At present there is still time to preserve the UK skill base. The UK manufacturing workers can still make jet engines and can still produce the best furniture. We are still capable of building and designing the best ships. The UK manufacturing workforce can produce products from paper clips to major power stations and oil refinery projects.

Our UK strengths are in the fact that British women and men have the ability to use by hand and brain to build the future wealth of the UK. Senior bankers never make anything but a financial mess and the Government needs to rethink its policy. National industries do work; UK commuters want to travel to work on trains, buses and cars made in UK factory sites.

Finally I would like to thank the Officers, Section Committee, Shop Stewards, Activists and Members for all their hard work over the last difficult 12 months and of course the CEC, the Senior Management Team and our National Office Staff.

CONSTRUCTION

Over the last 10 years we have always received above inflation increases. The three main trade unions: UCATT, TGWU (now Unite) and GMB have managed to secure better pay for their members. What has not been achieved over those years is any reduction in the working week. Holidays have remained static and health and safety has continued to be a major concern.

The industry is said to employ over 1.8 million workers. The contradiction in this is the interpretation of the word 'employ'. Bogus employment, fraud and tax avoidance still dominate the industry. Dubious arrangements with some employers have led to the exclusion of some workers based on their choice of union membership. The ultimate sanction by the employer to keep a secret list of those union members who they no longer want to employ was recently uncovered and major construction companies were found to have used the Kerr blacklists. The reaction of the Courts was only to impose a small fine.

The national Working Rule Agreement is weak and does not stop the exploitation of workers. The Employers Association chose to turn a blind eye to false employment and the Government refused to police or introduce legislation to stop false employment. The joint trade unions have been unable to stop this.

The real figures behind employment on the Olympics need to come under real examination. For instance it is commonly thought that large numbers of local labour have already come from around the world but have been registered as local residents.

Pay

The fact that the trade unions have done reasonably well over the last 10 years on national pay has made it much harder for the members to accept the 12 month pay freeze which the employers imposed in June 2009. This year's pay negotiations have only just started and another pay freeze for the industry may be on the cards.

Olympics

We have been involved with the monitoring group which is formally known as the Programme Review Group and is comprised of National Officers from UCATT, GMB, Unite (TGWU) and Unite (Amicus). Meetings have been few and far between and recently obstacles have been put in place to make it difficult for GMB to send a substitute to these meetings. Visits around the site are a poor substitute for real involvement.

We are very concerned about the real number of trainees and apprentices on the site and GMB is suspicious of the figures being quoted.

The legacy of the Games is also questionable. What will be left?

On a positive side accidents of a serious nature have been low and productivity seems to be high. There is no doubt that the ODA will produce a Games that we will all be proud of but the question of best employment practice and equal opportunity for local UK workers still remains unanswered. It would be very negative if we found that local UK skilled workers were overworked and replaced by cheap labour.

ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION

National responsibility for the engineering construction industry was transferred to me in August 2010; my thanks to Keith Hazlewood who had previous responsibility.

At the time I took over responsibility the industry had major problems and there were regular unofficial actions being taken at several power stations and oil refinery sites across the UK. Pay talks were about to start. The TU Side consisted of GMB, Unite (TGWU) and Unite (Amicus). Traditionally a Unite National Officer had led the TU Side and was responsible for all correspondence. It is fair to say that Unite has dominated relationships with the ECIA (the employers body).

Changes needed to be made. A national office staff member was given responsibility to set up an engineering construction database of GMB Officers and Shop Stewards. GMB National Office took over control and responsibility

for correspondence with our stewards. The GMB General Secretary became involved and our stewards were called to a meeting in London one Sunday before the National Joint Shop Stewards met in Eastbourne. It is also fair to say that GMB took control of the Lindsey Oil dispute and it was only settled by the determination of our shop stewards and the tremendous support shown by GMB General Secretary, Paul Kenny.

The final negotiation took 12 hours to complete and at 1am in the morning the company signed an agreement reinstating over 600 sacked workers. There were a number of commitments agreed during the negotiations and unfortunately it was less than forty-eight hours before the main contractors breached the agreement. Nevertheless we were able to get our members back on site. Over the next few months we undertook to negotiate alterations to the national agreement.

GMB carried out a successful industrial action ballot and those people who doubted that this could be achieved were proved wrong. I have no doubt that the threat of industrial action from the workers within the industry led to an honourable pay settlement and put a marker down to the employers that GMB will not be treated as a second class trade union.

Following negotiations we achieved a 2% pay increase; full details of the offer can be found at www.njceci.org.uk (Go to 'Downloads' > Categories: Communiqués 2009).

The main issue for all our members within this industry is continuous employment and the right for any worker to be employed and to enjoy the pay and benefits of the national agreement. GMB has now uncovered several employers flouting these rights and discriminating against UK workers. This was never more so than the events at Staythorpe power station.

In August 2009 redundancies were announced amongst the UK workforce. No consultation with the trade unions and no consideration was given to the fact that there was a large volume of non UK labour on the site who had been excluded from any redundancy selection. In December 2009 it was discovered that some of the non UK workers were being underpaid by up to £1300 per month and it now became very clear why the contractors wanted non UK labour.

A strike ballot was called for and a panel hearing under the NAECI agreement took place. The results were that all our members who had money stopped out of their wages were reimbursed. The non UK labour was paid back thousands of pounds for the underpayment. The redundancies were withdrawn to enable a fair and proper procedure to be implemented. This was a major win for GMB which was due mainly to the hard work of the Midlands & East Coast Regional Officer, Andy Fletcher.

We have now moved more resources into the engineering construction industry and we are confident that our membership will increase.

BRITISH FURNITURE INDUSTRY

BFM

The annual pay negotiations started in October 2010 and so far have produced not a single penny increase in pay rates. The employers' representatives have hidden behind the economic situation.

It is true to say that a very large part of the industry is suffering short time working. Some companies have introduced two and three day working so our members are suffering massive pay cuts. It is now time that the Government introduced a proper guaranteed week and invest in our members when companies have no work. A pay freeze is now in place.

Furniture Survey

With the help of our Manufacturing Section PAs work is progressing on a GMB workplace member survey. For the first time we have identified 100 companies across all Regions that employ our members. The intention will be to introduce a national database for furniture workers showing how many members we have in each company, whether we have formal recognition arrangements, rates of pay and other terms. The survey will also show our strengths and weaknesses.

The industry employs around 130,000 workers. GMB which is the largest union has around 5,000 members so recruitment opportunities are real.

BFC

We continue to play a role and the work is both valuable and important not only to those that work in the industry but to the general public. The fact that around 70% of all imported furniture tested from outside the European Community fails the UK flammability test is a real threat to the UK public.

We must pay tribute to the hard work that Don McGregor has done over the years in representing GMB on the BFC. Since his resignation due to ill health we have found it difficult to replace Don with an experienced furniture person. At the time of writing we are seeking a nomination to sit on the BFC.

Furniture Fire Safety

Some years ago GMB organised a short film to show the dangers of non flammable imported furniture. This in our opinion started a debate which the British Furniture Confederation (BFC) and the Furniture Industry Research Association (FIRA) have taken up. In Spring 2009 FIRA produced a guide to the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) Safety Regulations:

"FIRA's flammability specialists have compiled the guide supported by invaluable input from BFC members (NBF BCFA, BFM and AMUSF) and other industry experts. The guide covers the flammability requirements for all upholstered domestic products including sofas, armchairs, beds, mattresses, mattress toppers and some outdoor furniture. The guide provides advice on the requirements for manufacturers of fabrics and foams as well as the manufacturer/retailer of the final product. Essential for all manufacturers, importers and retailers the guide will be freely available either as a limited edition document or as a download. Government research estimates that the regulations have saved between 710 and 1860 lives and countless more injuries".

The industry was at one time 30% organised. The membership was formidable and very skilled. Currently we are probably looking at 4% organised but with some hard work there is no reason why this industry cannot be reorganised.

BRITISH SAWMILLING INDUSTRY

The industry has been badly affected by the downturn in the construction industry. The employers have gone through closure programmes and short time working.

The 2009 pay negotiations resulted in a pay freeze and the 2010 pay negotiations have been delayed.

The future for the whole industry looks bleak and the national agreement which has been around since 1946 looks in danger of being terminated. Membership has reduced to an all time low and the small membership that is affected by the agreement will now have to look at local collective bargaining.

FINNFOREST UK LIMITED

Finnforest is one of the better sawmilling and timber importers. Our members took a pay freeze in 2009. The company was able to do this because national company bargaining in previous years have resulted in well above inflation increases. The membership being amongst the highest paid in the sawmilling industry.

The recession has taken its toll on Finnforest. Several mills in Finland and Germany have been closed so it should have been no surprise when in November 2009 the company announced the possible closure of the Tilbury site with the loss of 116 GMB members' jobs. Several months of negotiating by me and the Tilbury shop stewards has resulted in a massive redundancy settlement; a delay in the first redundancies until July 2010 and the final redundancies in December 2010. We have also been able to create 80+ jobs at the plant in Boston, Lincolnshire.

The negotiations were helped tremendously by our European Officer, Kathleen Walker Shaw who contacted the Finns and their trade unions; the shop stewards in other plants in the UK also pitched in with messages of solidarity but most of all our shop stewards at Tilbury who are tremendous trade unionists and who never complained about burning the midnight hours to reach a settlement.

INSTITUTE OF ORGAN BUILDERS (IBO)

Despite the recession we were able to conclude a pay increase of 2% from 1st January 2010. The industry remains buoyant with at least two years work already secured.

REMPLOY LIMITED

The 6th/7th/8th March 2008 will always remain significant dates in the minds of 5600 disabled workers, their family members and their supporters including dozens of GMB Officers and staff. That three day period was the time that Remploy started to close 29 factory sites and put 2800 disabled and non disabled people on the scrapheap.

In years to come when historians look back at political regimes and assess what they did to lose power in my opinion the closing of a Remploy factory and the attack on disabled workers ranks as high as the worst mistakes over the economy and the dishonesty over Iraq and Afghanistan. The most vulnerable in our Society were allowed to be attacked and worst of all they were sacked because they were disabled.

Since then we have carried out a survey of the people who were sacked and the findings are as follows:

General information

522 ex Remploy employees had taken voluntary redundancy and 56 of them decided to take early retirement after that. 112 were made compulsory redundant and 9 of these later took early retirement.

92 people took early retirement as their first choice after being made redundant.

9 out of 735 ex Remploy employees retired in the normal way.

This shows that nearly all of those who left now receive State Benefits.

Current employment situation

Only 190, which is 26% of those who returned the questionnaires, found a job, but only:

37 (5%) of them claimed that their new job is better paid,

44 (6%) have a pension in their new job,

3 (4.5%) have better holidays now than they used to have with Remploy,

62 (8.4%) have a sick pay scheme.

Support from Remploy

Out of 735 questionnaires processed only 104 (14.1%) people admitted receiving help from Remploy to find a new job, whilst 510 (69.4%) claimed there was no support offered/given to them at all.

121 did not answer the question or the question wasn't applicable (e.g. early/normal retirement).

Would you come back to Remploy?

353 of 735 (48%) would like to come back to Remploy factories if given the opportunity.

101 (13.7%) were not interested in coming back (e.g. happy with the current employer, retired etc.).

281 did not answer the question or the question was not applicable (e.g. unemployed, early/normal retirement).

The results were brought to the attention of the Minister and Secretary of State but so far nothing has happened.

Despite protests from the trade unions the company goes from bad to worse. Directors have been replaced with even worse directors, new senior managers have been taken on and those who are decent are quickly reduced to being non effective. Senior management is still the same as before with the number of senior managers staying the same but with half the factory workforce. At the last count there were over 470 senior managers. We have corresponded with the Minister but it is obvious in his replies that he does not care and always giving the same answer "I do not run the company".

The closure of the Remploy York factory has led to the loss of over 56 jobs. We have been trying to set up a workers' cooperative and have received tremendous encouragement from GMB Regional Secretary, Tim Roache and GMB General Secretary, Paul Kenny. At the time of writing this report the problem seems to be that of funding.

Pay and conditions

The new HR Director led the negotiations on behalf of the company and to say that her inexperience showed from day one is an understatement. The negotiations lasted nearly 8 months with the TU Side requesting that ACAS be brought in to help the management side. The company then decided to class all Remploy employees as civil servants in order to try to restrict them to a 1% increase. After a marathon forty-eight hour negotiation the trade unions were able to achieve a settlement of between 1% and 2.5% with the vast majority of shopfloor workers receiving the higher percentage.

A major part of this year's agreement is the increase to 42 days of pre-retirement leave which can be taken by members in their last year of employment and which will be paid at full pay. This is a massive improvement in their preparation towards retirement. There is still a great deal for us to do as a trade union. The systems and trade union organisation that we have within Remploy means we can do the important job of keeping factory sites open.

FUNERAL INDUSTRY

Co-op Funeralcare

We are now entering the third year of derecognition. The so called caring Co-op continues to discriminate our shop stewards and activist and attack GMB members solely for being GMB members. Several approaches through the General Secretary have been made over the last year but we are still being kept from representing GMB members.

We must congratulate George Shearman and his branch for the magnificent support they have given to GMB members and the determination they have shown in their defence of funeral workers.

London Association of Funeral Directors (LAFD)

We were able to achieve a 2.7% increase in the rates of pay for 2009/2010. Negotiations are now about to start for 2010/2011.

TEXTILES

The industry continues to decline its UK manufacturing base. Most of what is left within the UK is in the hands of some very dubious people; cash in hand, long hours and unsafe conditions are now back in fashion. Nowhere is it worse than in the backstreets of Manchester. Victorian mills have been turned into Victorian textile sweatshops. The area around Ancoates near the city centre and recently shown on TV has uncovered large factory sites employing mainly

Asian women working in horrendous conditions. Urgent government action is needed to stop the spread of employment abuse.

The pay negotiations with the BCIA have been delayed due to the state of the UK economy. Early indications from the employers are that a pay freeze is on the cards. If this does happen then the BCIA agreement will be dead in the water.

INTERNATIONAL

We would like to start this section by thanking Kathleen Walker Shaw and our Brussels Office for the magnificent work they have done for the Manufacturing Section.

We attended the ITGLWF World Congress in Frankfurt accompanied by Brenda Fraser and Sheila Bearcroft. The textile conference was overshadowed by the sudden death 10 days before of the General Secretary, Neil Kearney. Neil was a tremendous advocate of cooperation between international trade union organisations and he worked tirelessly to bring trade unionism into new emerging economies such as Asia and Africa. For most of his life Neil worked to reduce the dependence that some families have on child labour. He will be sadly missed by all who knew him. The conference was further dominated by the proposed merger in July 2010 of the ITGLWF and two other international federations. Patrick Itschert was elected as the new General Secretary. We wish Patrick well for the future.

We also attended the BWI World Congress in Lille accompanied by two Lay Reps: Geoff Burch (Finnforest) and Paul Wheatley (CEC Member). The theme of the conference was cooperation between international trade unions and the exploitation of posted workers. The BWI General Secretary, Anita Normark retired and we wish Anita well in her retirement. Ambet Yuson was elected as the new General Secretary and we wish Ambet well in his new position.

The BWI remains a strong independent international who were able to help us during the last 12 months in a dispute we had over the closure of Finnforest Tilbury. We intend to take up seats on those committees that affect our members especially the health and safety committees and construction committee.

We increasingly deal with more multi national companies and are getting more and more legislation coming from Europe in a number of industries involved in manufacturing, so it is imperative that we keep a presence both European and internationally to have an input into these changes. It is very important that we have international standards across the world especially when it comes to competing for work globally where we are striving for a level playing field and not competing against countries like India whose working conditions must be one of the worst in the world who would benefit from common international standards.

We have direct access and input into European policies with our presence by having an office in Brussels which we utilize to the benefit of GMB members supported by Kathleen Walker Shaw and Sarah King who use their influence by having a local presence in Europe.

We represent GMB on a number of European and International bodies and attended a recent World Building Materials Conference held in Turkey and organised by the International Chemical Workers Federation. Allan Black has been elected Vice President of this sub Committee and thus GMB has regained its seat on the ICEM Executive Committee. Most of the sector is in the hands of a dozen or so world wide companies and this forum presents us with an excellent opportunity to exchange experiences with colleagues from across the world.

At European level the European Chemical Workers Federation has been extremely helpful to GMB in promoting the creation of European Works Councils and we are playing a full role in these efforts.

We also attend the European Food Workers Federation meetings and this year we have re-established GMB on its Executive Committee in the person of Margaret Boyd, GMB Scotland senior lay rep.

KEITH HAZLEWOOD, NATIONAL SECRETARY

Since last year's report very much the same message that we are experiencing with closures, job losses, pay cuts, pay freezes, closure of final salary pension schemes and announcement after announcement once again brought about by the current recession.

The Unions are working with employers to minimise the impact of the recession and look at ways of saving jobs, avoiding cutbacks and advising companies to hold their nerve rather than a knee jerk reaction resulting in closures and the worsening of our members' terms and conditions.

AEROSPACE

Since my last report there has been very little change within the Aerospace industry. Again we are constantly lobbying the UK Government to try and save this industry. We will continue lobbying to save jobs across the aerospace industry and the supply chain.

Bombardier in Belfast has secured the long awaited C series aircraft which in the short term has brought with it difficulties, although the long term for the site looks pretty good and the future going forward. The aerospace industries are global and all we have ever asked for is a level playing field when competing for orders which is difficult to achieve when some countries are subsidising the industry.

We have the sad story of some companies closing with work being sent to other locations of the UK; some work even being sent outside the UK. Companies like Airbus, Bombardier and BAE systems all have to fight hard to maintain current work and equally as difficult in trying to get new work. We will, however continue to lobby and do whatever we can to secure a presence in the UK for aerospace related industries and the supply chain.

THE OFFSHORE INDUSTRY

Last year I reported on the long standing issue with regards to the working time directive offshore and the interpretation of the holiday entitlements for people working in the offshore industry. I reported this issue had been resolved for the 2007 negotiations. I can now confirm that although the agreement was negotiated with the Offshore Contractors Association (OCA) and the resolve to the issue of the holiday entitlement offshore, we still have to date some companies that are not complying with the agreement by not paying the full holiday entitlement to its employees. In the last 6 months we have had 4 national reference failures to agree on the full implementation of the holiday entitlement that were negotiated and agreed by the OCA. These companies that are not complying with the Agreement are companies that are saying that the client is refusing to pay the contractor the full 4 week holiday entitlement. We are currently trying to get a meeting with the clients and the OCA with the national officials to see if we can find any common ground and persuade the clients to adhere to the agreed holiday entitlements.

In 2008 we achieved a 4.3% one year deal on the basic rate with improvements on the increments for example sickness benefit etc. We did not think it would be appropriate to go beyond a one year deal bearing in mind we still had some OCA member companies that were not complying with the agreement reached in 2007, so we thought it would be appropriate to give these companies the opportunity by just having a one year deal to honour the agreement.

I also informed you that we had submitted the 2009 pay claim. At the first meeting the employers offered us a pay freeze. Our initial response was to tell the employers to go back to the members and review their position and put forward a realistic offer. In the meantime, we should put negotiations on hold until such time as all the OCA member companies comply with the 2007 agreement regarding the working time holidays entitlement, and until the current recession buys a bit of time when things hopefully begin to improve.

In September of last year we met with the employers, the fourth meeting and they were still adamant that there would be a pay freeze and they could not afford to pay any increases this year. We then went to the members offshore with a consultative ballot. The response to this was very disappointing to say the least. We had no alternative but to go back to the OCA and tell them that our members had accepted the pay freeze for 2009 and would expect the employers to take this into consideration when we submitted the pay claim for 2010.

In January this year we submitted a nine point claim for the 2010 wage negotiations. The employers went away to consider the claim and at the time of submitting this report, negotiations were still ongoing.

The offshore industry, much the same as other industries is feeling the effect of the current skills shortage and the ageing workforce. To assist the issue in the short term we have negotiated an agreement with a couple of companies for them to use Filipino labour on a top up basis and not instead of UK labour. These agreements so far have worked and there has been no exploitation of these Filipinos because in the agreement we emphasised that these contractors would be paid the industry rate which we have watched very closely.

We are constantly trying to increase the membership offshore which so far we have been successful mainly at the heliports. We are still in the process of arranging other meetings with potential members when they go offshore, although we are experiencing issues with other unions encroaching on the construction maintenance side of the industry, which is predominantly the craft side of the offshore sector.

SHIPBUILDING

The UK shipbuilding industry continues to be one of mixed fortunes. On one hand we have the demise of commercial shipbuilding in the UK with only one yard still managing to operate and that is on the verge of closure which would be a sad day for commercial shipbuilding in the UK. On the other hand in the UK defence shipbuilding industry we have the biggest order book ever, we are currently building the last of 6 type 45 Destroyers which will be launched later this year

then work will continue on the 2 super aircraft carriers. The carriers are of such size that no one yard can accommodate the build of them. They are being built in 5 blocks in various yards up and down the country and then floated up to Rosyth in Scotland which is only one of two yards big enough to facilitate the assembling of the super aircraft carriers. Even then, the yard has had quite a lot of extension work done to it to be able to facilitate this assemble of the carriers.

Beyond the carrier programme we have a number of ships under the MARS programme. Once again, all ships for the Royal Navy and there are further orders being placed as I am writing this report. It is important that we secure orders like the future surface combatant ships.

The Industry's two major companies Vosper Thornycroft from Portsmouth and BAE Systems last year joined together calling themselves BVT Surface Fleet of which BAE Systems held 55% of the shares in the new company and VT 45%. I can now confirm that BAE Systems has bought VT's 45% of the shares and now solely owns the company which is called BAE Systems Surface Ships. It is working on an alliance between the UK yards in conjunction with the MOD under the UK Defence Industrial Strategy. This will hopefully stabilise the industry and eliminate the cut throat competition that has existed between the yards which has resulted in too many casualties in the past.

We are still building the astute submarines at Barrow in Furness yards which is now called BAE Systems Submarine Solutions. Recently the MOD have instructed BAE Systems to slow down the work on the submarines under the defence budget review. This will not only extend the length of the build of these submarines by as much as 9 month per boat, but will also mean there will be excess labour and could put them in a situation where they will have to shed labour. We are looking at ways of addressing the job losses at the Barrow facility and one of the avenues we are exploring is using the mobility agreement amongst all of the BAE Systems yards as a process of eliminating any compulsory job losses.

Within the last three months we have had meetings with the MOD Procurement Minister, Quentin Davies and also the Secretary of State for Defence, Bob Ainsworth and our concerns were about the recent media speculation of defence cuts and concerns as to what this impact would have on the two aircraft carriers and future orders. We got a categorical assurance from Bob Ainsworth that the carrier programme is now signed and will definitely go ahead but is still not sure what type of aircrafts will be used.

Our main concerns are that if we get a Tory government at the next general election that they have indicated there will be changes in the defence programme and spending, which sends a very serious message to the all defence programmes.

ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES

In general engineering things have got worse. The same sad stories of pay cuts, pay freezes, job losses and an attempt to keep industries afloat which this year has been accelerated by the current recession. The recession has had a substantial impact all across UK manufacturing. We need to continue to work together with UK employers the government and the employers federation in an attempt to stabilise UK manufacturing jobs and to formulate a strategy that will keep manufacturing based in the UK until we come out of the recession and going forward. At this moment in time it looks almost impossible. We still have to compete against countries like China, Japan and India who we are tendering for work that low that any UK company could not survive. We still have this culture of it being easier and quicker to close UK establishments rather than other countries in Europe and beyond with less impact.

Once again all we have ever asked for is a level playing field and at this moment in time we don't have it. As in other industries we are experiencing the ever increasing skill shortages and we need this addressing by investment in training and the reintroduction of apprenticeships for all engineering related industries to be able to survive and compete.

We still have the problem of the ageing workforce with people leaving the industry or retiring and not being replaced. Some companies are realising that they need to employ apprentices in order to survive but at the ratio that they can afford to employ apprentices.

There is an ever increasing use of companies employing non UK labour and in some cases exploiting our European colleagues by paying under the rate for the job, making them a cheaper alternative which we need to address to maintain our current terms and conditions and make sure our European colleagues are not being exploited by these ruthless employers.

UK CAR MANUFACTURING

This industry is mainly serviced by the Birmingham region of which I would like to thank Bert Hill and his colleagues for all the work they have done in the Industry.

The UK Automotive sector is vital for UK manufacturing that is currently very fragile. What has become even more apparent during the stressful times of the recent recession is that short term support for the industry is crucial. Once jobs in this sector are lost they are gone forever, as the car industry is a global commodity designed and produced in global industrial networks. This message has been stressed strongly to the present government.

However, this point has not been lost on our economic competitors who have moved swiftly to support their own industries. More backing and support in developing and transforming the car fleets around the world to lower carbon vehicles is very apparent. In UK car manufacturing we need a clear strategic planned and co ordinate approach to keep our industry afloat. There's an increasing trend for UK based manufacturers to source it from overseas which is having a major impact on our domestic supply chain.

As I am writing this report Jaguar and Landrover have submitted to their unions their strategic review. The plan identifies decisive measures that will see them through the next 12 to 18 months (short term) and as talks developed, there is a long term plan that includes new starter rates, changes to pension scheme arrangements, offshore purchasing in India and China, overseas manufacturing and the closure of one of the West Midlands plant. Jaguar/landrover state that these measures have been taken to sustain new product ranges, manufacturing costs and efficiency to support performance and technology excellence. There will be a cost because the new generation of lightweight cars, supports cars and SUVs with hybrids and electrification technology aimed to significantly reduce fuel consumption and CO2 will be a major challenge in the UK.

Finally, the UK automotive manufacturing sector has moved further away from volume car productions. Over the last five years we have witnessed planned closures at companies like MG Rover at Longbridge, Peugeot, Ford at Dagenham, Jaguar and Aston Martin, plus the pending announcement of Jaguar Landrover to close.

The status of the component supply chain is another area of great concern. Experts state that further projective decline will happen at most firms. In a recent report from Peter Mandelson of the new automotive innovation and growth team, he states that the UK automotive industry remains a critical part of the UK's economy. We totally agree for once but it is too late.

CORUS

It is fair to say the last 12 months within the CORUS UK Steelmaking business has been horrendous.

The Company went from very large profits to extremely large losses as soon as the recession kicked in.

The Company gave the Unions the news we all dreaded in July 2009 that 5,000 jobs were likely to be lost across their UK business.

On top of that we had the threatened closure of Teesside Cast Products (TCP) with another 2,600 direct jobs and possibly double or even treble that number when the supply chain and contractors are taken into account.

The company also stopped all bonus payments which formed part of our member's terms and conditions.

The GMB along with our other Union colleagues registered tribunals for breach of Contract/Unlawful Deduction cases and thankfully the Company backed off and paid the bonus owed to our members.

The Company also decided that it would close the Final Salary Pension scheme to new starters without even consulting with the trade unions.

The GMB and our union colleagues responded by threatening industrial action and once again the Company backed off and have been consulting with the Unions to find a sensible solution to the problems with the Company Pension Scheme.

At the time of writing this report, mid February 2010, there appears to be some signs of an upturn in the steel market.

TEESIDE CAST PRODUCTS

The Trade Unions and Corus formulated a Task Force to gather information and look at ways of keeping the Teeside plant open. To look at potential buyers, additional work, any other interested parties and ways at mitigating any compulsory job losses.

The plant was supposed to mothballed at the end of January 2010 but at the first meeting we negotiated an extension of one month to the end of February 2010 to give the opportunity for any interested parties to put together a realistic bid for the plant.

At the conclusion of the first meeting, we managed to move Corus which resulted in them keeping the Redcar South Bank Coke ovens open for the next three years saving 120 of the 1,700 jobs that would be affected. The Coke ovens will operate even if steel making ceases at TCP.

There were two serious potential buyers but Corus would not divulge who they were. There is a strong suspicion that Corus do not want any steel making competition in the UK. The National Steel Committee is trying to arrange a joint meeting with Corus and the Prime Minister with both parties present.

At the time of writing this report the steel committee is still optimistic that a customer or buyer will keep Teeside Steel works open.

I would like to put on record my thanks to Jimmy Skivington who has been constantly involved throughout the crisis.

ALLAN BLACK, NATIONAL OFFICER

Introduction

During the year since the last GMB Congress many of the industries on my sheet, particularly the building materials sector, have continued to suffer from the depths of the current recession brought about by the irresponsible activities of the major banks. For the construction (and therefore building materials sector) it is a double whammy!. The Industry is almost always first in to a recession of any kind as building projects are relatively easy to cancel or defer. In addition the DIY market tends to shrink as people put off housing repairs and maintenance, fearful of future employment prospects. However, as Congress and the Section Conference will be aware, in this recession the second part of the hit comes from the apparent reluctance of the banks (even those in theory owned in whole or in part by the taxpayer) and the building societies to advance mortgages, particularly to first time buyers. This reluctance is either represented by a point blank refusal or the imposition of such conditions regarding deposit levels that first time buyers are frozen out of the private sector housing market with the consequential disastrous effects on the private house building sector. In past generations this slack could be taken up by expanding the public sector needs to provide social housing. However, the systematic withdrawal from the provision of social housing inspired by successive Governments in the 80s and 90s means that this capacity is no longer available. The alternatives that have been created are pale imitations of what existed and cannot remotely fill the gap. Housing replacement levels in the UK, particularly social housing, have never been satisfactory, but the levels of starts and completions in 2009 have plumbed new depths. This in turn is reflected in massive stocks of brick, plasterwood, cement, glass and the other materials the manufacture of which provides jobs for GMB members on my sheet. The employers in the sector have responded to falls in the demand of 30% or more in two ways. As is their tradition they have closed plants costing our member their jobs-

Accrington Brick

Westbury Cement

Stairport Brick

Steerpoint Brick

Parts of British Gypsum

Parts of Hanson Aggregates

Unfortunately, the list is endless and we have not, I fear, seen the last closure yet. The second response from the Employers has been to attack long established terms and conditions of employment of our members as part (sometimes the whole) of a "cost cutting" exercise. Shift allowances/patterns have been attacked, allowances of all sorts cut, overtime premia questioned (not that much overtime is currently being worked in the sector) and, above all, pension provision is being savaged. Companies in the sector like Lafarge and Pilkington have either negotiated changes to their pension schemes involving a reduction in employer costs or are in the process of doing so. I have obviously been involved in trying to defend our members' interests and engage in damage limitation

The collapse of demand in the UK for building materials is obvious and real. In this sector our members are understandably concerned first and foremost to protect their jobs. Thus when Employers propose cuts or reductions or lay offs designed allegedly to save jobs we have no real option but to listen and to consider. However, my sheet also covers Employers in other sectors who are not impacted or not impacted to anything like the building materials sector and in these a much more cynical game in being played.

My sheet also encompasses at national level the GMB membership in food manufacturing. To listen to some of the Employers in this area, you would believe that one of the responses of people to the recession is to stop eating.

Many of the largest food companies in the UK are subsidiaries of household names multi nationals. Unilever and Nestle for instance fall into this category. Others are owned by faceless equity capital companies which have no regard whatever for the social impact of decisions they take. There is no comprehension or concern for instance in the mind of its owners about the fact that most of the UK factories operated by United Biscuits are located in some of the areas of the highest social deprivation in the country.

The fact that buying food is not a matter of choice means that these companies are, to an extent protected from the worst effects of the recession. This economic reality has not stopped some of these companies attacking our members' basic terms and conditions – and of course, pension schemes yet again. This reality is dealt with in more detail later in my report.

I now want to deal with the specific rather than the general and use the rest of the report to update Congress and the Section Conference on the key changes impacting our members since we met last year.

BUILDING MATERIALS

Hanson Group

It now makes sense to deal with Hanson as a whole since although the Group – for whatever reason – continues to maintain the fiction of divisional bargaining the reality is that their stance is being centrally determined.

Thus in all three allegedly separate divisions in the UK:

Castle Cement

Hanson Aggregates

Hanson Building Products

The response to claims for improvements in terms and conditions in 2010 has been a pay freeze. In Building Products, this has been reluctantly accepted by our members in view of the number of closures by brickworks and concrete plants and the obviously catastrophic stock piles. In cement the proposed freeze is at the time of writing being considered by our members in Ribblesdale (North West region) and Padeswood (South Western region) and I will be able to update at Congress. In Aggregates our members enjoyed a relatively good pay rise in 2009 as the second leg of an RPI related 2 year deal and again the proposed freeze for 2010 is out for consideration as I write this report.

Lafarge Cement

The 2010 pay round at Lafarge Cement produced – not exactly to the surprise of our members – a proposal from the Company for a pay freeze. The reality of the loss of yet another plant – Westbury in the South of England and the threats hanging over others meant that our members took the view that this was the reality. The only point we really made was like in all other companies where a pay freeze is being applied and our members are not willing to resist is that should we detect market improvements in the pay year, we reserved the right to reopen the talks. I have to say that I think this is an unlikely prospect for 2010.

In late 2009 the Company asked the Unions – principally GMB to contemplate the introduction for the first time ever of a lay agreement. They put their proposal forward to avoid or at least postpone further plant closures with at least two of their remaining sites under threat. After consultation with the members a lay off agreement providing up to 75% of pay has been agreed. This, as Congress would expect, has caused controversy within our membership which I am dealing with. Finally, our small but loyal membership amongst Lafarge's directly employed HGV drivers were also faced with a 2010 pay freeze.

British Gypsum

I resumed national responsibility for British Gypsum during the period since the last Congress from the Midland & East Coast region. It is right to record my gratitude to the Region and to my colleague Colin Todd in particular, for looking after our members so ably for a significant number of years.

BG is now part of the St Gobain Empire (a French multi national). Again over the last 12 months we have seen significant job losses, notably at the Kirkby Thore plant in the Northern region and the imposition of a pay freeze in 2009. There are also rumblings from the Company about attacks on other terms and conditions and our members are on a high state of alert to defend the current position.

Solaglas

Again this is part of the UK Operations of St Gobain and conducts negotiations with the GMB on the basis of two separate operating divisions. Since last Congress I have taken responsibility at national level for the Glass Industry as a whole (including Solaglass) from my colleague Phil Davies to allow Phil to focus on other responsibilities in the Manufacturing Section.

Solaglas Windowcare

After our members had overwhelmingly rejected a 1% pay offer we succeed in obtaining a settlement of 1.6% increase operative from part way through the pay year. This marginal improvement does of course give us a higher start point for the 2010 negotiations but the prospects at present are not encouraging.

I am determined to improve the GMB membership position amongst this Division's 500 or so employees.

Solaglas MSN

At the time of writing, we have had an initial stormy meeting with the Company. As part of the fallout from this a further meeting on pay for 2010 has been arranged and I will update the position at Conference.

Flat Glass Industry NJC (Green Book)

The above agreement covers most of the glass industry downstream companies – double glazed units, conservatories etc. In the current pay round the Employers imposed a pay freeze due to the 30% or so decline in demand. We are obviously monitoring the position.

Pilkington

Pilkington is now a subsidiary of NSG a Japanese multi national. The production sites in St Helens negotiate at plant level and are ably represented by Charlie Leonard and his excellent shop stewards team. At national level the Company has initiated talks on changes to its pension scheme aimed at cost reductions. We will of course, do all we can by participating in these discussions to protect our members' position.

Monier

This Company's name will be unfamiliar to Congress but it is the new name for what is left of the old Redland Rood Tile Company. In co-operation with the other recognised union we are attempting to re-establish a national agreement covering all six sites still operating.

Aggregate Industries

Again this is a UK subsidiary of a foreign (Swiss based) multi national. Our members are covered by two separate bargaining groups and are about to present pay claims at the time of writing this report. In the meantime, the Company has written to all staff (white collar) employees to the effect that in 2010 there will be a pay freeze. The position from our members' point of view is therefore, not encouraging.

Tarmac

Last year Tarmac indicated that it wanted to consult those unions it recognised at local level – there is no national agreement – on changes to its pension scheme. My colleague Richard Taylor from the Midland and East Coast region found himself involved in these discussions as we have a reasonable number of members in that region. It was quickly made clear that these "consultations" were a sham being put through to satisfy the letter of the law. We therefore, took the decision, with the support of the members, to withdraw from these so called talks and thus remove the veneer of respectability from the process.

I now want to turn to give a brief update covering my responsibilities in the Food Manufacturing Sector.

FOOD MANUFACTURING

United Biscuits

As an employer of around 2,500 GMB members, UB is the largest employer in this sector that I deal with. There is a bargaining group covering the four former McVities sites and the rest of the plants negotiate at local level. The Company has recently lurched in the direction of national consultation/negotiation on common issues and we now have a Joint Union National Committee. Several issues have been dealt with by this body although it is still pretty much in its infancy. At the time of writing we are in difficult talks about a new Attendance Management Systems the Company wants to introduce and about changes (cuts) it feels it can impose on the current redundancy terms. In the light of the aggressive stance taken by UB on these issues I anticipate that these talks might lead to a dispute in the next couple of months and I will bring Congress up to speed when we meet in Southport.

Nestle

Again bargaining on pay and conditions with multi national food giant Nestle is conducted at plant level. However, the Company has seen the merit of setting up a National Negotiating Forum (NNF) to try to increase harmonisation and promote consistent application of some important conditions of employment. The Company has also used an expanded version of this body to begin discussions on proposed pension changes.

Burtons

Since last Congress, Burton Cakes (GMB Scotland) has engaged with its recognised Unions on changes to the Company's existing pension scheme. Our shop stewards attended with me a couple of meetings at the St Albans HQ of Burtons. However, again it became clear that the consultation was intended only to give a veneer of respectability to decisions had already been taken. On this basis the Unions effectively, withdrew from talks.

Unilever

The GMB members in Unilever (Norwich and Warrington) are faced with pay freezes at their local bargaining procedures. Minor improvements have been secured but in all honesty the Company's pay freeze stance has for the most part prevailed.

CHEMICALS AND PAPER AND BOARD INDUSTRIES

Astrazeneca

In the last pay round (WEF 01/06/09) an increase of 3% covering a two year period (with other minor improvements) was accepted in a consultative ballot by our members. This settlement looks increasingly attractive in the light of the outcome of pay talks elsewhere. As ever, the bulk of the work done in representing our Astrazeneca membership, is shouldered by my colleague Neil Holden ably assisted by Ian Brocklehurst and his fellow reps. I am grateful for their help and support

BOC

I am not satisfied by the role we play in BOC - the liquid gas company – where we have a small but loyal membership. I do not consider that GMB is afforded the appropriate consideration as a recognised Union by the company and other colleagues. It is my intention to try to rectify these shortcomings this year.

Air Products

We have sole recognition for a small but clearly identified bargaining group in AP. This year we have been trying to negotiate the consolidation of an absurdly complex variable bonus into the basic rate. We have had ballots on the Company's last two final offers on the matter and it looks as though we may be on a collision course as it is the Company's declared position that they intend to impose the rejected consolidation on our members from April 2010.

Chemical Industries Association (CIA)

As all other bargaining in the industry is devolved to Company or plant level we try and on the whole, succeed in maintaining good relations with the CIA at national level. Since last Congress we have on a number of occasions made use of the CIA dispute resolution procedure to settle issues confronting our members in CIA affiliated companies. We have also been able to make common cause with CIA for lobbying purposes when the Employers position on issues accorded with that of the GMB.

Corrugated Paper & Board CPI)

The Union organises four plants in this industry covered by the National Agreement. We are therefore, in a minority position. However, we have a loyal membership which is feeling the effects of the recession like everyone else at Congress.

In the last pay round the Employer's Side split with one of the three large companies taking the view that a 1% increase which was on offer was more than they could afford!!

The Majority Union voted to accept the 1%. The GMB members recorded a healthy vote to reject it. We are, after some false starts conducting a ballot for industrial action amongst our members.

Employment Agencies

I have retained responsibility at national level for the GMB's engagement with employment agencies. In co-operation with my colleagues Kathleen Walker Shaw and Barry Smith we have tried to influence the UK Government to fully and speedily implement in the UK the Employment Agencies Directive that we have from the European Union. The Directive itself is much weaker than we would like but at least it is a start point in protecting some of the most exploited workers in the UK. It is therefore, with a real sense of despair and frustration that we have witnessed the Government put up with every possible argument for further weakening or further delaying implementation.

As far as the agencies are concerned, we are devising a recruitment strategy which, initially, at least will revive those agreements we had with some of the more responsible employment agencies a few years ago. This is very much work in progress at the time of writing this report.

European Works Councils

In the Manufacturing Section there has been a revival of interest amongst our members in the creation and working of EWCs. In part it is also due to the experience gained by many of our reps who sit on EWCs and recognise their shortcomings. Again in co-operation with Kathleen Walker Shaw and other colleagues we have been lending support to our reps to pursue this issue with their employers. In many cases we have been using the assistance of the various international and European Federations, the Union's affiliates in pursuit of this end. This international aspect of my sheet is dealt with in more detail elsewhere in the report.

Pensions

Finally, I think it is worth highlighting what I believe to be a key issue I confront at the present. The unremitting attack on our Employers on our members' pension schemes is devastating the morale of our members many of whom are the

most long serving and loyal across a whole range of companies. One after another, Nestle, Pilkington, Astrazeneca, Lafarge, Tarmac, Burtons to name but a few have engaged with the Union with varying degrees of seriousness to propose cuts to our members' pension entitlement. This is, of course a retirement time bomb that is being set and the frustration is that apart from securing the old minor concession here or there almost powerless to stop the changes. In doing what we can protect our members I have had the utmost support from the GMB National Pensions Department. Their expertise has often confounded the actuaries, consultants and various other players that the Employers wheel out to justify their proposals but of course in the end the decisions are based on cost cutting and we are taken by the Employers not the actuaries. I am most grateful and I know the members are most appreciative of the efforts of the Pensions Department.

CONCLUSION

As the recession continues, albeit with a little light at the end of the tunnel, the Section is going to be faced with continuing challenges. With the help of our lay activist, our regional officers and many others, I believe we can grow the Section even in the current adverse climate. I will continue to play my part as required and I regard it as a privilege to do so.

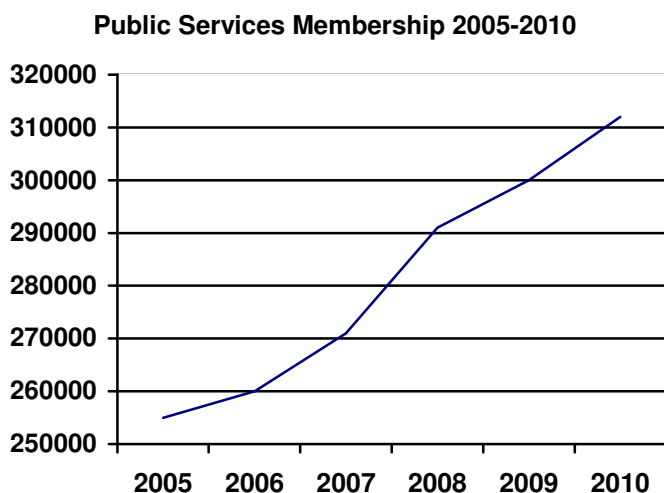
Finally, I would like to record my personal thanks to Marilene Smith my P.A. and our relatively new colleague Kasia Odlin (who takes care of my diary as far as the Glass industry is concerned) and who carries a huge administrative load within the Manufacturing Section. They do so cheerfully and tirelessly on behalf our members.

I commend my report to Congress.

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

1. PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Public Services Section grew to more than 312,000 by the end of 2009, up from 303,522 at the start of the year. The chart below shows the Section's consistent membership growth.



The public sector is under increasing pressure. Thousands of jobs have been cut by local councils and other employers, with more losses on the cards. An election year for national and local government, combined with the media hysteria about public spending, promises to make 2010 a defining moment for public services.

GMB members, backed by their workplace organisers, branch secretaries, other lay activists and full-time officers, are leading the fight to protect public services and the workers who deliver them.

Amidst the challenges, there remains plenty of scope to recruit and organise new members in the sector. The Public Services Section is well-placed to continue its membership growth.

2. NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The role of the National Committee is to consider and determine policy issues and Public Services Section activities at national level. The Section is fortunate in having an active and committed National Committee chaired by GMB President, Mary Turner. Our National Office staff are Brian Strutton, National Secretary; Sharon Holder and Rehana Azam, National Officers; Justin Bowden, on Regional secondment; Mick Hubbard, Productivity Services Officer; Tom Hazeldine, Research & Policy Officer; Angela Sayer, Section Administrator and PA; and Rita Compton, PA. The Section has been well supported by National Office departments (legal, pensions, political, health and safety, communications); the NAU; the National Organising Team; and the GMB Brussels office; all have contributed to help the Section grow and deliver its objectives for our members.

The National Committee decides actions arising from Congress and Section Conference decisions; receives and scrutinises reports from the National Secretary, National Officers and GMB Regions; as well as matters raised by

Committee members themselves. Current issues in national negotiations are discussed in particular detail. Minutes of National Committee meetings are approved by the CEC and distributed to branches via Regions and posted on the GMB website for all members to see. The main points dealt with by the Committee in 2009 included:

- Section membership and growth
- School Support Staff Negotiating Body
- Personalisation of social care
- Public Sector Pensions
- Single status in local government
- Legal Services Commission redundancies
- Southern Cross organising strategy
- Local government pay negotiations
- GMB Further Education Forum
- New ISA requirements
- Two-tier workforce issues and training
- Council housing
- NHS ambulance sector
- Higher Education pay negotiations
- Campaign against PFI
- GMB National Contractors Forum
- Environment Agency pay negotiations
- NHS Pay Review Body
- Academies
- Prison Service pay and job evaluation
- Further Education pay campaign
- Police staffs pay negotiations

The National Committee membership is:

Mary Turner	President - London Region
Elizabeth Blackman	Midland & East Coast Region
Dana Bruno	North West & Irish Region
Linda Clarke	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Gary Doolan	London Region
George Fraser	London Region
Gordon Gibbs	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
David Hope	North West & Irish Region
Pamela Hughes	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
James Jones	Northern Region
Kevin Jones	South Western Region
Evelyn Martin	London Region
June Minnery	GMB Scotland
Peter Murphy	Southern Region
David Noble	Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region
Lorraine Parker	Southern Region
Vivien Smart	Birmingham & West Midlands Region
Billy Tonner	Southern Region
Michael Widdison	Midland & East Coast Region
Peter Dow	MPO Representative
Heather Starr	MPO Representative
Steve Rice	ASU Representative
Richard Passmore	NHS Representative
Barry Lambert	HE Representative
Rory MacQueen	FE Representative
Ronnie Hill	Schools Representative

3. SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF NEGOTIATING BODY (SSSNB)

The new School Support Staff Negotiating Body held an historic first meeting on 7 July 2009. This the first national bargaining machinery to be created for many years and a strong achievement for GMB.

The SSSNB gained legal status with the successful passage through Parliament of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act in November 2009. The Act formally entered into force in January 2010.

With the new negotiating body finally up and running, the real work of negotiating a new pay and conditions framework for all support staff in maintained schools in England can begin.

The SSSNB has created two working groups to develop a national pay structure as well as a national core contract of employment. It has procured job evaluation experts to do detailed preparatory work including designing around 100 benchmark roles and a dedicated JE scheme.

GMB is represented on all parts of the negotiating body by three lay members of our National Schools Committee: Alyson Bryan, Christine Footer and Barbara Plant, together with the National Secretary who is Joint Secretary to the SSSNB. The Schools Committee, chaired by Ronnie Hill, oversees the work being done by the negotiating body.

GMB members will have a vote on any proposals that emerge. This is not only an important matter of principle but also an opportunity to invite all school support staff to have their say through GMB membership.

4. HEALTH SECTOR

GMB, along with other NHS unions, remains a key partner in the Social Partnership Forum which brings together NHS Employers, Trade Unions and the Department of Health to discuss, debate and involve partners in the development and implementation of the workforce implications of policy. The main policies dealt with by the Social Partnership Forum in 2009 include:

- NHS finance
- Transforming Community Services
- A new Commercial Operating Model for the NHS and Department of Health
- The NHS as the Preferred Provider of Healthcare Services
- Retention of Employment
- NHS Staff Survey
- NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework
- Staff Passport
- Embedding Social Partnership Working in the NHS
- Pandemic Flu (Swine Flu)
- Healthcare and Associated Infections (HCAI)
- Health, Work and Well-being of NHS Staff
- Personal Health Budgets – Implications for NHS Staff
- NHS Constitution

NHS Membership

At the end of 2009, the Public Services Section's combined NHS and Ambulance Service Sector membership stood at 26,008. GMB is the fifth largest trades union among the fourteen trades unions and professional organisations represented on the NHS Staff Council.

National Advisory Committees

The Health Service Advisory Group and the Ambulance Committee met a total of five times during 2009. Both committees report to the Public Services Section National Committee. Advisory committees provide a platform for regional consultation and for NHS occupations to consider and advise on potential occupational group implications of emerging Government/Department policy, NHS employment policy and practice, and GMB policies and campaigns. Current membership of the advisory committees consist of:

Health Service Advisory Group

Phil Baldwin (North West & Irish Region)
Alan Chetwynd (Midland & East Coast Region)
Neil Collinson (Northern Region)
Mick Coppin (Midland & East Coast Region)
Mary Finn (GMB Scotland)
Joss Guittard (North West & Irish Region)
Jean Garside (London Region)
Tony Hackett (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)
Martin Jackson (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)
Gary Lock (South Western Region)

Lynne Myers (Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Region)
Jill McCarthy (South Western Region)
Richard Passmore (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)
Alma Stewart (Northern Region)
Ray Stewart (Southern Region)
Keri Thompson (London Region)
Maya Venkatasawmy (Southern Region)

Ambulance Committee

Mo Akbar (London Region)
Ally Barron (GMB Scotland)
Anne Berry (Midland & East Coast Region)
Alan Giles (Southern Region)
Kevin Lyons (South Western Region)
Ben McGachy (Southern Region)
Dave Midgley (Yorkshire Region)
Sean Mulligan (London Region)
Malcolm Parker (Northern Region)
Mike Quirk (North West & Irish Region)
Steve Rice (North West & Irish Region)
John Roberts (North West & Irish Region)
Tony Stephens (South Western Region)
Sharon Thorpe (South Western Region)
Keith Wellsbury (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)

Advisory Committee chairs are co-opted members on the Public Services Section National Committee.

NHS

Pay, terms and conditions and pensions form the basis of key work undertaken in the NHS in 2009.

NHS Pay 2009/2010

- Currently in the second year of a multi-year pay agreement in the NHS across the UK. Rates of pay from 1 April 2009 were uplifted by 2.4% on National Pay Scales.
- Increases of 2.4% also applied to the National Recruitment and Retention Premia payable to qualified maintenance craftsmen and technicians under the terms of Annex R, paragraph 13, of the Agenda for Change handbook and healthcare chaplains under paragraph 15; an increase of 2.4% of the minimum and maximum value of high cost area supplements.
- Deletion of the lowest point of band 1 from the pay scales.
- An increase in the value of the top pay point of band 5 by an additional 0.33% resulting in re-spreading of certain pay points in band 5 and the first 3 points in band 6.
- An increase of 2.4% to the value of cash allowances payable for on-call work.

Whilst the 2009 uplift was above inflation, the 2007 and 2008 uplifts were below inflation at the time. The Government also confirmed the uplifts had been fully funded. However, reports from some parts of the UK have indicated that local NHS organisations are 'sounding out' staff on their likely reaction to the non-payment of the 2010 uplift, as this too may represent an above inflation uplift.

NHS funding has risen from £37billion in 1997 to £110 billion in 2010 and this money is not being taken away. It is the rate of growth that will end following this period's spending review.

Terms and Conditions

The NHS Staff Council and Executive have dealt with a number of issues, including:

- On-call review
- Mileage allowances
- Knowledge and Skills Framework
- Job Evaluation
- Equality and Diversity
- Partnership reports from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Work/Life balance and improving working lives
- Recruitment and Retention Premia guidance
- Ill health benefits
- Injury benefits

- NHS Pay Review Body evidence
- Facilities for staff organisations
- Skill mix/downsizing/organisational change
- Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) fees
- Unsocial Hours/Annual leave
- Review of professional registration fees
- Travel/car parking issues
- Study time
- NHS carbon reduction strategy
- Occupational safety and health in healthcare

Pensions

The pre-budget report announced in 2009 makes clear that the NHS Pension scheme will have to find £16m in savings. Because of the NHS Pension reforms introduced in 2008, savings of approximately £1 billion will be achieved by 2012.

The 2008 section of the NHS Pension Scheme includes a number of flexibilities which NHS, Trades Unions and Employers agreed could be attractive to existing staff. For example, higher accrual rates which means that benefits could be worth around 8% more if staff transferred to the 2008 section from the 1995 section; also, the ability to draw some of their pension whilst continuing to work.

Provisions set out in the NHS Pensions Agreement, signed in 2007, means that existing members of the 1995 scheme will be given the choice to transfer to the 2008 scheme.

The timetable to implement Pensions Choice began in January 2010.

The Public Services Section, in conjunction with the pensions department, has offered and undertaken briefings in regions on the Choice exercise and continue to provide updates, details of which can be found on the GMB website.

The Scottish Public Pensions Agency are also implementing Choice and, like England and Wales, plan to issue Choice statements to existing scheme members towards the end of January.

5. CARE SECTOR

At the Labour Party Conference in September 2009, Gordon Brown announced, quite unexpectedly, proposals to provide free home care in England and outlined ambitions for the creation of a new National Care Service, which is expected to be one of the key plans of Labour's election strategy. Personal care is currently means-tested but Ministers want to see English Councils provide it free to about 280,000 people in line with the service available in Scotland.

A Social Care Bill was published in November 2009. Subject to parliamentary approval, the Bill, which would come into effect from October 2010, would guarantee free personal care for up to 280,000 elderly and disabled people with the highest needs who live at home. The legislation is intended to be the first step towards establishing a new National Care Service.

Both the announcement and the publication of the Personal Care at Home Bill, although warmly welcomed by GMB, fail to address the fundamental issues affecting the social care sector: chronic under-funding, charges and the impact and implications for the social care workforce, in the community, local government and NHS, of direct budgets and personalisation.

In the last two years GMB has submitted responses to five consultation documents linked to adult social care. Each called on the Government, firstly, to increase funding and, secondly, to make changes to the system that would ensure national standards of assessment and eligibility, which are free at the point of delivery, are fair and easily understood by users, families and carers. Lastly, GMB has appealed to the Government to introduce a national pay and grading system for the care sector with good rates of pay linked to career progression. A copy of GMB's response on Personal Care at Home can be found on GMB's website.

The priority of the Public Services Section across the Adult Social Care sector in 2009 remained in the independent care sector market. GMB membership amongst the largest UK provider, Southern Cross Healthcare, continues to grow and, at the end of 2009, stood at over 13,000 members.

Despite lengthy negotiations on a comprehensive pay claim submitted in July 2009, no agreement was reached and Southern Cross imposed a 1.6% pay award to staff on a Southern Cross contract. Subsequently, in December 2009,

the award was unanimously rejected by a ratio of 9:1 in a national ballot of members. GMB's Southern Cross National Committee has embarked on a sustained campaign to re-open talks and to seek a revised award to the one imposed.

The Southern Cross National Committee consists of: Linda Birch (Birmingham & West Midlands Region), Martin Ayliffe (London Region), Helen Ewan (Midland & East Coast Region), Brian Jenkins (North West & Irish Region), John Barron (Northern Region), Joanne Laurie (GMB Scotland), Sharon Rawlings (South Western Region), Anthony Smith (Southern Region) and Michelle Bee (Yorkshire Region).

In parallel, the General Secretary, supported by the regions, the National Organising Team, the political department and the Public Services Section, has commenced a high-profile campaign to highlight the plight of Southern Cross staff with local authorities. The staff are poorly paid because Southern Cross, to maximise profits and results, has adapted a low cost, low wage and low staffing model for the delivery of care services, which does directly impact on quality of care. The local authorities' targeted have either reduced or cut, in real terms, funding levels to Southern Cross which has direct consequences for budgets, pay and conditions and, therefore, GMB members employed by Southern Cross.

6. MOD

The most significant issue addressed in the MOD sector during 2009 has been the Government's proposed revisions to the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, in other words, redundancy terms. After eighteen months of negotiations, an agreement was finally reached at the beginning of February 2010. Five unions, GMB, Unite, Prospect, FDA and the POA, have reached agreement, subject to consultation.

The new terms are due to take effect from 1 April 2010 with transitional protections in some circumstances extending well into the future. The following highlight the changes to the redundancy terms:

Proposed New Compulsory Terms:

- Cash payment based on one month's pay per year of service for the first five years and two month's pay per year for subsequent service up to a maximum of the higher of two year's pay or £60,000. Where £60,000 is higher than three year's pay, the payment is capped at three year's pay (see worked examples below).
- Two year's qualifying period for a redundancy payment.
- Guaranteed unreduced pension for those within five years of pension age where the severance payment is insufficient to buy out the actuarial reduction for early payment.
- This guarantee will also apply to anyone aged at least 50 on 31 March 2010 who had a minimum of five years service at that date.
- Severance payments will be clawed back if a person is re-employed in the civil service.
- Limited protection for staff whose last day of service is on or before 31 March 2011 to the existing compulsory early retirement and severance terms only for those who are made compulsory redundant.

Proposed New Voluntary Terms:

- Cash payment up to a maximum of two year's pay but with employers having discretion about what they offer within this.
- Departments will have discretion to offer early payment of pension to those aged 55 or over.

At the time of writing the report, consultation ballots in the MOD, Prison Service, and among other pockets of GMB members covered by the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, are in progress, timetabled to end early March 2010.

The Public Services Section's involvement in the development of the revised Civil Service Compensation Scheme has been hugely supported by the GMB Pensions Department at National Office.

7. LEGAL SERVICES COMMISSION (LSC)

The LSC continue with their major plans to transform their business delivery. Over the course of the year the GMB received four HR1 forms which amounted to over 200 redundancies.

Each HR1 form served to the GMB was suitably challenged with every opportunity exploited to minimize job losses. Of the posts at risk a further exercise to apply voluntary redundancy as opposed to compulsory redundancy had some success. After lengthy challenges, including the successful suspension of a 90 days consultation period, a total of 90 posts out of the 240 posts were lost through redundancy of which 30% of these posts were through voluntary redundancy.

On pay the 2009/10 settlement amounted to 1.5% consolidated on all pay rates for LSC Staff.

GMB organisation has been central to the industrial agenda. Each GMB Workplace Organiser is tasked to achieve full membership at all LSC sites. Nationally this objective has been supported by the National Officer, Chair and Vice-Chair through facilitating meetings and ensuring suitable access arrangements are made available to meet with members and non-members. The GMB Senior Reps meet every quarter and the annual conference has ensured that all GMB Reps participate in the process of agreeing the industrial and organising strategy.

Politically we have continued to step up the pressure through a number of means and the members' letter writing campaign peaked in the middle of last year. The recent Audit Commission report identified some weaknesses in the LSC processes. This report will support the GMB's central argument that there is a lack of capacity available and job cuts will only result in difficulties in delivering services. The Ministry of Justice tasked Lord McGee to undertake a review of the Legal Services Commission through which the GMB has robustly raised the concerns of GMB members. At the time of writing members in the LSC await the outcome of the McGee Report.

The National Chair Peter Earley who works at the LSC South Tyneside Office and Vice – Chair Martin Benham who works at the LSC Birmingham Office have both provided strong leadership and support to all the members in the Commission. It is apt that both Peter and Martin are congratulated and thanked for the unstinting support to organise GMB members and retaining jobs in the LSC.

8. THE PRISON SERVICE

Negotiations are conducted through the Prison Service Joint Industrial Council (PSJIC). Our members in the service include maintenance, catering, cleaning and other relevant occupational groups within an industrial setting.

Workforce modernisation dominated discussions with the Prison Service but as the Prison Officers Association and Prison Governors Association rejected the outcome of the plans around workforce modernisation, the £50 million made available for this was taken off the table by the Ministry of Justice.

Despite the funds taken away the Prison Service continue to press for modernisation of its workforce.

The Prison Service Joint Industrial Council (PSJIC) of which the GMB is a member continues to press the employer to effectively consult and negotiate within the PSJIC collective bargaining arrangements. For too long the PSJIC trade unions to a degree have been bypassed on key fundamental issues on pay and grading. For example over the past three years pay settlements have been imposed. This causes significant anxiety amongst the membership. The key industrial priority is to change the status quo and identify real action from the employer to demonstrate their proper and meaningful engagement with the PSJIC trade unions. Meetings with the Minister have been secured over the course of the year so that direct support can be procured to assist in this fundamental disparity in bargaining arrangements.

Over the course of the year difficult discussions have had to take place to encourage full participation of reps in key industrial issues affecting GMB members. A new national forum has been set up in the GMB where quarterly meetings of reps will take place. A clear direction of priorities steered by the reps should begin to address the culture of dependency that is endemic in the sector. The newly formed reps forum should begin addressing the significant gaps with GMB organisation in the Prison Service. At the time of writing Rob Burnett from Birmingham Region has just taken up the role of GMB National Representative.

9. HIGHER EDUCATION

After protracted negotiations with the unions single table bargaining has been secured for the sector. The GMB was a key player in achieving this for the sector and the original agreement reached which the four unions that signed including the GMB remained unchanged. The agreement included an appendix which addressed the concerns and finally brought about the single table bargaining arrangements.

GMB HE sector retains its position to explore opportunities in building a strong organising culture within the sector. It is fair to say the success of the national organising pilots were rightly scrutinised and the subsequent report tabled at the CEC meeting in January 2010 offered a number of recommendations. The GMB Higher Education Committee has considered these recommendations and at the time of writing will shortly be communicating with the regions the work plan to implement them. Nationally there continues to be a commitment to work with any institution locally to build and support GMB organisation. Such local activity will secure a better understanding within the regions as to how the GMB can exploit opportunities to build membership within the sector.

The previous three year pay deal amounted to one of the best pay deals secured in the Public Services Section. However, the 0.5% pay deal concluded for the pay year 2009/10 was certainly a backward step for the sector.

The GMB believe that there is a crisis in Higher Education. Since March 2009, there has been a wave of job cuts sweeping through the sector affecting all staff including GMB members. These cuts will have a devastating effect on the provision and quality of higher education. The GMB shares the view that an ill-conceived, short term strategy of slash and burn to cut costs is nothing less than a betrayal of current and future generations in communities that are already hit hard by the recession.

The employer's response to offer a pitiful 0.5% and then to threaten that any suggestion for more would amount to further job cuts was challenged robustly particularly considering that the average salary for the head of a university is

£193,000. The GMB will continue to demand fair treatment of staff and fair pay. The GMB supported this by submitting a claim for a national agreement to protect jobs. A nationally agreed procedure will commit universities to work with the recognised unions to find ways to avoid redundancies provide training and maximise opportunities for deployment.

GMB Regions are actively encouraged to engage and develop the campaign. Further details of the campaign can be found on www.defendhighereducation.org.uk

The GMB Higher Education Committee supports the aims and objectives of the Public Services Section and brings direct attention to the PS Committee of the activities of the GMB Higher Education Section. The GMB HE Committee have met regularly and supported all the activities around single table bargaining and all issues relating to pay and conditions. The focus to develop support regionally and the sharing of best practice have been central to all activities.

The GMB HE Committee is made up of the following:

John Brannan (London Region)

Alan Budd (Midland & East Coast Region)

Jim Finucane (Birmingham & West Midlands Region)

Les Goodyer (Northern Region)

Barry Lambert (Southern Region)

Fred McDwyer (North West & Irish Region)

Patrick Maddock (Yorkshire Region)

Keith Russell (South Western Region)

Tom Young (GMB Scotland)

It will be appropriate to thank the Chair of the Committee Barry Lambert for his experienced guidance in chairing the activities of the Higher Education Committee and his active involvement in securing single table bargaining for the sector, which is certainly an issue very dear to this chair.

10. FURTHER EDUCATION

In England the vast majority of colleges are members of the Association of Colleges (AOC), an employers' organisation which negotiates with the GMB alongside other recognised trade unions to produce recommendations for individual colleges to adopt. There continue to be difficulties around settlements that only carry a recommendation to implement. As a result many colleges in England have fallen behind the nationally agreed pay scales.

The thrust of GMB activity has been to encourage regions to begin local FE college organisation. To support this activity regions have been provided with a list of colleges, the recognition agreement, model letters to initiate contact with the college principals and details in how the 'time to pay up' campaign can be applied to support the industrial and organising agenda of the GMB.

In addition the GMB Further Education Reps have asked for a forum for the sector, which the GMB Public Sector Committee approved, and the first inaugural meeting of the forum took place in January this year. Currently the regions represented on the forum are listed below. Developing Regional GMB organisation should assist in developing the forum and better assist the forum's activities. Regions continue to be supported where required to develop GMB membership within the FE Sector. Full details of the campaign can be found at www.timetopayup.org.uk.

On pay the 2009/10 settlement achieved a 1.5% increase on all salaries and allowances. Unfortunately no underpinning was considered or achieved in this pay round. Again as previously reported, 1.5% is meaningless if GMB Colleges are not implementing the recommendation. It is crucial the GMB take an active role locally to secure the national pay settlements and begin local membership organisation. The National Officer Rehana Azam and National Reps Rory MacQueen and Chris Grice will continue to offer support to regions to make national pay recommendation a reality in regions or support regions in implementing the 'time to pay up' campaign.

The current members of the Forum are:

Chris Grice (Southern Region)

Rory MacQueen (London Region)

Anne Mussan (Midland & East Coast Region)

Derek Sutcliffe (North West & Irish Region)

11. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

The majority of GMB membership is held by the Southern Region and the two national reps Terry Sadler and Mike Sutton are also based within the region. National negotiations on pay and conditions are carried out through the National Negotiating Group (NNG) where the GMB has one seat.

2009/10 pay negotiations were protracted and difficult and the Environment Agency was not immune to the pressures and challenges the public services have faced. Despite best efforts negotiations only achieved a 1.5% pay increase

which after some hesitation was accepted. The Environment Agency have already communicated how working smarter will be the key objective of the agency in the coming year and job security and retaining jobs and conditions will be a key objective for the GMB. At the time of writing the 2010/11 pay claim has been formulated by the trade union side and was recently submitted to the Employer.

The national reps continue to secure engagement across the regions by regularly updating all members on all issues discussed within the Agency.

12. POLICE STAFF

The terms and conditions of Police Staff are negotiated through the Police Staff Council (PSC). The GMB has one seat on the PSC which is currently held by Fergus Murchie of Devon and Cornwall Police.

The sector is currently in a three-year pay deal which commenced in 2008 and the pay deal will conclude next year. The offer consisted of pay increases retrospectively of 2.6% in year one, 2.6% in year two, and in the year three the increase will be 2.58% on all PSC pay points and allowances. Year three would see the deletion of the pay points 2 and 3. Deletion of the bottom pay points is a significant step to end low pay in the sector. In addition to this a strong statement was agreed by the PSC on the view to develop a strategic approach to explore a national grading structure for all Police Staff in England and Wales. Unfortunately this work has been delayed due to the lack of movement the employer has made on these issues.

Nationally the GMB continues to seek to work with Regions locally to strengthen GMB force organisation.

13. CONTRACTORS

The CEC acted on a Congress decision that the GMB needed to consider a fresh approach to organising members in the local government contracting sector.

The GMB National Contractors' Forum, established in May 2009, will offer an infrastructure for reps in the sector to better engage and exchange relevant workplace organising experiences. The ambition is to identify a number of national organising targets based on access arrangements and the industrial agenda alongside consolidating membership at sites where GMB already has members. Where national targets are identified the infrastructure to support reps and regions should bring the necessary components required to build and organise membership.

The Public Services Section is currently considering and evaluating relationships with contractors. Historically many of the contractors, whilst holding loose gateway agreements, do not recognise trade unions nationally for collective bargaining purposes but do at site or contract level. The key for GMB is to increase membership density to a level that makes proper recognition inevitable.

14. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Pay, pensions, job cuts and Single Status were key issues in local government in 2009.

Local Government pay

The 2008–09 NJC (Green Book) pay review ended in March 2009 when ACAS awarded an additional 0.3%, bringing the total value of the review to 2.75%, or 3.6% on the lowest spinal column points.

In the 2009–10 review, GMB and other local government unions reluctantly voted to accept the employers' final offer in September 2009. The offer was 1.25% for those earning between £6.22 and £7.10 an hour, 1% for those earning more. There was also an increase in minimum annual leave entitlement for employees with less than five years' service.

Which brings us to the current situation on pay for 2010–11. In October last year, GMB and the other local government unions submitted an NJC claim for a £500 flat-rate increase or 2.5%, whichever is the greater. The employers responded in the New Year by announcing that there would be no pay offer whatsoever for the NJC, Craft or Chief Officers. They were not prepared to enter into discussion or negotiation.

GMB has condemned the arrogance of the employers and their total disrespect for council staff. The employers are pleading poverty but they cannot back this up. This is a political decision by Tory-controlled local government. At the time of writing, the trade union side of the NJC has ruled nothing out, and is taking forward a political and publicity campaign leading up to the pay anniversary date in April and the local elections in May.

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS remains a well-funded and sustainable scheme. It has over £100bn in the bank for future council pensions, and an annual cash surplus of over £4bn.

A policy review group, involving the local government unions, employers and civil servants, has continued to discuss a sustainability model for the LGPS. The idea is to buffer the scheme against future cost increases and to demonstrate its long-term viability. In December 2009 the Pre-Budget report created new complexities by including the LGPS in new

capping arrangements for employer contributions to public-sector schemes. How this will work in practice has yet to be hammered out.

Limited reforms have been achieved on LGPS ill-health arrangements. We have seen new statutory guidance and some regulatory changes. But progress on this issue is still extremely slow.

We continue to react robustly to the malicious scare-mongering of the Tories, the Lib Dems, the media and self-interested pensions-industry commentators, about the future of local government pensions. A new myth-busting GMB pamphlet on public-sector pensions is being distributed, for information and as ammunition for rebutting further attacks on the LGPS and other schemes. The pamphlet calls for private-sector provision to be raised up, not public-sector schemes run down.

Single Status/Equal Pay

The implementation of single status pay and grading structures in local authorities continues to be underfunded and as a result negotiations have broken down in many councils. This has led to employers forcing through change by dismissal and re-engagement tactics and GMB and other TUs responding with litigation and industrial action. While hundreds of thousands of women have gained pay rises and often substantial backpay awards there have also been tens of thousands of men and women who have lost out. GMB aims to secure equal pay at the best level for everyone and where employers refuse to do that we take all necessary steps to protect our members interests.

Previous reports have referred to the antics of no-win-no-fee lawyers in persuading union members to take legal action against their unions over equal pay, alleging discrimination. GMB lost a case, Allen, in Middlesbrough and we settled the claims of a small number of individuals. Following negotiations with the no-win-no-fee lawyer, Stefan Cross, he has committed to drop all other outstanding discrimination claims against GMB without compensation.

15. COMMUNITY AND DISTRICT NURSING ASSOCIATION

At the time of writing, members of the Community and District Nursing Association (CDNA) have voted to transfer engagements to GMB and that has been ratified by the executives of both unions. Documents are currently with the Certification Officer and if approved the transfer would be effective in April. This is an exciting opportunity for CDNA and GMB together to grow and organise membership and with it our ability to strongly represent health professionals in the community.

REGIONAL SECRETARIES' REPORTS

BIRMINGHAM AND WEST MIDLANDS REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP & RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	14,145
MANUFACTURING SECTION	12,814
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	26,721
Grade 1 members	37,463
Grade 2 members	11,623
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	4,594
Male Membership	27,785
Female Membership	25,895
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	7,090
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	-622
Membership on Check-off	34,910
Membership on Direct Debit	14,119

Response to Organising Agenda

The Organising Agenda continues to be a priority within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region, however I have to report due to a variety of reasons that 2009 was not as successful as previous years with regards to the Organising Agenda. Part of the reason for this obviously is the recession that everyone has had to deal with. Unfortunately and according to Government statistics, the West Midlands as a region has suffered more than any other region in respect of job losses in the manufacturing base and company closures. Another part of the reason as to why we did not do as well in 2009 as we did in previous years, may be down to complacency setting in because of our previous successes and I have therefore made it clear to all within the region that we cannot dine out on our past successes, we have to ensure that the Organising Agenda is reinvigorated and complacency removed, which will be the case. However throughout 2009, there were still dedicated organising activities, we held another successful Southern Cross week-long campaign which again delivered in excess of 150 members in Southern Cross during that week. The Schools Organising Agenda is still ongoing and Officers diaries are accessed and meetings in schools arranged and put in their electronic diary. A strict instruction went out in 2009 that no organising meeting should be cancelled, if something major came up, it was the responsibility of the Officer involved to ensure a colleague attended the school if it was absolutely imperative that they could not. The Accompanying Representatives are continuing to prove a useful resource in that we do not have to send Full Time Officers to do first line grievances and disciplinaries and they are also a major assistance when dealing with the unspecified membership which can be quite time consuming. The policy on GMB@Work training for activists continues to be delivered and continues to prove very useful with regards to activists then mapping their workplace which then again helps the Organising Agenda in regards of consolidation in line with the policy set by the Union. All in all, taking into account the recession and the higher than average job losses within the West Midlands, the region has fared reasonably well in that at the end of December 2009 our regional membership stood at 53,680 members which was a net loss on the previous year of 622. The fact that the net loss was contained to the amount reported is a testament to the commitment of the staff, Officers and activists within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

Throughout 2009 the region has continued to concentrate on the main national targets provided by the National Organising Team, driven within the region by the Regional Organising Team and delivered by all Officers and activists. As a result of the continued targeted organising within Southern Cross, I am pleased to report that during 2009 we broke through the 1,000 barrier in respect of membership. As a result of that success we also continue to hold Wilkinson's Stores dedicated organising weeks which has resulted in a marked increase in membership within that company. As well as the national projects and the national targets, we also have our own regional project board and work in progress throughout 2009 has included the following companies; The Order of St. John's, Care Homes, The Alzheimer's Society, Accord Housing, Alpha Care, Busy Bees Nursery, Braun Contractor and Sterilog Contractors and

The Learning Disabilities Care Group. The Greenfield targets continue to be pursued within the region and from January 2009 through to December 2009 the following Recognition Agreements were secured on a voluntary basis; H&R Chempharm UK Ltd, Triplex Ltd and Federal Mogul Sintered Products Ltd.

Overview of Region's Economic & Employment Situation

Throughout 2009 the region has continued to suffer severely with job losses primarily in the Manufacturing Sector. As well as the job losses in the Manufacturing Sector, there have also been major problems with pay in that average pay settlements in the manufacturing area up to the three months to December 2009 stood at 0.5% which was a slight increase for the previous three month period which stood at 0.4%. Many manufacturers imposed pay freezes during 2009 and many companies actually deferred pay settlements. Whether it's a pay freeze or a deferred pay settlement, the facts are it is still a pay cut. Within the Public Services Sector there again have been major problems with Local Government awarding marginal pay increases in 2009 and towards the end of 2009, quite a lot Local Governments announced major job losses with Birmingham City Council announcing over 2,000 jobs to go. Obviously this has not helped the local economy as every job loss sustained means that people have less disposable income and also then begin to claim benefits which have to be paid from somewhere. The unemployment rate across the West Midlands as at the end of December 2009 stood at 259,000 claimants which was above the UK average which stood at 9.6% of the working population in the West Midlands.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	4
Membership Development Officers	
Regional Organisers	17
Organising Officers	1
No. of Branches	111
New Branches	2
Branch Equality Officers	15
Branch Youth Officers	12

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	
Total Disablement	
Working Accident	1084.40
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	1100
Funeral	16010

4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

Throughout 2009 the regional magazine, Centreport continues to be a major source of delivering information directly to every member within the region. Also in 2009, the regional website has had an overhaul and is far more user friendly with special sections of the website dedicated to the Organising Agenda within both the national targets with schools, Southern Cross and Asda and also the regional project board again where we keep members informed of the issues surrounding them in their workplace. We also now ensure that successful legal claims are publicised both in the regional media and press and also on the regional website. Dozens and dozens of press releases have been issued to the local media and we also work with the national Communications Department to ensure a wider distribution of press releases regarding manufacturing problems, job losses, factory closures but also advertising major success stories. We have also sponsored many local community events such as local football teams, amateur boxers and community athletic games. The Media department continues to use SMS text messaging along with a database of email addresses for activists to ensure that they are kept in the loop with regards to any campaigns that we have ongoing.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

In 2009 a decision was taken to go to one sole provider of legal services, that being Thompsons Solicitors. This has proven to be a very useful move as Thompsons have and continue to commit themselves to assisting us in our organising campaigns within the region.

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
585	585

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
158	107		51 £99,900.90	£220,000	£2,871,037.68
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			427		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	60
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
25	15	1	12 £35,857.38	-	£74,637.79
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			35		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
112		-	1

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
10	1	2

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

The Regional Equality Forum is now well established and we continue to have the Regional Equality Conference on an annual basis however we also now have a successful Union Modernisation Fund bid within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region based on increasing the amount of Equality Representatives across the region. This is being co-ordinated by our National Equality and Inclusion Officer, Kamaljeet Jandu and a project worker from Walsall Local Council, Sharon Harding. The region is also involved in a national UMF project to encourage vulnerable workers in communities with a high density of ethnic minority members although a national project being headed up by National Organising Officer, Martin Smith a Birmingham Regional Organiser has been seconded to run the project, namely Ann Lafferty. All in all, equality and inclusion appears to be high on the agenda within the Birmingham and West Midlands Region as it rightly should be.

7 TRAINING

138 new Reps completed their IST training from 1/1/09 – 31/12/09.

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days) GMB@Work	13	80	55	135	270
GMB/TUC Induction (8 days)	6	54	25	79	790

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Practical Bargaining Skills (10 days)	1	9	2	11	110
Communication Skills/Public speaking (3 days)	1	5	3	8	24
Employment Law Diploma (36 weeks) weekdays	1	7	3	10	360
Facing Redundancy & Follow on day (2 days)	1	45	8	53	106
Job Evaluation (2 days)	1	7	7	14	28

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Health & Safety Intermediate (10 days)	2	30	6	36	360
Health & Safety Advanced (10 days)	2	29	6	35	350
JCB Reps Health & Safety (5 days)	1	13		13	65

NORTHERN COLLEGE

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Advanced Health & Safety (5 days) weekdays	1		1	1	5

GFTU

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Equality Reps stage 1 (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Leadership Skills (3 days)	1	1		1	3
ILM Level 3- Leadership & Management Weekend 1 (3 days)	1	1		1	3
ILM Level 3- Leadership & Management Weekend 2 (3 days)	1	1		1	3

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Preparing for Retirement (1 day) weekday	1	1		1	1
Flexibility in the workplace – weekend (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Employment Rights (3 days) weekend	1	1		1	3
Self management & personal effectiveness (3 days) weekend	1	1		1	3
ILM Level 4 Management Award-weekend 1 (3 days)	1	1		1	3
Equality Reps Stage 1 (3 days) weekend	1		1	1	3
Bullying & Harassment stress (3 days) weekend	1		1	1	3
Equality & Discrimination Course (1 day) week day	1	1		1	1
Train the Trainers (3 days) weekend	1	1		1	3
Dealing with redundancy issues (3 days) weekend	1	1		1	3
Trade Union History (3 days) weekend	1	2	1	3	9
Advanced course for paid officials & senior Reps (3) weekend	1	1		1	3
Advanced negotiating Behaviour (3 days) weekend	1		1	1	3
ILM Level 4 – Leadership & Management weekend 2 (3 days)	1	1		1	3

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Stepping up (10 days) weekdays	1	1		1	10
Coping with the economic downturn (1 day) weekday	1	1		1	1
Using Computers for Union Reps (10 days) weekdays	2	3		3	30
Health & Safety Stage 1 (10 days) weekdays	1		2	2	20
Safety Reps - Next Steps (10 days) weekdays	1	1		1	10
Trade Union at work Certificate (10 days) weekdays	1	1		1	10
Union Learning Reps (5 days) weekdays	1	1		1	5
TUC Diploma in Employment law (36 days) weekdays	2	2		2	72

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Next Steps for Safety Reps (10 days) weekdays	3	3		3	30
Stepping up-The advanced course for Union Reps (10 days) weekdays	1	1		1	10

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY

The region continues to promote health and safety awareness across the Birmingham and West Midlands area and specific courses on health and safety are delivered on a regular basis which then encourages Workplace Representatives and Organisers to organise and campaign around health and safety in the workplace which is a vital assistance to the regional Organising Agenda. We've found throughout the region that when health and safety is used as an issue we can organise very well within the targeted workplaces.

LONDON REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	95,098
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	33,430
MANUFACTURING SECTION	10,443
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	51,225
Grade 1 members	60,651
Grade 2 members	25,598
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	8,849
Male Membership	44,180
Female Membership	50,919
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	13,714
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	1,123
Membership on Check-off	56,067
Membership on Direct Debit	32,134

This being my first full year as Regional Secretary I would like to place on record my thanks to all London Region Officers both Lay and Full Time, Staff and members for the overwhelming support they have given both me and the region since my appointment together with the assistance and encouragement from many colleagues from other regions of the GMB.

Yet again, I am pleased to report a net increase in membership building on the efforts of previous years. Given the serious economic recession and the damage this has caused and is causing, it is I believe, an outstanding achievement for which I highlight the efforts of all Officers, Staff, Branch Secretaries, Shop Stewards et al, who have carried out many vigorous campaigns most especially in schools, ASDA, Wilkinsons as well as their efforts in individual workplaces (trends etc).

During the past year we have re-invigorated our commitment to GMB@Work together with renewed emphasis on IST and consolidation all of which are having positive results leading towards our aim of substantially increasing the number of high qualified active Lay Officers across the region. We can also report a well received and successful GMB@Work staff training days.

At the time of writing we are in the early stages of the General Election campaign, and like most regions face some very severe challenges most especially in those constituencies where the BNP and others have a presence and intend to field candidates.

We have established a Regional Political Forum in order not only to direct our efforts to key seats during the election but also, and possibly more importantly, to establish a vibrant ongoing political awareness and presence between elections, something we seem to have lost in recent years. Our overriding message is supporting GMB values which we hope will help to cement relationships with the many people we aim to assist during the campaign and into the future.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	4
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	18
Organising Officers	7
No. of Branches	120
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	27
Branch Youth Officers	9

Whilst the London Region continues to focus on GMB@Work, recruitment and retention we are mindful of the need for consolidation, as well as the protection of the terms and conditions and employment rights of those of our members in companies facing the effects of the economic downturn so far with good effect.

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	£450.50
Total Disablement	NIL
Working Accident	£2,082.55
Occupational Fatal Accident	NIL
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	NIL
Funeral	£27,705.00

4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

Press

We continue to do very well in getting coverage for the work of the GMB London Region in the papers, on radio and on the internet.

CANDID

CANDID is produced three times a year and now has a new look in response to members' feedback from the readership survey conducted last year. The new style is more accessible and colourful and all round easier to read. The twelve outer pages report the massive amount of work that the GMB London Region Officers and GMB Post Holders do for members. The work of the GMB London Region's Organising Team, its targets and growing membership is now covered in the twelve regional pages. Thank you to everyone who has provided copy and photos for CANDID during the year.

The cost of the magazine has also been reduced by cutting the cost of postage simply by folding it for delivery to members' homes. Advertising revenue has recovered from a dip during the depths of the bankers' recession and so the overall cost of production is back on track.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
629	603

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
527	196	7	324 £	£	£3,016.891.54
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			1,162		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	158
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
158	8	6	64 £288,127.64	3 £41.947.71	£330,075.35
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			107		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
378	64	£1,552.185.20	116

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
0	0	0

Since the introduction of an in-house solicitor and improved system for filtering cases, there has been a significant increase in cases settled by compromise agreements. Officers have been provided with quick and easy advice to assist in case management and as a result fewer cases have been referred for Tribunal action.

6. EQUALITY & INCLUSION

Since taking over as the Regional Equalities Officer in March 2009 regular Race and Equality meetings are held on a bi-monthly basis where issues regarding equality from the region are discussed in addition to planning of future events and bringing equality into the organising agenda. There has been representation for one of our members at the TUC disability conference and six delegates attended a National Conference in Manchester and participated fully in submitting motions workshops and contributed to the general discussion.

The Shout LGBT Group have been particularly active in promoting the equality agenda and pursuing organising and recruitment of workers by participating in the London Pride event on 4 July 2009, taking part in the TUC Equalities Conference and holding a very successful fringe meeting on domestic and workplace violence with speakers from the GMB Sex Workers and Entertainment Branch and Broken Rainbow. The Shout Group also sponsored Black Pride and had a stall there too.

As yet, the region has not yet held a Regional Equality Conference however it has been established that there is a need to increase the amount of participation around the region in respect of equality activity and due to geographical boundaries making it difficult for all branches to participate in the bi-monthly meeting and steps are now being taken to

establish more localised forums for Race and Equality meetings which will then feed into the Central Forum on a quarterly basis. Once this has been established then steps will be taken to progress the Regional Equality Forum through a Regional Equality Conference.

GMB's new Equality and Inclusion policy has not deterred the GMB London Region Young Members from self-organising their own internet social community Face book group, website and AGM. As usual they have worked as GMB volunteers in the Workers Beer Company bars at Glastonbury, Reading and Leeds Music Festivals again this year and raised money to fund their GMB activities.

Young workers most common work problems are bullying and harassment and many of them do not know that they have any rights at work. The loss of formal apprenticeships has also impacted on the manufacturing skills of younger workers.

Many have mobilised their year against the BNP and fascist activities in London and elsewhere both during elections and since. This work will continue into next year as the General and Council elections approach.

Around 6.2% of London Region's members are classified as Young Members i.e. under 27 years of age.

7 TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (3 days)	10	76	29	105	315
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	5	43	17	60	300
GMB@WORK	19	163	57	220	440
Consolidation(2 days)	9	75	36	111	222

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
None					

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day H&S Course	6	58	12	70	350
Safety Inspections	3	20	7	27	54

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Learning Reps	9	70	27	97	291
Put It In Writing	4	36	11	47	141
Negotiating Skills	2	10	3	13	39
Say Your Piece	3	18	15	33	99

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Stress, Bullying and Harassment	3	15	7	22	66
Communication Skills	6	31	14	45	45
Disciplinary and Grievance	6	42	19	61	183
Northern College	4	6	2	8	33
2 Tier Workforce	2	15	4	19	19
Job Evaluation	1	5	5	10	10
Diversity	2	20	10	30	30
Pensions	1	12		12	24
Accompanying Reps	1	13	1	14	14

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
None					

8. HEALTH & SAFETY

It is acknowledged across GMB London Region that understanding of, and dealing with, health and safety issues in the workplace helps raise the profile of the GMB in terms of recruitment, organization, servicing and retention. The information within the H&S courses, particularly the emphasis on safety representative's rights, safety committees and involvement in Risk Assessment process, gives our representatives the confidence, ability and knowledge to represent members in all sectors where GMB is present.

This applies to workplaces where recognition already exists and where health, safety and welfare concerns can be used to maintain, and grow, membership levels and in newly recognized workplaces where health, safety and welfare issues can aid recruitment and retention. Consequently safety reps in the London Region undergo a full programme of training. This training is evaluated to take into account any changes in health and safety legislation.

Bulletins are also produced on GMB orange bordered paper for added impact. These cover such diverse subjects as blood borne diseases to lone working to working in both cold and hot temperatures and can be useful for both information and as an aid for recruitment. This is useful in workplaces where recognition has been achieved and full organisation has not yet been established. The bulletins can help produce confidence in GMB individual members and their representatives and ensure that GMB is recognised for consultation purposes.

The department also acts in an advisory capacity for officers, safety reps and individual members. Often many problems can be sorted out over the telephone, though this needs to be followed up by supporting literature. Increasingly, advice is sought and answered by electronic means. In more serious situations there will sometimes be a request for a site/workplace visit with a follow-up written report. Again the presence of a specialised officer can raise the profile of GMB and help the safety reps maintain, and demonstrate the benefits of GMB membership.

Health & Safety continues to be a moving feast across the region. For some in public services, managers do have knowledge and experience but often too few resources to implement policies, while in the private sector, particularly smaller companies, the lack of knowledge can often be frightening. Indeed well trained GMB representatives will often be better informed and more aware of potential problems than many managers.

Therefore the region will continue to ensure that safety representatives will be elected in practical and up to date information with a view to enhancing recruitment and organisation across all workplaces; and recruitment and organisation seldom hinge on one single issue and the region has demonstrated that by raising, and solving health, safety and welfare issues the GMB can remain not just strong, but also extremely optimistic.

MIDLAND & EAST COAST REGION

1. MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	55,090
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	14,268
MANUFACTURING SECTION	15,628
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	25,194
Grade 1 members	36,521
Grade 2 members	11,667
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	6,902
Male Membership	31,299
Female Membership	23,791
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	8,573
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 (54036) – 31.12.2009	1,054+
Membership on Check-off	31,796
Membership on Direct Debit	17,611

Response to Organising Agenda

The Midland and East Coast Region is continuing to promote and progress the organising agenda by adopting a proactive approach within a number of key workplaces that have been set and prioritised from the national agenda and regional targets. These have also been set and agreed by officers who are working in conjunction with activists and lay reps.

By linking the Region's organising team with area officers, we have developed a sustainable recruitment resource by using teams of workplace activists and organisers. Whether these are existing reps or new recruits, we have found that the GMB@Work ethos/ training and development are paying dividends. With the increased confidence that has developed in workplace reps as well as officers and well organised workplaces, issues are being put on the employers' table, giving a proactive approach.

The national targets of ASDA, Southern Cross and Schools is still delivering moderate growth, but in order to be more sustainable we need to concentrate on encouraging more of our school contacts to become workplace organisers.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

We introduced 3 pilot projects with regular review periods in Wilkinson's, Leicester City Council and North Lincs and Goole NHS Trust. There is an underlying programme with the development of prototype plans that can be lifted and applied in similar situations. This is still ongoing with the end review and production of final project reports due in early 2010.

Impetus is still on the national targets with a centralised organising team and regular, pre-planned recruitment weeks that are diarised annually at the beginning of the year. This is supplemented with the addition of fortnightly 'organisation' days with the area teams of organisers and activists. This gives us the ability and resources to respond to any opportunities that require a quick reaction such as the construction and engineering dispute at Lindsey Oil Refinery.

This approach has assisted the Region in enabling growth during a year of economic uncertainty, when most other trade unions are perhaps not doing so well. Linking recruitment and organising under the GMB@Work banner is creating a positive formula.

With the assistance of Dominika and Marzena (Polish members of staff at Regional Office), we continue to raise the Region's profile with migrant workers in all areas of the Region.

Retired Members Association

We have a vibrant Retired Members Association that is actively involved in campaigns, particularly those involving pensions. These retired members have also offered their invaluable services and greater experience to campaigns and recruitment initiatives, which will assist in imparting knowledge.

The RMA is going from strength to strength with an expanding core of activists. The national conference took place in October 2009 with motions being passed on Pensions Credits, Health and Transport rail travel. The RMA have also joined forces with NPC and put in submissions on the Government's 'Future of Care' consultation.

Overview of Region's Economic and Employment Status

There is a diverse and disparate structure to the Midland and East Coast Region. We cover an area traditionally known as the East Midlands, Humberside and East Riding of Yorkshire. The Region stretches from Scarborough in the north to Wellingborough in the south and from Boston in the east to Buxton in the west.

A greater proportion of the East Midlands economic output comes from manufacturing more than other regions of the UK. During the current economic downturn, employment figures have not declined as rapidly as the national average.

This picture is portrayed differently in Yorkshire and Humberside, as well as the more rural areas of the Region. Manufacturing has taken a big hit with the movement of global capital and the economic impact of the recession, the abuse and misuse of migrant workers within the food industry, and agriculture.

We have also seen attacks on public services, with local authorities announcing redundancies in all parts of the Region, but, as seen in March at the G20 demonstration, we can mobilise and challenge through these turbulent times in our economy.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	1
Regional Organisers	13
Organising Officers	4
No. of Branches	91
New Branches	0
Branch Equality Officers	40
Branch Youth Officers	25

The Regional Secretary continues to lead the Region's management team, supported by 3 Senior Organisers who each have individual geographical areas, which are aligned to improve the services we deliver to the members.

The Region has 15 servicing Organisers, supported by a Membership Development Officer and 2 Organising Officers, which form part of the Regional Organising Team who have responsibility for working in the whole of the Region with the Servicing Organisers and Activists. The 3 Senior Organisers each have responsibility for one of the Sections in the GMB, along with other responsibilities, as delegated by the Regional Secretary.

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	
Total Disablement	
Working Accident	1685.00
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	
Funeral	33,401.00

4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

Communication is one of the core principles to the GMB@Work ethic. The Region has continued to produce the 'Contact' magazine, encouraging participation from both activists and officers of the Region. This is creating a diverse means of communication.

Impetus is still ongoing with the collation of email addresses through online joining and members making enquiries through the website. This gives us a quicker and more cost effective method of mailout lists for regular updates in employment law and political updates, and also enables us to give a speedier response to members' queries.

We have had good and comprehensive media coverage at both regional and national level from organisers and lay reps, an example being the Lindsey Oil refinery dispute, during which media coverage was at a maximum, giving a profile during a potentially difficult campaign.

The information circulated around the Region has also been added to Branch newsletters for circulation to branch members and workplaces. Although this isn't as widespread as we would like it to be, it is certainly moving in the right direction.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
732	724

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
911	329	9	513 £5,040,965.15		£5,040,956.15
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			1,231		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	250
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
340	143	8	181 £435,727.36	8 £29,545.73	£465,273.09
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			636		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
7	2		11

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
21	10	9

The Region's Legal Services remain a crucial element of the Region's recruitment, organising and servicing objectives.

The Region's Solicitors, Thompsons, continue to provide a full range of legal services to our members, including personal injury and employment law. The extension of this service to also include cover for members' families on any personal injury incurred outside the workplace, including whilst on holiday or in a road traffic accident, makes what we provide even more attractive.

The Free Will writing service offered by Thompsons remains very popular and the fact that the Will can be made in joint names also benefits the member's spouse/partner.

Thompsons Specialist Compromise Agreement Unit have dealt with a large amount of Compromise Agreements this year as our Organisers have been negotiating these on behalf of members with their employers, rather than go down the route of an Employment Tribunal.

Equal Pay claims are still ongoing within Local Authorities and NHS. There have been many settlements via a COT3 in the Region resulting in substantial payments for our members, albeit not at the 100% settlement figure that our members were advised of. At present we have 437 cases outstanding in the Region with no litigation against the Union. The success is due to full time officer and legal negotiation and advising members as to their statutory rights.

Earlier in the year we arranged for Thompsons to give a presentation and briefing to our Officers and Regional Committee members on the new Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures and ACAS Code of Practice that came into effect in April, and the LRD booklet providing guidance to union reps was circulated out to all our shop stewards to assist them in providing support and advice to our members in this area.

6 EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

Following the Region's Equalities Conference in October 2009, the final plans have been made to launch the Regional Equalities Forum at a conference being held on 21st April 2010 at GMB Regional Office in Nottingham. The previous conference successfully identified activists committed to and experienced in our seven different fields of equality and in conjunction with the Education department we have set up an email database for communicating with these individuals. Equalities contacts will receive information about equalities, in general, and also information specific to the area of equality they have outlined as their area of interest.

It is intended that by the time the Spring conference is concluded that we will have established even more dedicated equalities contacts and that they will form equalities groups able to stimulate and generate serious campaigning on specific issues that affect our members and promote our values and principles. The Spring conference will be motion based, but in order to ensure we start with a strong foundation the motions will be restricted to ideas and suggestions about campaigns within the Region's equality strands or ideas and suggestions about the Equality Forum's future structure and programme. The Forum will be elected from the delegates in attendance and the conference will aim to put in place a basic structure and constitution in line with Regional policy that will enable the Forum to function efficiently.

Equalities is at the heart of what we do in this Region and all branches are encouraged to send delegates to ensure that the Forum is a success and we continue to be at the forefront of the Equalities agenda.

Ethnic Breakdown of the Regional Race Advisory Committee:

	White	Black	Asian	Other
Male	6	1	1	
Female	2	2	1	

Ethnic Breakdown of the Regional Equal Rights Advisory Committee:

	White	Black	Asian	Other
Male	2			
Female	6	1	1	

The young members of the Midland and East Coast Region in 2009 made continued progress in line with the stated GMB policy support for the organising agenda.

Young members are also trying to find their place in the more streamlined equalities structure within the GMB. To this end a number of young activists attended the Regional Equalities Conference in Nottingham in May 2009. Whilst recognising that a more focused equality structure may propel this agenda forward it is hoped that young members will not be pushed to the margins as this progress develops.

Once again the Region has been able to provide a full delegation to the TUC Young Members Conference this year as on previous occasions. I thank the branches in the region who have supported such initiatives.

A number of young members along with hundreds of other members from our region attended the G20 march and rally in London in March 2009. Although generally ignored by the media this was another huge demonstration by working people against the inherent contradictions and inequalities generated by an unchecked global capitalist system, as once again working people took the brunt of a crisis generated by the greed and reckless stupidity of a small ruling minority.

As the recession bites hard into the economy and jobs, it would appear to be young people who are feeling the pinch. With unemployment at 2.5 million a disproportionate number appear to be made up of the young with joblessness among this

group rising faster than any other age group. The unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds is 16% and rising. Even worse is the fact that nearly one in three 16-17 year olds without qualifications are unemployed. This leaves a whole group of young people trapped between a school system which failed them and a shrinking job market with little hope of work.

There are a number of reasons why this is the case with manufacturing decline meaning craft apprenticeships have all but disappeared and two thirds less available entry points to employment training schemes. Young workers are concentrated in a narrow range of service industries such as sales which are often casual and also vulnerable. As we also know young workers are discriminated against through lack of redundancy entitlements and lower minimum wage rates which makes them cheaper and easier to hire and fire in these uncertain times.

The government has made some acknowledgement of the problem by the announcement of a £2 billion scheme for training and funding for 35,000 apprenticeships, however this will never be enough.

The GMB needs to continue the fight for our young members to eradicate discriminative employment legislation and to campaign for better job opportunities for all. The current situation is a damning indictment on an economic system that seems to be punishing the very young people who are in actual fact its future.

7 TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	9	107	37	144	288
GMB Induction (5 days)	9	104	34	138	690
GMB@WORK (1 day)	4	34	12	46	46

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to Health & Safety (3 days)	9	101	32	133	399
Advanced Health and Safety(10 days)	1	7	3	10	100

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Accompanying Reps (1 weekday)	1	7	4	11	11
Grievance and Disciplinaries (1 weekday)	4	42	9	51	51
Grievance and Disciplinaries (2 weekdays)	1	7	3	10	20

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to Pensions (2 weekdays)	2	22	5	27	54
Representing Members Briefing (2 weekdays)	1	16	2	18	36
Tackling Stress at Work (2 weekdays)	1	11	8	19	38

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
TUC courses		84	11	95	
GFTU courses		5	1	6	
Northern College courses		6		6	

8 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Workplace Organisation and Visits

In the period since last Congress, the RHSO has been involved in a number of visits to workplaces:

- Staythorpe Power Station H&S Inspection/Workplace Visit
- Rigid Containers (Desborough) Migrant Workers/ESOL/H&S
- Ellis Guildford School (Nottm) Work-related Stress

The service continues to be explained to all new representatives attending all the regional training courses.

Enquiries

Regional office continues to handle health and safety enquiries. In the period since the last report to Congress the following subject areas were raised:

- Asbestos GMB Region database scheme
- Working temperatures What is the minimum?
- Adverse Weather Individual Rights
- Risk Assessments Employers legal responsibilities
- Work-related Stress Individual Rights/Absence
- Fumes Effects/Control Measures
- Working Time Rest breaks/payment
- Overhead power cables Health concerns

Training

The RHSO completed the new Workplace Safety Reps Advanced Course and this was piloted in April 2009. The reaction of the attendees was extremely positive and it is therefore planned to further roll out the course.

Other courses delivered in 2009 included:

- Tackling Stress at Work
- Representing Members
- Accompanying Representative Training
- Employment Law Update (including the new ACAS Code of Practice 3)

Information Distribution

During 2009 the following Health and Safety Matters have been distributed to Safety Reps and Branches:

- January 2009 Employers Liability
- Feb 2009 Asbestos Campaign
- March 2009 Mesothelioma
- April 2009 New HSE Strategy: be Part of the Solution
- May 2009 Drug and Alcohol Policies
- June 2009 Personal Protective Equipment
- July 2009 Swine Flu

- August 2009 Workers Memorial Day
- Sept 2009 Review of Workplace Temperatures
- October 2009 Towards Copenhagen – Trade Union Priorities
- November 2009 Pleural Plaques – Where are we now?
- December 2009 Sentencing Guidelines for Corporate Manslaughter

The Regional Office continues to offer an e-mailing service to distribute electronic versions of documents dealing with health and safety on request from representatives. The Region's revamped website holds a great deal of Health and Safety information and additional resources are to be added including the new Safety Representatives' Toolkit.

A revision and update of the health and safety pages on the regional website is continuing. The Department will always be proactive in responding to any changes in the needs of our safety representatives.

Additional Activity

The RHSO undertook training to complete the NEBOSH General Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health. A successful Merit pass was achieved.

NORTHERN REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	72,544
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	19,141
MANUFACTURING SECTION	26,130
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	27,273
Grade 1 members	45,143
Grade 2 members	9,886
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	17,515
Male Membership	45,156
Female Membership	27,388
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	6,830
Increase/ Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	1,687
Membership on Check-off	38,824
Membership on Direct Debit	16,134

Response to Organising Agenda

Our approach to workplace organising is embedded within the wider GMB@Work strategy. Organisers undertake Initial Support Training (IST) targeted at new lay activists including union learning representatives, with recruitment, workplace organising and retention the key elements, supported by GMB benefits and services. Once the IST is undertaken, new lay activists are eligible to attend the two day GMB@Work course with the key features of workplace organisation explained, discussed and practiced within the course environment. The two day GMB@Work training courses are delivered by Organisers and we have two Northern Regional Organisers nationally qualified in teaching adult learners as a way of overlaying the practical on the ground Organiser knowledge of workplace organisation, with professionally recognised approaches to tutoring our lay activists. To date we have trained approximately 425 new lay activists on the two day GMB@Work course. In addition new lay activists must undertake the IST and attend the two day GMB@Work course as a gateway to embarking on the other parts of the Regional Education Programme.

In addition we have rolled out a concentrated programme of one day GMB@Work training focused on existing lay activists and union learning representatives. The one day GMB@Work courses are being piloted in the first instance within our Public Services Section lay activists, and will then be extended to the rest of our existing regional lay activists. The training of existing lay activists and union learning representatives is delivered by our network of Organiser Tutors. To date we have trained approximately 75 existing lay activists within our Public Services Section.

Workplace consolidation of members in recognised companies is our key priority with particular emphasis on workplaces where we have less than 60% density. Our Regional Corporate Strategy and Development Plan covers our regional organising agenda and our approach to effectively train our army of lay activists will help us in our goals of consolidating and growing our regional membership.

In developing our regional membership base and as part of our regional planning, we are taking a proactive approach to breaking new ground with new targets aimed at bringing additional GMB recognition in our regional workplaces. Organisers as part of the workplace auditing and mapping process, are encouraged to identify potential targets for increasing local GMB membership, with emphasis on building membership above the 10% requirement under the recognition regulations; organising a petition to pass the 50% threshold; lodging the recognition application. This approach has proved extremely successful in winning new recognition agreements and extending our Regional GMB influence.

As part of our Regional Corporate Strategy and Development Plan, Organisers in our Area Teams are dedicated to undertaking two days per week membership consolidation in organised workplaces, and in so doing entrench the GMB@Work culture. Our Regional GMB@Work NOT Information System provides valuable support to turning our plans into action.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

The focus for our activity is aligning our Regional Planning with the GMB@Work approach to workplace organisation within national target areas, in conjunction with the National Organising Team. Workplace organisation, targeted recruitment and retention are aimed at Southern Cross, Schools, Security and ASDA. In addition regional targeting of Wilkinson Stores, Professional Drivers and PUBCOs is aimed at building our regional membership base and locking in to the national organising strategy.

In seeking to develop new organising opportunities, we beat off hostile and renewed attempts by ASDA to win a major victory in gaining recognition at the Distribution site CDC, Washington, Tyne and Wear. We have secured further recognition agreements across the Northern Region including in TRW, Washington, Tyne and Wear in the teeth of an aggressive anti-union company campaign to keep us out. In addition we have made a further attempt at achieving recognition at the former Magna Kansei Company. We took on the Company, now known as CalsonicKansei Corporation, which is particularly hostile, anti trade union and American owned, and succeeded in winning GMB recognition, which was a tremendous achievement and won despite the best efforts of the company's anti-union propaganda aimed at keeping us out. We have also been successful during 2009 against the back drop of a massive recession, in winning recognition in companies within Food and Leisure; Engineering; Construction, Furniture, Timber and Allied areas as we seek to extend the Northern Region's workplace influence.

We continue to develop our Regional Young Members with focused campaign work based on workplace, education and social issues. Several new young member lay activists have completed IST and GMB@Work courses and in our regional planning we are targeting growth in young members as part of the next phase of the Region's development.

Overview of Regions Economic and Employment

As the economy appears to be in recovery mode from the worst recession in modern times, our fears have been realised in that the sting is in the tail of the economic downturn.

Redundancy in the Region is on the increase with big job losses across the board in the Manufacturing Sector, which initially had been holding up well.

The closure announcement of Corus Steel is a body-blow to Teesside where so many jobs depend on the steel-making business, both directly and indirectly. Our Members of Parliament have been working tirelessly to find a solution to save this plant, alongside the Joint Trade Unions. The campaign is ongoing; however, we do not see a remedy without Government financial support.

A large number of businesses have taken the opportunity to shake out jobs, re-organise and, in the process, attack workers' terms and conditions of employment under the veil of the recession. In most cases, unnoticed, apart from the victims in this process.

The threat of future job losses in the Public Sector, despite the colour of the Government, following the much awaited General Election, has added to the doom and gloom.

Yes, the recession may be technically over, but the pain shows no sign of easing.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	5
Membership Development Officers	2
Regional Organisers	18
Organising Officers	2
No. of Branches	127
New Branches	0
Branch Equality Officers	15
Branch Youth Officers	15

Two of GMB Northern Senior Organisers, Helen Marshall and Jackie Woodall, have elected to take early retirement along with Jim Marshall our Health, Safety and Education Officer.

Three long-serving officers of our organisation whose contribution has been outstanding over the many years of service.

The procedure is underway to replace these positions and we look forward to a smooth takeover and back to the business of growing Northern Region, albeit in these difficult economic times.

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	0
Total Disablement	0
Working Accident	2612.65
Occupational Fatal Accident	4000.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	0
Funeral	64803.00

4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

Northern Star Magazine

Throughout 2009, three Northern Star Magazines were delivered direct to every member of GMB Northern Region, keeping members updated on relevant news throughout the Region and the organisation Nationally including industrial issues, legal successes, congress and some fantastic personal achievements and charity fund raising articles from both members and GMB staff.

From industrial issues such as the averted strike action at BNFL and ongoing campaigns at Corus, ASDA and Npower through to education learning agreements across the region and more, the magazine aims to cover all aspects of the regions campaigning activity.

As always a substantial contribution was made to the magazine's by the union solicitors Thompsons and Browell Smith & Co. Providing detailed reports and articles on an ongoing basis regarding specific cases, general information and changes to relevant legislation.

In the July issue of the Northern Star a prize draw was developed to encourage people to update their contact details and to provide their email address so that we can improve our communication to members whilst reducing costs. This project increased the email addresses held in the region by around 25%.

Recruitment Booklet

In conjunction with a local design agency, the Northern Region re-designed and developed the Recruitment Booklet which is now the standard publication for recruiting new members to the union.

The booklet was given a more professional image, in line with the newly launched website. Feedback on the Recruitment booklet has been positive and the pre-paid, sealable application forms are proving popular.

Workplace/Branch/Section Newsletters, Flyers and Posters

A variety of publications were issued throughout 2009 to members within Workplaces, Branches and Industrial Sections including some of our largest companies such as Southern Cross, ASDA, NPower and a number of Local Government locations across the region.

Website

After a long wait, the Northern Region website (www.gmbnorthern.org.uk) was finally launched again in late 2010, providing a valuable information source for members and representatives as well as giving the region another medium to encourage recruitment, organisation and retention.

Advertising

The Northern Region has continued to include adverts in relevant publications across the region and nationally with adverts appearing in the Morning Star, local NHS handbooks, the Durham Miners Gala brochure and more.

In 2009 further advertising was arranged with an LCD advert the full length of St. James' Park, the home of Newcastle United FC, ensuring that the union is seen at every home game and by millions across the world watching on TV. We also have an advert at Barrow FC in Cumbria spreading our support across the region.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
890	890

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
1163	436		727		
			£6,797,108.38	£	£6,797,108.38
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			2928		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	344
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
304	119	9	107	69	
			£303,887.31	£376,672.67	£680,559.98
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			213		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
		£	

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
107	47	9

GMB Northern Legal Services

Protecting members at work and ensuring their employment rights, health, safety and dignity at work are fundamental principles of GMB. Our legal service continues to play an important role in supporting our aims through campaigning, lobbying and fighting claims to secure the best possible terms and working conditions for GMB members.

In the field of employment rights the GMB continued its commitment to resolving disputes in the work place. Where that proved impossible it supported hundreds of members through the Employment Tribunal in claims against their employers. In some cases this meant securing new information and consultation rights from the TUPE Regulations (GMB Northern v Cable Realisations), in others it meant securing employment rights for hundreds of members that worked under sham self-employment status (Callaghan & ors v Lafarge Aggregates Ltd). Our solicitors secured awards and settlements of well over £600,000 through the Employment Tribunal for GMB members, including £270,000 in one claim alone against Circatex. The union's continuing fight for equal pay in the workplace has also borne fruit in 2009 with thousands of claims receiving settlement offers in 5 local authorities.

Working with our lawyers, GMB Northern Legal services secured more than £6.6m in compensation for injured members and their families in 2009. In order to raise awareness of the union's legal service, its considerable successes and the perils of using heavily advertised "No win- no fee" lawyers, members receive regular communication on legal issues and many GMB Northern cases have been highlighted in the national and regional media. We have distributed thousands of Legal Services cards and workplace posters featuring our Legal Service freephone number. Regular monitoring indicates that most members use the legal service as a result of the support and guidance they receive from Officers, Shop Stewards and activists.

We hold regular legal advice surgeries for members at locations across the Northern region and every branch now has a dedicated lawyer assigned to it in order to ensure maximum support and the best possible communication. All new Shop Stewards receive training to assist them in supporting members and raising awareness of the union's legal service.

We routinely monitor the views of our members on the legal services provided in order to develop and improve the service. In 2009, more than 95% of the members surveyed were satisfied or extremely satisfied with the legal service provided.

To ensure that our full-time and lay Officers have the best possible skills to support our members, regular legal training and updates are provided on employment rights and Health & Safety issues. GMB Northern are committed to ensuring that our members continue to receive the best possible legal representation and support.

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

During the last year we held an inaugural meeting of the Northern regional equalities forum. We had a number of guest speakers. We discussed the role of the Equalities forum could play in the region, how we could use issues in the equalities agenda to recruit and organise around, and what issues the group were most pressing at the moment.

The issue of carers seemed to be one of the most pressing to our group, many of whom felt they were a group of people who were almost hidden from society and very vulnerable.

We also discussed the forthcoming Equalities Bill and the impact that it would have on the country, and in particular GMB members.

We elected a chair and secretary who have agreed to take the work forward and hopefully in the New Year the Equalities Forum will go from strength to strength

7 TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)	14	140	31	171	
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	7	64	13	77	
GMB@WORK					

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3 Day Introduction	6	77	14	91	

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day Health & Safety	5	43	8	51	

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
Northern College Barnsley Residential	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day Advanced Health & Safety	1	2	0	2	
3 Day Understanding Disability Discrimination Act	1	3	0	3	
5 Day Employment Law	1	3	0	3	
5 Day Specialist H&S & Environment Impact	1	7	0	7	

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

8 HEALTH & SAFETY

The RHSO sits on the Asbestos Sub-Committee of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Occupational Safety and Health.

This group deals with all issues relating to industrial disease contracted through exposure to asbestos eg mesothelioma and pleural plaques, dealing with all aspects from exposure risks, identifying potential workplace hazards both in the Private and Public Sectors including treatment and care for sufferers, regulations to prevent exposure and compensation for this debilitating and killer disease.

The main emphasis from, a Regional perspective, is to avoid the risk through alerting and training our activists to carry out risk assessments in their workplace when there is any questions relating to the presence of asbestos materials, as well as promoting a general public awareness of this hidden killer.

To this end GMB, UNITE, UNISON and UCATT are collaborating with union-backed solicitors in setting up a Northern Region Asbestos Support and Campaign Group under the umbrella of the Northern Region TUC. This will bring all of the issues together in a co-ordinated approach, giving advice and support to sufferers and their families by raising awareness and campaigning for justice.

This newly-formed group will work with and add value to those like-minded organisations already engaged in this activity across the Region.

We continue to campaign on issues connected with the workplace environment generally and are presently involved, through the Regional Health Authority and TUC, in encouraging employers to adopt a policy of individual wellbeing in the workplace and lending support to workers who wish to improve their physical and mental health.

NORTH WEST & IRISH REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP & RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	23,545
MANUFACTURING SECTION	23,269
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	38,599
Grade 1 members	57,801
Grade 2 members	16,428
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	11,184
Male Membership	48,476
Female Membership	36,937
Total number recruited 1.1.2008 – 31.12.2008	9,454
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2008 – 31.12.2008	3,059 decrease*
Membership on Check-off	54,296
Membership on Direct Debit	18,763

* This figure includes 1,700 ASU members transferred to other GMB Regions.

Response to the Organising Agenda

In 2009 the Region took a pro-active stance to re-organising the large unwieldy general branches into workplace branches wherever possible, in line with GMB@Work. It was a significant piece of work given that the large general branches built up over years were unwieldy and at times resistant. However it seems to be delivering better servicing, ownership and identity, which was still somewhat of a sticking point in some areas following the merging of two regions.

The restructuring will continue in the future and all sizeable workplaces will be strongly encouraged to adopt this approach.

Also in 2009 we have taken steps to ensure that everyone understands the relevance and importance of having a consistent and sustainable approach to organising in a way that ensures growth at any given opportunity.

We have begun a comprehensive series of workplace mapping which sets the foundation for a better informed approach to developing our organisation, particularly in respect of recruitment and representation at a local level.

An important part of this process is the Initial Support Training, where on a one to one basis the officer can sit with the new representative to explain what their role is within the GMB and to identify and pursue aspects related to the Organising Agenda. Another important part of the regional response is to encourage new representatives to come forward, particularly within their specific areas. These meetings with members and also new and existing lay representatives have led to successes where we have not been a significant force in the past. The meetings are specifically to highlight the GMB@Work Agenda and to make inroads into recruitment in particular targeted areas. Also as part of the Response to the Organising Agenda as above, it has resulted in some long standing stewards asking to take and attend refresher courses.

The Region continues to promote lay representative participation at both regional and national level, particularly in the construction area and NJC Local Government meetings.

The Region continues to operate a retention programme which is managed for its cost effectiveness as well as its continued good level of performance.

The new regional website is proving popular and the number of on-line joiners is constantly monitored. The website is also used to highlight the ease at which members can obtain the benefits and services of the Region, including its legal services.

It is felt in the Region that the move to enable members to lodge TU56 (PI claims) on line and over the phone, or using a much more user friendlier form, has been a positive one.

TARGET	PERIOD	MEMBERS RECRUITED
Schools	School Year 2008/2009	940 (up 27% on previous year)
Southern Cross	2009	494 (up 30% on previous year)
Asda	2009	384
G4S Guarding	2009	199

Economic and Employment Situation

As with all areas of the UK, the North West & Irish Region has been affected by the global recession. This has led to further job losses in the Construction and Manufacturing Sections. In previous years we highlighted construction in Northern Ireland as being a major potential area for growth, with only 5 - 6% of the 82,000 construction workers belonging to a trade union. However, due to the downturn in our economy, this has not materialised. Northern Ireland has also seen the loss of 220 jobs in B/E Aerospace. The Region has also suffered with the closure of a number of small to medium sized engineering companies.

The lack of recruitment opportunities in the Manufacturing Sector has meant that the Region continues to target Public Services for its main area of growth. However, the fourth quarter of 2009 has seen many Local Authorities in the Region announcing shortfalls in their budgets, which in the worst cases has led to announcements of potential cuts in jobs and services. The less drastic approach has seen the freezing of appointments.

To highlight the plight of our members, demonstrations have been held in different locations throughout the Region.

The current national unemployment rate is 7.8%. Also the national claimant rate is 4.1%. Across the Region the unemployment rate is as follows:

Northwest 8.7% Northern Ireland 7.2%

The Region has thirty-three areas above the national claimant rate.

Blackburn & Darwen	5.0%	Armagh	4.7%
Blackpool	4.9%	Ballymoney	4.8%
Bolton	5.3%	Belfast	6.4%
Bury	4.2%	Carrickfergus	4.2%
Halton	5.9%	Coleraine	5.1%
Knowsley	6.8%	Cookstown	4.9%
Liverpool	7.5%	Craigavon	4.8%
Manchester	5.7%	Derry	6.8%
Oldham	5.4%	Down	4.8%
Rochdale	6.0%	Dungannon	4.8%
Salford	5.5%	Fermanagh	4.2%
Sefton	5.3%	Larne	4.5%
St Helens	5.1%	Limavady	6.4%
Tameside	5.2%	Moyle	6.2%
Wigan	5.2%	Newry & Mourne	5.1%
Wirral	5.5%	Omagh	4.5%
		Strabane	6.9%

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	5
Membership Development Officers	0
Regional Organisers	22
Organising Officers	2
No. of Branches	239
New Branches	10
Branch Equality Officers	25
Branch Youth Officers	6

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	13,230.00
Total Disablement	-
Working Accident	7,811.15
Occupational Fatal Accident	1,000.00
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	-
Funeral	52,656.00

4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

Officers and lay representatives across the Region have continued to take advantage of all the usual forms of local media to address and highlight national and regional GMB issues and campaigns. National press releases have been adapted accordingly to fit regional activity and Officers in the Region have been regularly called upon to comment on local radio and television and to provide additional quotes in the local press. Highlighting GMB activity in this way has helped to maintain the GMB profile, assisting in recruitment activity and demonstrating to our members the efforts that their union has been making on their behalf. Some examples of where the use of local media has assisted in putting pressure on employers to resolve industrial disputes include Focsa, Enterprise, McBrides and Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

The Region occasionally takes out advertisements in various publications including NW Labour History Journal, Morning Star, Nerve Magazine and Big Issue.

The Regional Magazine, Fusion, continues to be well received by members and has been a useful vehicle reinforcing and complementing regional and national messages and campaigns. In particular we have used the magazine to highlight the Region's activities in ASDA and in schools. The magazine has also been a useful tool to highlight GMB services and legal successes and the simplified TU56 form has assisted members with lodging legal claims.

Our regional website has been developed over the past year with the aim of making it more accessible to all members regardless of computer skills and abilities. The site has been simplified to make it easier to navigate and the new "2 click" 'Join Now' function has assisted in a steady increase in the number of new members joining on line. We are looking to further develop our regional site and we are considering linking it to other branch websites in the Region. The national news page includes links to daily news items and has proven very popular. We have also had a number of members lodging personal injury claims over the telephone following our advertisement of this facility on the site.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
999	999

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
631	69	Nil	560	2	
			£2,638,909.90	£3,750	£2,642,659.03
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			2,525		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	59
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
9	2	Nil	7 £27,221.90	Nil £	£27,221.90
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			130		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
2,500 Equal Pay Claims	Nil	£ -	2,500

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
Nil	Nil	3

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

The Equality Forum in the North West of the Region has been successfully launched and has a total membership of 20. The NWREF has met on three occasions in 2009. It has been a productive year for the MWREF, not only in the organisation of the Region's first Equality Event but also in running several campaigns and events.

Alongside this the Forum has agreed its own composition and Terms of Office which sits in line with the recommendations made by Congress.

Below is a brief summary of the work achieved by the NWREF in 2009.

Manchester Pride

The Region was represented for a fourth year at the Manchester Pride event, with volunteers from the MWREF and branches staffing the stall. For the first time all the funding raised came from the generosity of branches throughout the Region.

Strawberry Tea

Various strawberry tea events were held throughout the Region which resulted in £500 being raised for the Charity, Breast Cancer Care.

Hope not Hate Campaign

NWREF members attended the Hope not Hate anti BNP Day School which was organised within the Region. This was well attended and speakers included Paul McCarthy, Nick Lowes, John Cruddas MP and labour MEPs. The main aim of the event not only gave activists the knowledge needed to help build successful local campaigns to defeat the BNP, but also ways to communicate this through the workplace and communities.

Members of the Forum also further supported the Hope not Hate Campaign by distributing newspapers on behalf of Searchlight to various locations throughout the Region.

Support was also given at the TUC Conference in Liverpool with members of the NWREF attending the anti BNP vigil.

Migrant Workers

2009 also saw the launch of our regional migrant workers network and although slow to start, momentum is gathering pace with the largest growth in Manchester.

Regional Equality Event

The NWREF worked alongside the Region to organise its first regional Equality Event. Guest speakers included Brian Shaw, NEF Chair and Talat Jabin, Immigration Barrister. Delegates were elected to attend the 2010 National Equality

Event and a regional motion was agreed. It is hoped that this event will grow to become as successful and popular as the Region's Women's Conference.

Women's Conference

Our Education Department has again produced and organised one of the Region's most popular and enjoyable events which is in its ninth year. Guest speakers ranged from the heart wrenching true story of Maria Shields and her family's fight to free her son, to the comical Frank Carlisle who gave a presentation on historical Liverpool women.

TUC Conferences

The Region has been represented at all TUC Conferences and events that have taken place in 2009.

National Equality Conference

The Region sent a full delegation to the above event.

Training

Equality Officers now have a regular slot on the ten-day Shop Stewards' Induction. However, it is hoped that members of the NWREF will take ownership of this in 2010.

Ethnic breakdown in the North West is as follows:

White British Male	7
White British Female	10
Black British Male	2
Black British Female	1

Over the past year in Northern Ireland we have continued to highlight inequality wherever it exists in the workplace and we have been successful in forcing a number of employers to introduce necessary changes which we are pleased to report has benefited many of our members.

The greatest change has come about in Local Government, namely in respect of Equal Pay and Single Status. That said we have also pursued a number of successful claims within education and also in some areas of the private sector.

We are slowly but surely beginning to enlist support from lay activists in taking responsibility for helping us to resolve case on inequality and in particular, where we are asking them to ensure that this becomes a fully inclusive part of our organising agenda.

There is evidence to show that this portrays our union has been progressive and effective in bringing about these long overdue changes.

The Equalities Forum in Northern Ireland has met throughout the year and has identified some local groups to work closely with to promote the GMB organising agenda within minority groups throughout Ireland. This will help raise the profile of GMB with individuals who would not normally have access to unions until problems arise. This work will continue well into 2010 with invitations to these groups to share knowledge and experiences with the Forum.

Race Awareness Task Group

Unlike many parts of the United Kingdom we have a limited number of migrant workers in Northern Ireland. That said, we have been determined to ensure that we follow the recommendations put in place by the Race Awareness Task Group which were endorsed by the CEC many years past.

We regularly work to ensure that migrant workers are treated equally and fairly in line with other workers in the many sectors of industry which we cover on an ongoing basis. We already have a representative on the CEC who regularly attends conferences on the part of this group of members.

Ethnic Breakdown, Northern Ireland

White British female	4
White Polish female	1
Black Afro-Caribbean female	1
White British Males	6

7 TRAINING

In figures (as at 31.12.2009)

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (10 days)	14	139	48	187	1870
GMB@WORK (2 days)	14	139	48	187	374

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Organisation For Negotiation (3 days)	2	13	6	19	57
Branch Organisation (3 days)	1	4	2	6	18
Grievance and Disciplinary (3 days)	3	32	9	41	123
Bullying & Harassment (2 days)	2	26	6	32	64
European Awareness (1 day)	1	18	4	22	22
Pension (1 day)	1	8	1	9	9
Union Learner Reps (5 days)	3	13	10	23	115

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Health & Safety/ Risk Assessment (5)	1	11	5	16	80

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
International Women's Day (1)	1	1	24	25	25
Women's Conference (2 days)	1	8	85	93	186

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Shop Steward Health & Safety/ Industrial Relations (10 days)	26	116	52	168	1620

8 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Regional Health & Safety Officers of the North West & Irish Region continue to work closely with Regional Organisers and throughout the year have provided both written and verbal advice and guidance on matters related to the health, safety and welfare of our members. In addition the Officers, have been involved in workplace visits advising on health & safety inspections and generally providing support to our Health & Safety Representatives.

The Officers are continuing to review the service we provide and working to increase the knowledge of our Health & Safety Representatives, which the Region sees as vital in our efforts to recruit and retain membership.

Workers Memorial Day was honoured in several areas of the Region; a rally was held at Manchester Town Hall and a memorial plaque was unveiled at the Regional Office with a short service conducted by a local minister, and the release of balloons to remember those who had lost their lives in the course of their employment. GMB members also sponsored events in Preston, Blackburn, Oldham, Wigan and Northern Ireland.

GMB SCOTLAND

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	9,852
MANUFACTURING SECTION	13,219
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	36,438
Grade 1 members	42,210
Grade 2 members	12,440
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	4,859
Male Membership	31,875
Female Membership	27,634
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	5,665
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	(746)
Membership on Check-off	46,700
Membership on Direct Debit	8,153

Response to organising agenda

2009 – 2010 has not seen the growth hoped for during 2009 into 2010 and has resulted in a further analysis and measurement of our Regional Performance.

Refocusing on the delivery of GMB@Work Training to all new Workplace Organisers has been driven by our Education Officer in conjunction with the Regions Organising Team leading to significant throughput of Workplace Organisers.

The Regions approach during 2009 has resulted in our ability to deliver training in a more flexible way by targeting courses in more geographically challenging areas of Scotland where training has for a number of years been difficult to deliver.

This is a major undertaking within the Region one however that is proving very successful with feedback on the delivery and content of GMB@Work Training being very positive and proving how well new Workplace Organisers respond to the Organising Agenda.

GMB Commercial Services Section continue to have significant involvement with the major energy companies with Equal Pay still being an issue within certain sections of this group which is outlined in this report.

Having the Region's Organising Team deliver training flexibly across the Region has ensured courses are now delivered speedily following Initial Support Training with courses being run on a regular basis ensuring delivery is taken out to meet the needs of our new Workplace Organisers closer to their local areas.

The issuing of the new GMB@Work Training Policy resulted in the Regional Secretary delivering an extensive Session with all Officers in the Region. The policy is clear and takes GMB@Work to a new level – ensuring we produce an

increase in membership at each workplace where we are organised and the introduction of the involvement by GMB Officers more closely in delivering training.

The key step change is the focused approach in delivering Consolidation Training Courses to our existing reps by Officers through short two day courses.

This change will result in an integrated approach from Initial Support Training (IST) to GMB@Work and the development of Workplace Organising Plans which will include regular review meetings every 3 months to measure our workplace performance when set against our Organising Plans.

Given the role of Officers within the implementation of the Training Policy a Training Session has been arranged within GMB Scotland and will be delivered by Martin Smith and Avril Chambers, this will be delivered on 1st March 2010.

Regional systems are currently being adapted to facilitate and support this training. GMB Scotland's Officers in preparation for this session have already been through a preliminary session as stated covering:

-The Officer's Role

-GMB@Work Programme Design

The implementation of the policy during 2010 will be a boost within the Region.

2010 will be a year of change within the Region in ensuring the turnaround of recent trends of membership loss which is outwith our control as a result of closures and redundancies however notwithstanding this trend there is still significant opportunity across many sectors for membership growth.

The Region's focus for 2010 is ensuring our Organising and Campaigning work is fully integrated and co-ordinated into everything we do.

Developing more Regional Targets to supplement the National Targets will be focusing on consolidation and growth within our existing workplaces.

Asda will be a significant challenge but will be a huge opportunity this year.

Developing our Regional Network of Workplace Organisers within Asda Stores will be key to our growth strategy.

Although having only two distribution centres in Scotland there is scope to grow our membership base within Asda Distribution. Southern Cross continues to be driven within GMB Scotland and has developed a healthy group of Southern Cross Workplace Organisers across a geographically diverse country and has an active Branch.

Schools and School Support Staff continues to be an opportunity for growth notwithstanding some problems the Organising Team have been experiencing in some of our thirty-two Local Authorities who appear to be attempting to block our access.

Officer Training is delivered regularly by our Solicitors on a range of employment matters from TUPE to Equal Pay. This has been welcomed by the Officers in their Personal Development..

Recruitment targets and campaigns

In 2009 GMB Scotland continued to recruit in the National Targets; Schools, Southern Cross, Asda and Wilkinsons where we see our membership continue to rise.

In Scotland amongst the campaigns there were targets including Navitas who provide Security and Cleaning to Shopping Malls in which we have reached an agreement for recognition.

In the Region we have targeted Speedy Generators, Balcas, Aviation Security and Hy-Fab which are all ongoing.

GMB Scotland have also participated in the PubCo and Verdant campaigns.

We also have been participating in both Local Government and NHS campaigns as well as meeting with our colleagues in the GMB/ASU to promote the GMB as the Union for Ambulance Personnel.

In Scotland we have also been involved in Local Community and Multi-Cultural Gala Days promoting GMB Scotland in the Community.

Overview of Region's economic & employment situation

Scottish Economy - Figures for the current state of the Scottish Economy will not be released until April 2010 however the Recession in Scotland has followed similar trends as that of the UK economy. However, it is expected that when the figures are released the evidence is likely to show that growth in the Scottish Economy will be weaker, Scottish GDP falling by 4.6% annual with the Service Sector falling by 0.3%, the production sector increased by 0.9% with construction falling by 1.6% lower than the UK corresponding figures.

Employment correspondingly in Scotland was down by 28,000 compared to the same period last year.

The GMB participated in the recent National Jobs Summit "Building Scotland's Recovery" at which Jim Murphy, Secretary of State for Scotland and the First Minister Alex Salmond made keynote speeches.

Significant indicators emerged when looking at the figures of Local Authorities across Scotland in terms of Highest Claimant Counts. This highlighted the Scottish Claimant Count was similar to the rest of the UK which with a significantly lower population was significant with the level of job vacancies failing across all sectors of the Scottish Economy.

GMB Scotland plays a significant role through the Scottish TUC as one of the major affiliates, meeting regularly with the Scottish Government on key issues such as:

- Rebalancing the Scottish Economy
- The impact of Recession on Scotland
- Energy
- Public Services
- Climate Change
- Health Service

Meetings are held on a regular basis with Ministers and Civil Servants on key issues to GMB and the affiliate Trade Unions. One of the key themes GMB has been calling for is for the Scottish Government to support a National Living Wage by ensuring that all Public Sector Workers are paid at least £7 per hour, which is the Living Wage introduced by Glasgow City Council.

The Scottish Economy has received a health warning from the Fraser of Allander Institute that Scotland may face a second recession this year even if the economy returned to growth. Their reasons were blatantly obvious to GMB Scotland and lay the blame for this forecast on the refusal of the banks to lend to business as they sought to restore their balance sheet. This combined with the coming public sector recession – yet to strike the UK – would further the damage the road to recovery and a growing economy.

Clearly Public Spending cuts planned by the Tories if elected would force local councils to reduce costs during the next few years. This would have a higher impact on Scotland where the Public Sector accounts for almost 22 per cent of Gross Value Added to the Scottish Economy compared to 18 per cent throughout the rest of the UK.

Equal Pay continues to be an issue across the 32 local authorities in Scotland with second wave claims being progressed.

Recent settlements by Glasgow City Council has resulted in what can only best be described as a blatant attempt to satisfy a settlement with Stefan Cross on behalf of his clients to the detriment of the GMB. Having met recently with the authority's Legal Team we are determined to raise this matter by seeking more details on these settlements by using the Freedom of Information Act and referral to Audit Scotland for the benefit of our members. However we have moved significantly on Equal Pay notwithstanding this current situation with offers of settlement being made to our membership.

We continue across the Region to engage with Migrant Workers Groups to build community links and we were recently invited to speak at a major Scottish Migrant Workers Conference that was held in Falkirk prior to the end of 2009. This is however still a long term project within the Region. The contacts made across the Central Belt of Scotland and particularly in and around Inverness and Fife continues to be developed and other major centres of Migrant Workers Groups within Scotland.

The Commission on Scottish Devolution – Calman Report, the body set up in 2007 has now delivered it's long awaited report on Scottish Devolution 10 Years On. Amongst it's 24 recommendations are radical plans for Holyrood to take charge of half the income tax raised in Scotland with the commission arguing this move would make the Scottish Parliament more accountable. Also, proposed is that Scotland have prudential powers to borrow for capital investment to build public infra-structure such as schools and hospitals. Other areas proposed by Calman are:

- Reserved Powers
- More co-operation Scottish and UK Government
- The Union
- Holyrood Matters

The fact that Scottish people will no longer find it credible to blame Westminster every time there are tough decisions to be made is not popular with the Scottish National Party.

The Arbutnott Report has now been concluded and has focused on Shared Service Provisions across clusters of Local Authorities in Scotland to achieve efficiency of services and service delivery. However recent discussions appear to suggest that this will not be implemented as it is suggested that the cost of implementation would be greater than the potential savings.

Scottish Manufacturing - This sector accounts for around almost 230,000 people. The Global Recession has resulted in a significant downturn with manufactured export sales falling to their lowest level since 1995.

Current suggestions indicate signs of turning the corner however major problems are still being experienced by business in securing additional loans from the banks due to the increased cost of borrowing.

Given the Scottish Government's opposition to Nuclear New Build the focus at the moment is on Renewables, Offshore Wind, Marine Energy (Wave & Tidal), Carbon Capture and Storage & Environmental and Clean Technologies. Scotland is well placed with massive opportunities as a major player in the development of Offshore Wind and Tidal Power.

The creation of major manufacturing and fabrication facilities within Scotland would provide growth opportunities when fully materialised.

GMB has expressed real concerns over the Tory plans for Shipbuilding following a meeting which failed to provide any clear assurances that they would maintain a £4 billion contract to build two aircraft carriers jeopardising the future of an entire industry and about 14,000 jobs. John Dolan, CEC member and Jamie Webster, Convener along with 9 other Shop Stewards including those from the Clyde and Rosyth Shipyards met with Liam Fox, Shadow Defence Secretary at Westminster on 24 February 2010. This meeting was arranged by Labour MSP, Ian Davidson. This meeting left GMB Stewards less than confident as to the future commitment of the Tories. Fox when asked about assurances commented that he would be seeking details about break clauses for these carriers. The Tories planned Defence Review if elected would take place in November 2011. These are worrying times for members employed in the industry with no other means other than MOD work in Scotland.

GMB with other Public Service affiliates through the STUC are mounting a major campaign across Scotland to protect jobs and services. Meeting regularly we are moving closer to launching this initiative at the time of writing this report in the build up to the STUC Congress in April 2010.

GMB has a major involvement in Scoping out a "Charter for Public Services in Scotland" and will play one of the lead roles in the Public Services Conference to be held on 19 March 2010.

Our position is that by investing in public works, health and education can drive forward the Scottish Economy stimulating growth.

With STUC affiliates we are calling on the following action from Government:

- Progressive Taxation to maintain and improve Public Services. An end to Council Tax Freeze and Small Business Bonus Scheme which is starving the Public Services of cash.

- To use the Public Sector as an economic driver. Housing Investment to allow Housing Associations and Councils to invest directly in homes and jobs.
- To end PFI/PPP and abandon the Scottish Futures Trust. Provide Scottish Government Grants for new capital projects, to keep Scottish Water in Public Ownership and to create a Scottish Investment Bank.
- Expand Public Sector Procurement for the benefit of communities, boost employment, support sheltered workplaces and promote equality.
- Oppose privatisation or part privatisation of Local Government Services and commit to democratic and accountable models of public service delivery.
- To invest in the Curriculum for Excellence reduce class sizes, commit to the expansion of early years education and care, recognise the importance of further and higher education to the economy and society.
- To tackle Scotland's health inequalities. No role for the private sector in capital investment in hospitals.
- Fair Pay and Conditions of Employment for all Public Service Workers including paying the Scottish Living Wage and in delivering Equal Pay and to commit to No Compulsory Redundancies for Public Service Employees.
- To recognise the value of the voluntary sector as a service provider within a framework of direct public provision.

GMB Scotland's voice has been significant in pressing the Scottish Government to establish a Scottish Investment Bank. Discussions have focused on funding provisions with Banks and Pension Funds to support a £300 million Scottish Investment Bank. Reports at present are encouraging indicating discussions are advancing. If this deal goes ahead it would significantly assist the current gap on funding to small and medium sized businesses across Scotland. Scottish Government announced in 2009 that they had already set aside £150m to support this.

Minimum Pricing of alcohol is a key debate within the Scottish Parliament with the Scottish National Party proposing minimum pricing to reduce the current levels of consumption. This represents difficult issues particularly for the GMB as this will have an adverse impact on the whisky industry in which the GMB is a major Union.

The Government Health Professionals are adamant that minimum pricing is essential in reducing consumption and abuse of alcohol in Scotland. While GMB Scotland support the need to reduce consumption and abuse of alcohol we do not accept that the position of Government and Health Professionals targets the problem areas and that if implemented as currently proposed will result in unintended consequences for the Whisky Industry.

The Labour Party who opposed the SNP proposals have set up a Commission to consider alternative pricing mechanisms and other measures intended to tackle alcohol abuse.

This is a major topic of debate for GMB as stated the unintended consequences of the SNP approach would be to directly impact on sales by increasing the price of Whisky on Scotland, provide more profits to the supermarkets and result in Carlisle being a new border crossing with white vans running cheaper booze over the border into Scotland and being sold cheaper in housing schemes across Scotland.

A further concern of GMB is that should this legislation be implemented as a Health Measure then exports may suffer in Global Markets where potential opportunities would be available in some countries to stop whisky imports on Health Grounds. GMB Scotland will be providing evidence to the Commission before Congress and will be working closely with the Scottish Whisky Association.

Recent developments across this normally buoyant sector have shown that volume downturns have impacted significantly. The downturn started October 2008 with volumes falling and having to agree radical approaches across the Whisky Sector by a combination of working reduced hours with agreement to pay back these hours later in the year, also by taking unpaid leave or by taking holidays, all this to safeguard jobs.

The industry is dominated by ownership outwith Scotland with a number of smaller independent firms being Scottish owned.

The announcement by Diageo, the largest and most profitable spirit company to close two Plants with the loss of 900 jobs in June 2009 had a major impact and effect on the Scottish Workforce, causing significant uncertainty and insecurity. GMB Scotland played a major role in the Government Task Group set up to try and pull together an alternative Business Plan to mitigate these closures and safeguard jobs.

Involvement with Consultants, Community Groups, Political Parties and Local Authorities however failed to bring about a change to Diageo's decision to close. Having lead a delegation to meet with the Chief Executive in London proved to be successful albeit on a limited scale and impacting on the Redundancy/Closure Package which is one of the best across the UK. These closures will take until March 2012 to be completed.

This is a key sector in terms of the Scottish and UK Economy making a significant contribution to the UK Economy.

There are no significant signs at present of an upturn in production which is always worrying across the sector. However, GMB continue to take a pro-active role and lead discussions with the employers, government and the Scottish Whisky Association.

GMB Scotland's Public Service Section is currently preparing for proposed efficiency cuts with media speculation as to the impact of Public Service Cuts in terms of jobs. Speculation abounds within the media of 1 in 6 jobs going as Authorities make efficiency cuts.

We are already experiencing the impact of cuts in the Highlands and Islands, Aberdeen and across the Central Belt of Scotland. The setting up of Arms Length companies by the local authorities may increase as may outsourcing the provision of some services.

The recent pay negotiations with the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Joint Trade Unions has resulted in no offer being put forward by the employers side who even had the audacity to suggest that those who had benefited through Single Status already had received increases, the one thing omitted from this was that most of those receiving an increase were women and that these increases should have been paid to women in '98.

A tough year ahead yes – however notwithstanding the climate there still exists opportunities.

Commercial Services Section

Logistics and Distribution is dominated within GMB Scotland by Norbert Dentressangle Logistics, DHL and Asda. All of whom have their own particular unique issues in terms of the competitive marketplace.

Membership within this area continues to be stable as a result of, in particular, the linkage with NDL and Asda servicing Morrisons and Asda Stores.

Settlements within NDL were difficult to achieve in 2009 with protracted negotiations and a threat of Strike Action.

Within Asda the move this year to discuss wages and conditions with the Company on a National rather than local basis has been welcomed and DHL has been undergoing significant change in a difficult market.

Scottish & Southern Energy - Ofgem's Proposals for Pensions

Ofgem regulates the electricity and gas distribution and transmission network operators, which are all monopolies, to protect the interests of current and future customers. Ofgem sets a price control every five years that determines the total revenues for each licensee. As part of setting the allowed revenues, Ofgem assesses the efficient level of pension costs for the businesses. In 2003, Ofgem set out six key principles for the treatment of pension costs, in particular those arising from Defined Benefit (DB) schemes and applied these, with minor refinements, through the last three price control reviews covering electricity distribution, transmission and gas distribution. The DB schemes were originally the pension schemes of the nationalised gas and electricity industries prior to privatisation. At privatisation employees were given certain protected rights. This 'protected persons' status is peculiar to the electricity sector. Most of the schemes are now largely closed to new employees.

There have been significant developments in the UK pension environment since 2003, including the Pensions Act 2004, which led to the introduction of the Pensions Regulator and the Pension Protection Fund (PPF). There have been changes in mortality, investment yield assumptions, and the introduction of scheme specific funding. As a result, the deficit has increased significantly with the aggregate DB current funding allowance set for the monopoly networks

now standing at £441 million per year. Whilst the current regulatory treatment allows the companies to recover their actual pension costs in full, provided that they are economic and efficiently incurred, Ofgem has come under increasing pressure to ensure the costs borne by the customers are minimised. Not least, regulators in other sectors have implied that Ofgem's approach is more lenient than any other utility sector.

The Issues

Ofgem's is therefore reviewing the 2003 principles. The latest consultation looks at a range of possible options for regulated sector pensions, including maintaining the current arrangements. Ofgem states that it wants to ensure that network operators are under similar pressures to other businesses to manage their pension costs efficiently. Whilst Ofgem appears to recognise that comparisons with other utility sector arrangements (e.g. water) may be misleading, it nevertheless considers that network operators are exposed to less risk than other sectors.

Ofgem has suggested that pension costs can be split into three elements:

Liabilities for past pension deficit; ongoing costs (including any incremental deficit that arises); and the cost of servicing the schemes. Liabilities for past pension deficit are currently fully funded. Whilst Ofgem has stated that maintaining the existing arrangements is an option, another option proposed is to draw a line on pension deficits at the next regulatory review period (for electricity distribution this would be 31 March 2010). Ofgem suggests that network operators could be incentivised to manage the ongoing costs and any incremental deficit that subsequently arises via standard efficiency targets or benchmarking. Ofgem suggests that the cost of servicing the schemes could face similar incentives going forward.

We do not believe there is any need for significant change to the pensions. Pensions are a legitimate cost and a legal requirement for network companies. There is no evidence that these costs have been inefficiently incurred, indeed it is in the interests of both the companies and the trustees to minimise pensions funding costs. Furthermore, we do not believe that network operators can be compared to other utility sectors because of the very different arrangements at privatisation. Whilst the latest consultation states that existing pension liabilities will be fully funded and are not being put at risk, it is not clear to us that this will be the case. Ring-fencing of the existing pensions deficit at a point in time will mean that only the costs at that time can be guaranteed full funding. We are firmly of the view that the current arrangements should be maintained, and we are concerned that some of the other options proposed may expose businesses to significant unfunded costs.

Scottish Power - Union membership have voted to accept the Business 2009/2010 Pay and Conditions offer which applies to all UNITE (AMICUS/TGWU), PROSPECT, GMB and UNISON Members.

The key elements of the settlement are outlined below:-

-Twenty One month deal – 1st April 2009 to 31st December 2010

-No pay award to be applied to base salaries and flow-through payments from 1st April 2009 to 31st December 2009.

-2.5% increase on base salaries from 1st January 2010 to 31st December 2010 for all employees who are in post at 1st June 2010 but excludes anyone whose application for Voluntary Redundancy has been accepted. This will be paid in June 2010 backdated to 1st January 2010

-2.5 % increase to annualised standby and shift payments only from 1st January 2010 to 31st December 2010. This will be paid in June 2010 backdated to 1st January 2010. No pay award to be applied to all other flow-through payments from 1st January 2010 to 31st December 2010.

Performance Management – removal of enhanced incremental progression and bonus payments for all employees. Standard increments, at the 2008 value, for performance year 1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010 will be paid in June 2010 backdated to 1st April 2010 subject to employees achieving at least a 3 performance rating. For clarity these arrangements will also apply to apprentices and craft trainees.

Performance Management – Standard increments at the 2008 value, for performance year 1st April 2010 – 31st March 2011 will be paid in June 2011 subject to employees achieving at least a 3 performance rating.

Joint commitment to key principles for Business Change

As part of the settlement the Trade Unions also agreed to extend the "Temporary Transfer" process to 31st March 2010 for employees currently temporarily transferred only. New transfers will not be sought beyond 31st December 2009. This process was previously agreed at the SP Energy Networks JCC meeting on 27th January 2009. In addition, with effect from 24th December until 31st March 2010, employees who work overtime and are entitled to payments in accordance with the current overtime provisions, will have the opportunity to take TOIL (Time Off in Lieu) at the appropriate overtime rate ie single time, time and a half or double time dependant on when the overtime was worked. For the avoidance of doubt there would be no change to the provisions for the payment of TOIL.

Scottish Power - Joint Statement - Energy Networks JCC and Core JNC - Following the Business and Trade Union Joint Statement issued on 22nd October 2009 a special combined meeting of the EN JCC and Core JNC took place on 27th and 28th October at Dealain House, Cumbernauld to commence the Company/Business consultation process in relation to business proposals arising from the Strategic Improvement Programme (SIP). At the meeting EnergyNetworks made a presentation to the Trade Union Representatives which outlined the need for change, proposed changes to the Energy Networks and Core Operating Model, potential people impact and Guiding Principles to deal with the outlined changes. The key points discussed are detailed below;

Need for Change; Current levels of return on equity are insufficient.

Cost benchmarking through DPCR5 has highlighted that productivity improvements must now be made.

Wider economic factors have driven down connections activity by 30 to 50%.

New, tighter regulatory standards will be imposed on the connections activity from 2010.

Need to establish Relationship with Iberdrola's global model for major project design and construction.

Implementation of SAP in 2010.

Management Proposals; Creation of a Single ScottishPower Connections business in order to meet regulatory and competition challenges, to create a sustainable connections business protecting ScottishPower jobs for the long term. Proposed connections business must be able to compete in the market place and is built on assumption of no further decline in housing market.

Strategic decision not to pursue external Infrastructure Services work in order to maintain focus and efforts on 'in area' connections business. Key decision to focus our resources on our licensed areas.

Review of Relationship with IEC (Iberdrola Engineering & Construction) to build on internationally recognised project management and engineering excellence.

Focus on multi-skilling, up-skilling, efficient working arrangements and productivity in Field Operations.

People Impact - The estimated impact of the Business proposals were as follows;

Proposed reductions of 345 posts across EN and Core during 2010 due to: -

Synergies from creation of ScottishPower Connections Business

Strategic review of Infrastructure Services activities

Efficiency and productivity improvements

The proposed changes must be made in order to get SP Energy Networks to the baseline that Ofgem have assumed as the starting point for DPCR5. Beyond this, significant work still required to achieve an upper quartile industry position. It was noted that the potential impact of SAP and mobile technology are also still to be determined.

Trade Union Representatives made a number of challenges and requested further details on the Company's proposals. Following discussions Trade Union Representatives reserved their position on the Company's proposals and requested a business case for the proposals outlined.

Guiding principles to deal with the proposed changes; At the meeting both sides agreed that every effort would be made to minimise the impact to staff of the proposed changes through the following measures;

Where reasonable and practical secure suitable alternative redeployment and retraining for employees in EnergyNetworks and Core and across the wider Scottishpower.

Where unable to secure suitable alternative redeployment will endeavour to achieve reductions by voluntary means.

Manage change and potential people impact using fair, transparent and robust processes.

Recruitment Freeze implemented with immediate effect.

Ongoing review of Contractor and Agency staff.

Consideration of requests for voluntary redundancies, including shunt redundancies, across EN and Core in line with business requirements.

Both Company Members and Trade Union Representatives are jointly committed to work together to achieve any necessary reductions. Where unable to secure suitable alternative redeployment the business will endeavour to achieve reductions by voluntary means.

Scottish Power – Energy Re-organisation, Energy Networks - The Trade Union members of the SIP Connections Working Group have adopted an intermediate position following the meeting on 8 January 2010. The Trade Unions have asked a series of questions in relation to the businesses Connections SIP proposals and justifications and the

business has responded to the questions. It is felt an impasse has been reached in terms of this part of the consultation exercise.

From the business case presented, the Trade Unions remain resolutely unconvinced that there is any legitimate rationale or justification for a stand alone Connections Business. The TU Side of the Working Group remains convinced the new Connections Business will have a greater opportunity for success as an integrated part of the future Energy Networks business.

The TU Side have a legitimate fear that one of the main drivers of a standalone business is an early attack upon our existing terms and conditions of service. From the analysis undertaken by the Connections SIP Project team and presented to the working group, we believe that there is insufficient evidence to support the future sizing of the resources required by the new Connections Business. We are of the view that the SIP Project team has taken risks by making too many unreasonable assumptions. We are of the view that most, if not all, of the efficiencies identified by the Connections SIP Project team, with renewed focus, are achievable within the existing business structure. We believe that the removal of Connections staff from standby arrangements will put the network at considerable risk, from an operational perspective, from a health and safety perspective and from a customer service perspective. We do not believe that this aspect of the overall SIP review has been thoroughly assessed and represents an unacceptable risk to the business, to direct and indirect staff operating on the network and to the general public. We are of the view that, with a more efficient scheduling tool and accurate identification and management of all available resources, inefficiencies associated with current operational standby arrangements and occasional impact upon Connections planned work can be managed effectively and eradicated.

Scottish Power - Flexible Working - Introduction - The Company is committed to helping employees balance work and personal commitments and believes that one way of achieving this is to provide easier access to flexible working. Parents of children aged under 17, or of disabled children aged under 18, and who have 26 weeks' continuous service with the Company, have a statutory right to apply to work flexibly in order to help them care for their child and the Company has a duty to seriously consider such requests. This can apply to a mother, father, adopter, guardian or foster parent of the child, or the partner (which includes same sex partners) or spouse of any of these who have or expect to have responsibility for the upbringing of the child.

Carers of adults also have a statutory right to apply to work flexibly in order to help them with their caring responsibilities, A carer is an employee who is or expects to be caring for an adult who: is married to, or the partner or civil partner of the employee; or is a near relative of the employee: or falls into neither category but lives at the same address as the employee. The "near relative" definition includes parents, parent-in-law, adult child, adopted adult child, siblings (including those who are in-laws), son-in-laws, daughter-in-laws, uncles, aunts, grandparents and step-relatives. The Policy on Flexible Working provides an opportunity for these employees to effectively integrate their working lives and career development with other responsibilities and activities, maintaining a positive balance between work and non-work commitments. Whilst the main aim of the Policy is to assist employees who have responsibility for the upbringing of a child or responsibility for caring for an adult, ScottishPower will also consider all requests for flexible working from all employees, provided they have 26 weeks' continuous service with the Company. Each request will be given serious consideration in order to try to satisfy the needs of the employee and those of the Company. However, preference may be given to employees with children under 17 years old, or 18 years old if disabled, or adult carers and a request for flexible working for any other purpose will not be given the same priority. The Policy on Flexible Working should help the Company improve motivation and attract and retain skilled members of the workforce who would otherwise not be available to work.

OFGEM Consultation: Price Control Pension Principles - Second Consultation Document – Introduction - GMB, with over 610,000 members, is the UK's third largest trade union and the leading union for employees in the energy sector. GMB has thousands of members throughout the industry covering all the pension schemes referred to in this latest OFGEM consultation. Our members, the vast majority of whom are members of the industry's occupational pension schemes, perform a vital role in providing electricity and gas services to the public. Our members are integral to the sustainable future of the UK energy market and have been central to many key reforms that have improved the efficiency and quality of the sector. Many have decades of service within the industry and have skills and commitment unparalleled in Europe. They have also followed successive governments' advice and saved for their retirements through occupational pension schemes. A loyal and motivated workforce is essential if the UK is to meet the energy challenges of the twenty-first century, GMB is keen to engage in this endeavour but will not accept attempts to arbitrarily reduce energy workers' core terms and conditions.

GMB has previously responded to consultations by OFGEM on this issue and was part of the seminar held by the regulator in October 2008. We remain absolutely committed to ensuring our members are able to participate in viable, sustainable pension schemes for the long term. Our participation in the debate following the first consultation reflects this. GMB takes this second challenge to the 'Six Principles' approach equally seriously and is deeply concerned that some of OFGEM's proposals would severely undermine the pension savings of thousands of UK families.

BVT - Despite press reports, the company claim that they are on firm footing with regard to work and see no problems into the future. In fact, they are now at the planning stage for orders post carrier, for C1, C2, C3 class of ships. All of these class of ships they intend to design with an eye to future exports. As part of this process the Company have already made contact with various countries that have shown interest in enlarging their naval potential. We were recruiting heavily on the Clyde with Convenors and Workplace Organisers fully committed to GMB@Work.

As you may recall from the formation of BVT Surface Fleet on 1st July 2008, the Joint Venture agreement allowed for VT Group to exit the arrangement, subject to certain conditions, after 12-months. The 'exit' option was exercised by VT Group and BAE Systems and VT Group recently signed the agreement under which BAE Systems will buy VT Groups shares in BVT Surface Fleet Limited. When this is complete BVT will be 100% owned by BAE Systems and will change its name to BAE Systems Surface Ships Limited. It is hoped that the deal will complete, but there are two main conditions to this. There is a requirement, firstly, to secure European Union competition clearance and, secondly, the approval of VT Groups shareholders at the EGM that is being held on 19th October 2009. It is important to take this opportunity to emphasise that, with the exception of the change to BVT's ownership and name, there are no other changes and, in particular, there are no TUPE transfers being made. There will be no moving of employees from one BVT employing company to another and no employment terms and conditions will change when BAE Systems takes full ownership of what is now the BVT Group. As was the situation when BVT was formed, BVT are conscious of the importance of good quality, regular, communications with the workforce during this period. Accordingly, as part of a wider integration and communications plan, they intend writing to each employee at home to properly inform them of this change and have already established a forum for employees to obtain answers to any questions that they might have. They have advised that they will continue to work with local Trade Union officials across our Company as part of the integration process into BAE Systems Surface Ships Limited. However, following the debates between the employer and Trade Union officials in the early days of BVT, they have re-emphasised that TUPE is not involved in the impending change and that formal consultation is not required.

Interfloor Ltd - We have had further redundancies in this establishment. A substantial part of the Organiser's time was taken up in this Company during 2009. The reason being that two of our members had no confidence in the shop steward, and the steward would not participate in the appeals process with regard to these two members. The outcome of these numerous meetings was that one continued in employment at Heathhall, the other was transferred to the Company's other plant at Ironside, Dumfries. Whilst the redundancies were in place the Organiser had further talks with this Company on the future of the plant and wages, terms and conditions claim for this year.

Plant Future – the plant has moved the focus to P.U. from the traditional tread air underlay flooring. They currently have (1) P.U. facility, however it is the intention to install a further unit by the end of the year. If this occurs it will mean that approximately 25 people will be either re-employed or newly employed. With regard to the other plant in Ironside (Gripperoll) the Company have just bought out their biggest competitor thereby increasing their share of the market. Wages, Terms & Conditions - the Company are not prepared to move on this area until there is some form of stability in the current market area in which they trade because of cash flow issues.

Masterton Demolition - Four members have been made redundant as a consequence of lack of work in the industry. The Company consulted the Organiser on a redundancy matrix which was not agreed by the Union as it was almost entirely subjective. Appeals have been submitted by all four members; however, meetings were cancelled by the Company for discussion at National Level. The Organiser has been informed by the Company that this year's National Pay deal is not being implemented due to the downturn. This matter is ongoing.

RHI (Foseco) - In August 2009 a meeting took place with Management concerning further redundancies and a slight change to the matrix (removed appraisal after a request from TU Side). The Managing Director believed that any further reduction in employees may be the end of the Plant. However, in October this year it was reported that Company had some good news after the recent redundancy situation when their main competitor went bust which has completely reversed the dire situation RHI was in. Six members who were made redundant have been reinstated and there is seven day working at the plant.

Wood Group - The regular Bi-Monthly meeting was held with this Company. The main area of contention was on the BP Fields (North, Central & Southern Offshore) where BP have requested the contractors to reduce pay levels to OCA rates which would mean for most employees (blue collar only) a reduction up to 18%, this also affects other Companies and a 90 day consultation is taking place with GMB and UNITE, we have also been in contact with some of our members who work on the rigs who are affected. The Organiser has now attended two meetings under the 90 day consultation proposals to cut employees (blue collar workers only) up to 18% in pay with each of the companies above. BP who is the client has now offered an incentive scheme, but has not yet explained what it is. The matter is ongoing.

Petrofac - In August 2009 the Organiser attended two redundancy meetings at this Company, one was resolved, and the other is going to appeal.

Wood Group has lost the maintenance contract on the Apache Field to Petrofac who were not abiding by the OCA Contractors agreement for a TUPE Transfer. In 2009 the ongoing saga of whether Petrofac would attract TUPE has now finally been resolved. Petrofac have agreed to transfer over full Terms & Conditions of all ex Wood Group employees.

BP Fields Offshore - BP have conceded defeat on their proposals to cut up to 20% of OCA employees wages, they have now agreed to have further talks next year with a proviso that a negotiated agreement must be reached before any changes take place.

LaFarge Cement - NNC discussions took place on 9th and 10th November 2009 regarding the unprecedented drop in demand for cement in the UK market that is set to continue for the next two-three years. It is the company's and Trade Unions intention to maintain security of employment for employees and to continue to work in the spirit of partnership. For this business to remain sustainable for the long term and be in a position to exit the recession as strongly as possible both parties recognise a need to take action. Following lengthy discussions the company has proposed the following:

-Pay Negotiation - A one-year pay freeze for 2010.

Alignment of Pensions Benefits - It is the company's and the Trade Unions intention to maintain the existing Final Pay Pension Scheme for its current members. To support this intention, the company is proposing an alignment of the pension benefits across the Lafarge UK Pensions Scheme. A consultation took place with the mailing of individual letters to the members. The formal consultation took place with the mailing of individual letters to those members of the Blue Circle Final Pay section of the pension scheme outlining how they will be personally affected. The Pensions Consultative Council will also meet this week as part of the consultation process and discussions will continue with the Trade Unions.

Temporary Lay-Off Agreement - Full and frank discussions took place about the problems faced by the company and its employees, and there was agreement that all measures possible should be explored in order to avoid long term permanent job losses caused by, or occurring through another moth-balling exercise or full plant closure. The company, after much discussion, tabled a stand-alone temporary lay-off agreement. The scope of this agreement will cover all Lafarge Cement UK sites for a 36 month period with an annual review in 2010 and 2011. The agreement will include break clause that can be applied by either party with three months notice. The duration of lay-off will be a maximum of 18 weeks in any one-year for which employees will receive a reduction of their pay. Full details of how employees will be affected will be contained in the agreement that is being drafted. Any issues surrounding the lay-off arrangement that cannot be resolved locally will be discussed by the NNC to assist resolution.

Ukaea Dounreay - Decommissioning continues, the first round of redundancies took place two weeks ago. Acas have now concluded their investigation into a number of matters arising from a GMB dispute. GMB members were raising grading grievances which were not possible to resolve internally, all relating to the Hays JE Scheme and local agreements on pay protection, which the GMB were not party to. In summary, life long pay protection was the cause of all of the complaints and this matter has now to been urgently reviewed, in line with Acas recommendations.

Mastertons - Mastertons have won the Contract to demolish the fire damaged building at Longannet Power Station, expected to take nine months as there are safety concerns about the state of the building.

Bi Fab (Burntisland) - Arrangements are in place to meet with Employers at Bi Fab's Lewis Yard for recruitment and recognition, Management have refused to allow the Burntisland rep (GMB) to attend. Meeting with Management to look

at permanent numbers at the Yard as there are now 700 working there of which only 120 are permanent, another 300 are expected to arrive shortly.

Norec – Longannet Power Station - Scottish Power has indicated that over the past few years they have invested millions into improving facilities of the materials handling process, with additional investment to come. They now expect a return for their money by reducing costs in Coal & Ash. A Meeting took place with NOREC management and the stewards who agreed to hold talks over the next few months to see how this can be achieved.

Public Services - The work of the Public Sector Section within Scotland has a familiarity with the last report to Congress as Single Status, Job Evaluation, and Equal Pay were the issues that dominated the work of the Section. This year saw more of Scotland's Local Authorities introduce new Pay Structures and a new Terms and Conditions Package as part of the Single Status Agreement.

At the time of writing this report only four of the thirty-two Local Authorities are still to implement the new Pay arrangements through this Agreement. When this happens it will bring to an end a very difficult and complex set of negotiations across the whole of Local Government and our appreciation should go to the band of Branch Secretaries, Conveners, Shop Stewards, and Organisers who stayed the course through these negotiations and who in many cases managed to negotiate many improvements to the original proposals put forward by Councils. Whilst these improvements were made across all Councils GMB Scotland only signed off a Collective Agreement in two Councils Dumfries & Galloway and Shetland Islands Council. Due to our concerns about ongoing equality issues we were unable to sign up to any of the final proposals in all of the other Councils.

Arising from the way Councils introduced Single Status GMB Scotland has embarked on a third phase of Equal Pay claims. GMB Scotland has already lodged claims in most Councils for the original Equal Pay claim and a second claim was lodged for any gap period that emerged with delays in introducing a new Equality Proofed Pay Structure. This third claim covers the issue of Protection and where pay inequality continued through these arrangements we are seeking to obtain further payments for our members who have been subjected to continuing pay inequality through that period.

There was little or no involvement in pay negotiations this year as all of the major Pay Bodies had multiple year deals which covered the period of this report. Claims have been lodged for this year and with the current cuts in Public Spending GMB Scotland expect this year to be a difficult time with many of the Employers' stating publicly that there should be no increase this year. Indeed some of the more hard line Council Leaders are advocating a Three-Year wage freeze so some difficult times ahead for our negotiators and ultimately our members. Despite all of this doom and gloom GMB Scotland's view is that we should still pursue a claim on behalf of our members and we should continue to attempt to gain improvements to our members' standard of living.

GMB Scotland also wishes to pursue the issue of Low Pay within Local Government as many of our members, especially in the Part-Time Female Occupational Groups are on rates of pay well below the £7 an hour living wage.

The cutbacks in Public Spending are also having an impact on Job Security of our members. Another consequence of the squeeze on Public Spending is the Model of Service Delivery as Councils look at outsourcing and the setting up of at Arms Length External Organisations to Deliver Services.

The figures being quoted on job losses as a result of Budget Cuts is three thousand, GMB Scotland believe the figure will be much higher than this. Officials are now involved in consultation on this across Scotland, and unlike previous situations there is a real concern that on this occasion Councils may announce for the first time Compulsory Redundancies.

Of equal concern is the outsourcing Agenda that seems to be favoured by some Councils and the setting up of Arms Length Organisations by other Councils. The experience to date is this move impacts on National Bargaining as the Private Sector Companies or the Arms Length Organisations introduce their own Collective Bargaining arrangement. This also impacts on our Organisation within these operations; we not only need to follow our members we will in most cases need to build a new Organisation and Bargaining Structure. We will also need to build a strong membership base in each of these new workplaces.

Big challenges in the year ahead for GMB Scotland, but with the enthusiastic help of our Organisers and Lay Officials we are confident we can cope with these challenges and still deliver for our members.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	0
Regional Organisers	18
Organising Officers	3
No. of Branches	167
New Branches	2
Branch Equality Officers	34
Branch Youth Officers	0

2010 will also result in significant changes as Regional Office, Fountain House will undergo a major refurbishment and result in a much improved GMB facility and long term asset while at the same time improving the working environment for Staff and Officers.

Presentations to both Officers and Staff have highlighted 2010 as a year of change. Change in how we deliver GMB@Work. The role of the Senior Organisers integrating with the Organising Team in the delivery of strategy has been spelled out. Action plans and improved monitoring systems and communications will provide a platform on which we can improve performance.

Combined with the requirements on Officers in delivering Workplace Organisers Consolidation Training this presents the Region with fresh opportunities.

Staff employees have all been encouraged and supported in being offered opportunities to spend pre-arranged days with the Organising Team to develop an insight and understanding of Recruitment & Organising Techniques. This has been appreciated by those members of staff who have participated in this exercise which is ongoing.

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	0
Total Disablement	4,000
Working Accident	3,668
Occupational Fatal Accident	0
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	850
Funeral	43,005

4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

Press releases covering Manufacturing, Commercial Services and the Public Sector are issued on an ongoing basis either reacting to the press or indeed creating the issues on which we hope to recruit.

Local issues in conjunction with the National press releases continue to keep GMB in the public and members' radar.

Media Monitoring

Again there is a steady volume of involvement by GMB Scotland both in the press and Scottish Television on a whole range of issues.

The major role played by the GMB in the Whisky closures within Scotland received significant media coverage over a period of months from July 2009.

GMB Scotland has also played a leading role with the Scotch Whisky Industry in promoting Responsible Drinking. GMB views and opinion is regularly sought by the media on ongoing issues such as Public Services, Shipbuilding, Aviation and Security.

Campaigns have also covered the Living Wage Campaign in Scotland.

We continue to lobby and campaign on Safety Provision for G4S Guarding and Carbon Trust.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
324	324

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
458	101	0	356*	1	
			£3,948,846	£13,144	£3,961,990
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			705		

* of which 274 were settled after court proceedings were raised

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	2,586*
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* of which 2,368 are new equal pay cases, and 62 are multiple cases involving Chep Uk Ltd compromise agreements.

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
391	34	6	350	1	£645,205
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			6,571*		

*158 fixed fee and 6,318 equal pay (this includes some multiple job claims for single members).

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
18	8*	2

* out of 15 appeals held. Total "benefit gain" is £40,778.21

Occupational Accident & Diseases

The total amount of compensation recovered in 2009 was £3,804,490, the largest annual total for the last four years. This figure is more than double the total compensation recovered in 2008 of £1,849,316, and it represents an average recovery of just over £11,000 for each successful claim.

80% of all successful cases were brought to conclusion after raising Court proceedings.

The figures also demonstrate increasing efficiency in case turnover with 158 fewer outstanding cases at the year end as compared with the previous year.

The one significant disappointing figure is the total number of applications for legal assistance throughout 2009. At 324, this is significantly less than the figure for 2008 of 589. 2007 was 478 and 2006 was 575. This suggests an acceleration of the ongoing downward trend of the overall numbers of new applications for legal assistance in Occupational Accident & Disease cases. To address this downward trend and through the GMB@Work Training Courses we will introduce a specific campaign to actively promote the full range of legal services currently offered, by GMB Scotland, to our member's and potential members and their families.

Litigation against Stefan Cross

2009 saw a significant amount of time and energy providing legal services to members formerly represented by no-win, no-fee lawyer, Stefan Cross, but who now wish to return to GMB representation. We continue to represent over 300 members who wish to transfer agency in their equal pay claims from Stefan Cross or alternatively who wish to pursue actions against Stefan Cross for recovery of fees unlawfully retained from first wave equal pay settlements. In the past year, small claims actions against Stefan Cross have met with some success. We are actively pursuing ongoing complaints with the English Legal Complaints Commission, which, if upheld, could force Stefan Cross to repay all sums unlawfully retained to GMB members in Scotland. Further, a test case has been commenced in the Court of Session on behalf of a GMB member, Barbara Stanczyk. This case had its first hearing on the 27th January and is scheduled to proceed to a full hearing on the legal merits of the case in March 2010. Once this case is determined, this ought to clear the way for all outstanding cases to be dealt with.

Equal Pay

In 2009 the law regarding what is and what is not required for compliance with the now repealed Statutory grievance regime has been clarified.

As a result of that two things have started to happen in the Equal pay cases in Scotland. Firstly cases which had been sisted pending clarification of the law are now being recalled and the issues explored by the Employment Tribunal.

Secondly some council's have decided to offer settlements to members of the GMB using new funding being made available by the Scottish Government to do so.

Claims for post single status bonus protection periods.

GMB (Scotland) identified in early 2009 that members employed in some 11 Local Authorities had a further entitlement to make EPA claims for periods of up to three years after single status had been implemented. An exercise was carried out over the Summer of 2009 for the largest of these areas Glasgow City Council. This resulted in instructions being given to raise 1800 new cases for the pay protection period. This exercise is being rolled out into the other affected Councils with Inverclyde and Falkirk currently being intimated.

Settlement of Equal Pay Claims in 2009

Our employment Solicitors continued to part-settle Equal Pay Act claims on a weekly basis and in 2009 recovered a total of £278,283 in equal pay compensation for GMB members in Scotland. This included the resolution of one set of 183 claims against a non-local authority respondent.

Other Employment Cases (Non Equal Pay)

GMB Scotland referred a total of 158 new Employment Tribunal cases to our Employment Solicitors in 2009. In the same year, 120 GMB supported Tribunal cases concluded. 70% of the concluded cases were settled or succeeded following a Tribunal Hearing with a total sum of £645,205 recovered in compensation for GMB members.

Total Compensation Recovered for GMB Members in Employment Tribunal Claims

Total compensation recovered for all GMB supported Tribunal claims in 2009 was £923,488

Setting Up of Employment Advice Surgeries for Organisers

In 2009 GMB (Scotland) agreed to continue with a scheme which involves other employment cases. The Scheme commenced on 1st January 2009 and its objective is to provide legal, industrial and practical support to Organisers dealing with matters which may result in Tribunal proceedings being lodged. Organisers are attended upon at Advice Surgeries by an experienced Employment Solicitor and telephone appointments are arranged for those Organisers located outwith the central belt. The take up by organisers has been an average of ten organisers attending each session with a further two to three organisers obtaining assistance by telephone.

Extended Legal Services

The GMB Law scheme continues to provide members and their families in Scotland with 24 hour access to the whole range of extended legal services, for advice or representation, either free of charge (such as free wills for GMB members) or at reduced legal rates. In the past year, over 650 members or family members have taken advantage of the scheme.

The Outlook for 2010

This year ought to see a resolution of the volume litigation against Stefan Cross.

The continuing Equal pay claims fight will continue. 2010 is likely to see a large number of cases resolved at least for the period up to pay protection post single status implementation.

Generally there are likely to be more cases involving redundancy and insolvency issues until the economy begins to pick up again.

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

There has been some slippage in the Region in establishing the Forum due to a number of situations arising however dates have been set for the inaugural Forum.

However this has not stopped the current committee from being actively involved in campaigns and issues.

Using their work to highlight and integrate all their focus on recruitment and organisation.

Our members play a significant role within the STUC Women's Committee promoting the GMB Agenda such as:

- Equal Pay, Public Sector and other areas
- the Glasgow Living Wage
- Engaging with Employers organisations
- Human trafficking in Scotland

The central focus of their work and role is the integration of their work across all of the equality strands into GMB@Work.

The Forum's key objectives in 2010 will be to set Regional objectives in terms of increasing our Regional Membership.

The equality strands are key areas of opportunity.

Ethnic Breakdown of the Region's Committees and Conferences are:

Regional Committee:	7WH, 4 Unknown
Regional Council:	23WH, 1 OT, 21 Unknown
RERAC:	8WH, 1BA, 2 OT, 10 Unknown

7 TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (2 days)					
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)					
5 Day Induction incorporating 2 Day GMB@WORK	15	140	38	178	890

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5 Day Induction incorporating 2 Day GMB@WORK, Diageo, Leven	1	5	5	10	50

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB 3-Day Risk Assessment					
	5	47	12	59	177

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Health & Safety Stage 1 (10 days)		4	4	8	80
Next steps for Safety Reps (10 days)		6	0	6	60
Union Reps Stage1 (10 Days)		2	1	3	30
Union Reps Stage 1 Online (10 days)		0	1	1	10
Stepping Up – Advanced Course for Union Reps		2	3	5	50
Union Learning Reps (3 & 2 day block) 6 Days		1	2	3	18
TUC Diploma in Occupational Health & Safety (36 days)		6	0	6	216

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
TUC Diploma in Employment Law (36 days)		0	1	1	36
Risk Assessment (3 days)		1	0	1	3
Handling Grievances & Disciplinaries (3 Days)		1	0	1	3
Equality Reps		0	1	1	3
Pensions Trustees (3 Days)		1	0	1	3
Equality Reps (3 Days)		1	0	1	3
Getting Ready for E Learning (4 Days)		1	0	1	4
Spanish Stage 1 (10 Days)		1	0	1	10
Spanish Stage 2 (10 Days)		1	0	1	10

8 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Region's Health & Safety work continues to be used as a platform for growth within the context of the Organising Agenda.

Health & Safety issues are factored into the training programme of our new Workplace Organisers and also within our Consolidation Training.

Changing the perception of our Health & Safety Reps also has been a key area ensuring that these issues need to become workplace issues building campaigns around Health & Safety as a means to recruit non-members into the Union by promoting successes.

Health and Safety can no longer be seen as a separate discipline within the GMB but is part of our mainstream approach.

The roll out during 2010 of Consolidation Training to our existing Workplace Organisers will deliver change as to how Health & Safety is integrated into GMB@Work and our Organising Agenda.

SOUTHERN REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	82,230
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	24,520
MANUFACTURING SECTION	8,975
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	48,735
Grade 1 members	49,518
Grade 2 members	26,101
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	6,611
Male Membership	38,868
Female Membership	43,362
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	13,209
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	3,710 increase
Membership on Check-off	50,645
Membership on Direct Debit	24,885

The Region

For the fourth year in a row the region beat its previous enrolment figure for the calendar year. At the end of 2009 the region had enrolled 13,209 new members. At the same time, the Region grew to 82,230 members which was 3,710 more than at the end of 2008.

The combination of beating the previous year enrolment and growing by such a substantial amount during the worst recession for over 70 years, demonstrated an outstanding effort by all concerned in the Region.

Once again, GMB@Work is the core of all organising activity. In 2008 officers had been trained in GMB@Work and in 2009 all regional staff attended the same training.

The region's and the Union's objectives have been fully rolled out within the region to meetings involving branch secretaries and activists.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

The ROT team has continued to develop successful recruitment campaigns either on their own or in conjunction with Area teams.

The region has organised a Contractors Forum which has helped to strengthen and consolidate our position within a number of contractors.

The region has established an NHS sub committee where nominated delegates across the region meet on a quarterly basis. The committee encourages the co-ordination of regional activities and to communicate information about the NHS throughout the region.

South West Area

Since Congress 2009 the South West area of the Southern Region, despite the dire economic conditions, has continued to demonstrate membership growth. Successful organising campaigns have been carried out by local officers and key activists assisted by the Regional Organising Team in the schools of Devon and Cornwall counties.

The Public Sector continues to underpin the membership growth of the area against a backdrop of budgetary pressures and job cuts within both local government and the NHS. Through good workplace mapping and following the principles of GMB@Work more stewards are being identified and trained through a series of courses co-tutored by officers. The establishment of a key Rep network across the area has given stewards the opportunity to gain support from representatives within different industries across the area other than their fellow workplace stewards, branches and officers.

South Coast Area

The Team have supported both regional and national campaigns within such areas as Asda and Southern Cross and also received support from the Regional Organising Team with a number of campaigns.

Within local authorities campaigns have been run with Portsmouth City Council, Dorset County Council (within Education) with ongoing activity in Hampshire County Council (Education). Other campaigns involved Dorset County Council (Civic Offices), Portsmouth City Council (Residential Care Homes), Southampton City Council, Bournemouth Borough Council and Poole Borough Council.

Within the Private Sector a successful campaign was run within SGN amongst SGN 'C' employees who were formerly employed by Contractors and mostly not unionised. All fifteen depots in Southern and Scottish Region were visited resulting in the recruitment of 900 new members and a Rep in every depot. The success of the activity culminated in recognition for the SGNC Group and the establishment of proper consultative forums. All SC team members participated in this activity supported by a number of lay Reps from the industry.

An ongoing campaign at Nicholas & Harris Bakery has finally resulted in a sole recognition agreement for GMB. This campaign has been ongoing for some time and the outcome is particularly pleasing as the employees are predominantly Eastern European (mainly Polish). This campaign was conducted with support from the Project Workers using Polish speaking skills to maximise the potential.

Despite the rundown of Gatwick Airport following the announcement of its sell off from BAA, activity there has resulted in a minimum of sustained membership with increases in some areas as a result of campaigns run on the back of TUPE transfers.

Team members have been involved in ongoing industrial activity which has sustained GMB's position with businesses without necessarily resulting in noticeable increases in membership. An example of this is the Gaming industry where a downturn in activity has meant that membership growth was difficult despite improvements for employees brought about by GMB activity.

Another example is within the Portsmouth Naval Base where an industrial dispute situation brought about renewed interest in Trade Union activity but no significant membership growth because membership levels were already at 99% amongst shop floor employees. However, organisation within the workplace ensures that the membership levels are maintained with ongoing recruitment of all new employees into the business.

Central Area

The Central Area has seen recruitment and organising campaigns within the national targets ie Southern Cross care homes, Asda stores and schools.

In particular the issue of equal pay and single status were used to improve membership in Swindon Borough Council where a substantial number of equal pay claims and victimisation claims have been lodged through Thompsons solicitors.

The Regional Organising Team also undertook a successful campaign in West Berkshire schools which improved membership significantly.

Resources were also allocated to Heatherwood and Wexham Park NHS Trust around the outsourcing of work to Sodexo and improved membership amongst the directly employed NHS staff.

With responsibility for the Security industry, the area team continued to be involved in recruitment and organisation within G4S and Securitas in particular.

The area continued to be a focus for migrant worker organising and the Union continues to grow toward recognition at LF Beauty (formerly PB Beauty in Trowbridge).

Towards the end of 2009 officers and the local branch in Swindon were actively assisting a GMB member, Victor Agarwal, to secure the position of PPC in North Swindon following the retirement of Michael Wills MP.

London and South East Area

The South East area has continued to improve membership across a number of London Boroughs. In the majority of cases this recruitment is linked to a local campaign. For example, in Lewisham the local branch has visited schools to support the staff negotiating body and these visits also include the upgrading and single status of the support staff in schools.

Within the borough of Bexley the area used the imposition by the Council of single status agreement to campaign and build the membership.

Within Surrey County Council the area has continued to see growth over a period of fifteen months growing from 2000 members to 2700. The principles of GMB@Work have been applied to ensure that more stewards were involved in organising.

The area has once again see growth in Kent County Council. In Medway Council there has been a successful negotiation for further release of stewards. This extra facility has enabled the branch to concentrate on planning, recruiting and organising activities. This branch continues to grow and works well with Medway Council in organising training through our Education Department and lifelong learning.

As part of the organising agenda within East Sussex County Council the area has secured release for another part-time convenor.

The area has also recruited well within contractors; specifically Veolia and Verdant.

Within the NHS the area has built on the transfer of ASU Ambulance Service members into the region to grow our membership within that sector and to establish a local branch.

Within the Private Sector the area has continued to see growth within Wilkinsons, not only in terms of membership but also in organising activity with new stewards appointed in a number of new stores.

Overview of Region's Economic and Employment Situation

As has already been indicated, despite the serious economic situation the region has continued to grow with very little job losses. The South East and South West of the region is not immune to the pressures of the economic situation but in the main the sectors and industries that we operate in have not been hit as much as some sectors that we do not operate within.

It would appear that whichever party wins the forthcoming General Election that there will be an impact in the Public Sector. Whilst the region is not complacent about the impact that this will have, many of its recruitment targets are within front line services whether in education or the health service.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	5
Membership Development Officers	2
Regional Organisers	24
Organising Officers	4
No. of Branches	113
New Branches	4
Branch Equality Officers	27
Branch Youth Officers	9

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	NIL
Total Disablement	NIL
Working Accident	£3,610.85
Occupational Fatal Accident	NIL
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	NIL
Funeral	£29,614.25

4 JOURNALS AND PUBLICITY

In common with other regional magazines, the region's magazine 'Vision' in 2009 incorporated national pages and the magazine appeared three times.

The region has been involved in a number of high profile campaigns particularly in regard to Pubco which, as a result of the region's involvement, has seen steady recruitment within that sector. The region has also been involved in a number of high profile equal pay campaigns, particularly in Brighton.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

The Region's principal provider of employment and personal injury services, Rowley Ashworth, amalgamated in April 2009 with Thompsons. In the majority of cases though the same teams that were in Rowley Ashworth continue to service the membership in Thompsons. It is anticipated though that there may be some changes in 2010.

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
624	582

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
556	241	3	274 £2,774,338	£0	£2,774,338
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			1355		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	101
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
101	10	-	82 £454,581	9 £156,347	£610,928
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			54		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
164	2	£1,938,432	13

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
15	7	14

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

The Regional Equality Forum is now firmly established in Southern Region with regular bi-monthly meetings. The new structure has been bedded in and the Forum is working very effectively within the Region. We have organised one Regional Conference and there is another planned for March 2010. The Forum is active and covers and reflects all areas of the equalities agenda and this has been a positive development for the whole Region.

The Forum has been actively involved in a number of activities throughout the year and has taken part and played an active role in various Festivals and Pride events, such as Brighton. Forum members have led the way in terms of attendance at several Equalities Conferences encouraging activists in the Region to do likewise; this has had the effect of building up networks, contacts and knowledge, which in turn has had a positive effect in raising awareness and activity within the Region.

A Women's activist course was held and was a huge success and a follow on course has been planned. The Forum has been instrumental in working with the Education Department in helping to develop a range of equalities courses, such as Tackling Racism, LGBT and Migrant Workers. Three have now been held as well as the fore mentioned Women's course. These courses are a great development for helping activists in the Region in building their confidence and knowledge around a whole series of equalities issues. With the equalities message being taken back to the workplace and issues addressed as well as being used as an excellent recruitment and organising tool.

The Equalities Forum has also been active within schools and ran a successful competition within a school in Lambeth to design our Regional Equality banner. This was a fantastic success and raised the equalities agenda, as well as the role of the GMB as a major campaigning union. We are looking to organise a course on the main aspects of the new Equalities Bill and at our Regional Equality Conference, this will be one of the main themes that will be discussed.

There is now a migrant workers website within the Region and the migrant workers strategy is still doing great work, with 10% of regional recruitment being migrant workers. This demonstrates a very pro-active approach in terms of the Region being committed to representing and organising migrant workers. Several hundred migrant workers continue to join the union as a result of coordinated work by the Forum, the Education Department and the Regional Organising Team.

We are pleased with the development and progress of the Regional Equality Forum and the good work that we are achieving for our members. However, we are not complacent and are aware that there is more to be done and we will continue to look at ways in which we can continue to progress the work of the Forum.

Ethnic Breakdown of the Regional Equality Forum in Southern Region:-

White Irish	1	White English	2
White British	2	Mixed White & Asian	1
White Other (Polish)	1	Black	1
Black African	3	Black Caribbean	1
Black Other (Seychelles)	1		

7 YOUNG MEMBERS REPORT

The young members section took part in a number of activities in 2009 and while activism was patchy across the region, there were some significant developments.

National Equalities Forum

We have been working with the national equalities officer on putting together some more youth branded materials. Specifically we are looking at a joining form which identifies 5 reasons why a young person should join the GMB (this will be alongside others for each of the equality strands). To accompany this a Young Members Guide to their rights at work. This will identify key employment legislation as it relates to young people – working hours, breaks, night work etc. Two of the regions key activists have been central in helping to put these together and we are hoping they will be launched in 2010.

Regional Equalities Forum

Unfortunately the Conference scheduled for 2009 had to be postponed. This has been rescheduled for March 2010. We will endeavour to convene the Young Members workshop that had previously been planned.

TUC Network

The GMB have been involved in the TUC's new young members officers network and there have been a number of exciting new initiatives to come out of this.

The first is a more coordinated approach to the 'Speakers in Schools' idea. While we have struggled in the past with resourcing the project, in terms of getting enough reps and officers to deliver lessons, a new off the shelf package is currently being put together. A working group has been set up which we will attend to look at lesson plans with various multimedia packages that teachers and support staff in schools can help deliver to students as part of their citizenship classes. GMB will be able to call upon their contacts in schools up and down the country to ensure this is rolled out. In turn we can also ensure that the GMB message is delivered and that young people will be entering the workplace with a fuller picture of what trade unionism is all about.

We have also been looking at the potential opportunities that the Future Jobs Fund can bring about for recruiting young workers. This is part of the Governments 'Backing Young Britain' agenda which attempts to address the growing number of youth unemployment. The Fund offers 6 months posts to young people working for predominantly unionised employers up and down the country. The challenge for GMB now is to ensure we approach this young people when they enter their employment, campaign to promote the rights that the Fund offers and in turn boost our young member levels.

Finally there has also been much debate around Apprenticeships. While this is not something that I have had much experience of in southern region, it does seem that there are significant opportunities to approach young people in the workplace where their rights are limited and prone to erosion.

Cuba

A youth activist from Plymouth attended the May Day Brigade representing the GMB. She was able to take part in various activities; volunteering in the local community, attending international trade union conferences, meeting with local trade unionists and learning about their youth structures, and most significantly, attending the 50th anniversary rally of Cuban independence on May Day. The trip gave the delegate some key experiences which she will take with her forever. She also wrote an interesting piece for Vision magazine, and her own local branch.

Workers Beer Company

Delegates from across the region attended various festivals and events with the Workers Beer Company. Teams from Plymouth and Brighton went to Glastonbury, Reading and others raising money which we can use for future events. Some of the funds raised from the Brighton team were also donated to the Royal Sussex's Kayleigh Kennard Baby Unit – set up in honour of a young member who tragically died.

Regional Young Members Forum

Work is starting again to develop around a new regional young members forum. While this is very early days, one of the regions activists is keen to help kick start this and will be sending a mailing out to all members in the new year with the hope of getting things started.

8 TRAINING

(a) GMB Activists Basic Mandatory Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
2-Day GMB@Work	18	142	84	226	452
1-Day GMB@Work	1	8	4	12	12
5-Day Induction for New Reps Part 1	14	124	59	183	915
5-Day Induction for New Reps Part 2	9	83	42	125	625
TOTAL	42	357	189	546	2004

(b) GMB Activists Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Union Learning Reps	4	31	14	45	225
5-Day Union Learning Reps F/On	2	12	6	18	90
5-Day Accompanying Reps	1	5	4	9	45
3-Day Introduction to Employment Law	1	9	-	9	27
5-Day Introduction to Employment Law	1	5	3	8	40
5-Day Advanced Employment Law	3	22	3	25	125

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3-Day Training the Trainers	1	3	4	7	21
5-Day Industrial Relations Part 1	1	5	3	8	40
5-Day Industrial Relations Part 2	2	10	2	12	60
3-Day Stress at Work	2	22	8	30	90
3-Day Women Organising for Equality	1	-	6	6	18
3-Day Organising Against Job Cuts	1	6	1	7	21
TOTAL	20	130	54	184	802

(c) Health & Safety Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
5-Day Health & Safety Part 1	6	63	14	77	385
5-Day Health & Safety Part 2	3	31	11	42	210
TOTAL	9	94	25	119	595

(d) Other GMB Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
1-Day Role of the Branch Secretary	3	44	4	48	48
TOTAL	3	44	4	48	48

(e) TUC Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Student Days
1-Day/Week Diploma in Occupational H&S	1	-	1	1	
1-Day/Week Stage 3 Health & Safety	1	1	-	1	
5-Day Tutor Briefing	1	4	4	8	40
3-Day Trade Unions & the Environment	1	1	-	1	3
TOTAL	4	6	5	11	43

(f) GMB Officers & Staff Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
2-Day Time & Office Management	3	30	23	53	106
2-Day Role of the Organiser	2	23	7	30	60
TOTAL	5	53	30	83	166

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GRAND TOTAL	83	684	307	991	3658

2009 has shown an increase of 19.25% in the number of Reps, Officers and Staff attending training courses.

9 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Region continues to support the Reps in the workplace to enable them to support and represent our members. Training courses are increasing giving skills and training to all Safety Reps and advising them of campaigns within their industries. This has had a positive effect in enabling Reps to organise within their own workplaces.

Where possible, we will always try to deliver training to Reps from similar workplaces and relate the course to them and their industry.

Issues that have been dealt with by the Health & Safety Officer are as follows:-

1. The working time directive
2. Ventilation in confined work areas
3. Control of pests in the workplace
4. Working in cold conditions
5. Personal Protective Equipment

These are just some of the areas where we have been able to support our members and ensure that safe working practises are maintained.

We have received support in many cases by the HSE, when we have not been able to enter workplaces and will continue to work closely with them.

In many industries we are facing cut backs, but in particular with PPE members being told that they will have to wear eye protectors over their prescription glasses, foot protection either not given or given in the wrong size and told to make do, migrant workers having to work long hours or told that they will not have a job if they make a fuss.

These are some of the reasons that we have to ensure that Safety Reps are fully trained, are kept up to date with new laws and legislation affecting their industry and have the full support of the Regional Health & Safety Officer.

10 POLITICAL

In anticipation of the forthcoming General Election, the region has set its priorities for key seats that will be supported. In a number of cases officers have been appointed as key seat co-ordinators and have attended the appropriate training.

The region has continued with its policy of trying to roll out a programme for political training for activists

There are a number of key seats in the Southern Region a number of which have GMB supported candidates where the election could be won or lost.

Conclusion

Despite the adverse economic situation the region has continued to consolidate and grow.

SOUTH WESTERN REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	49,168
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	12,237
MANUFACTURING SECTION	9,240
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	27,691
Grade 1 members	31,938
Grade 2 members	12,357
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	4,873
Male Membership	25,206
Female Membership	23,962
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	6,044
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	80
Membership on Check-off	32,284
Membership on Direct Debit	10,945

The South Western Region continues to fully appreciate the hard work and endeavours of Branch Officials, Shop Stewards, Staff Representatives, Activists, Full Time Officials and Regional Staff.

Despite the economic difficulties caused by the “banksters” recession the South Western Region is in good shape.

Colleagues will recall, prior to the General Election the opposition parties were attempting to outdo one another in their fervour for savage spending cuts in public spending. Such policies can only damage the fragile economic recovery and increase the possibility of a “double dip” recession – a return to economic contraction after a brief period of economic growth.

The economic agenda set by the irresponsible “money for nothing” bonus culture of the city speculators and their ilk that brought our system to a virtual collapse, has become dominated by the budget deficit, i.e. the gap between Government revenues and expenditure. This is a grave mistake.

The deficit is a symptom of the current economic difficulties, not the cause. To reverse the widening of the deficit, Government policy should be aimed at reviving the economic activity. Only an increase in activity – and the taxes that come with it can revive the economy and restore Government finances.

The challenges ahead, from wherever they come from will be met head on by the Union and the Region and to those who continually strive to protect the interests of GMB members, your endeavours are highly valued and the Region says to you all, well done, keep the GMB flag flying.

Recruitment Targets and Campaigns

The GMB@Work organisation strategy remains central to the Unions membership growth. The Unions purpose is to get a better deal at work by building the Union in numbers and in power in every workplace we have members. The Region now has five GMB Organiser Tutors in place, responsible to the Regional Senior Management Team, operating in accordance with the GMB@Work national strategy, endorsed by the Central Executive Council. Thanks to the endeavours of everyone involved, the regional in-house educational programme has surpassed all expectations and is held in exceedingly high regard by Shop Stewards and Activists within the Region, making a significant contribution to membership and retention. Well done to everyone involved, keep up the good work!

Following the 2007 closure of Burberry's South Wales Treorchy factory, the Region campaigned and was successful and instrumental in the setting up of the Rhondda Trust, the function of which is to distribute the £1.5m secured from the Burberry Company over the next ten years. The first grants totalled £328,330 and will help nineteen organisations and twenty four individuals, including two former Burberry workers who will receive payments of £1,275 and £1,587. Rhondda Trust Administrators include Chris Bryant, Labour MP, Leighton Andrews, Welsh Assembly Member, GMB Senior Organiser Mervyn Burnett and former Burberry employees Gaynor Richards and Joan Young. Mervyn Burnett,

who was at the forefront of the battle with the Bond Street based Company, said: "We are pleased that the first round of grants have been paid and will benefit the local community, which was devastated by the closure of Burberry.

Branch Secretary Colin Puckett has been re-elected as Staff Side Chair for the North Bristol NHS Trust. Colin will serve a two year term in the post at a time when the NHS in the West Country is going through some major changes.

Congratulations to GMB Stewards Adrian Davies, Bev Carlick and their team on recruiting their fiftieth member in the Welsh Blood Service, Velindre NHS Trust. This hard working team has transformed GMB membership within the Branch in a little over a year and has seen GMB rise to prominence in the Organisation.

The Pontypridd and North Glamorgan NHS Branch, Cwm Taf NHS Trust, has successfully achieved pay band three for Hospital Sterilisation and Disinfection Unit (HSDU) staff at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital after three years of hard work. This follows on from a similar success when the Trust's Laundry Staff were re-banded from one to two after a lengthy appeal.

The Region is pleased to report that following the Bristol Employment Tribunal decision that Bristol City Council had unlawfully dismissed Bob Straughan, a GMB Health and Safety Representative, the Council made a significant "out of court" settlement to Bob, which included pension protection. Bob was pleased with this settlement. He said: "I hope this case will help protect all other GMB representatives from the dreadful situation I found myself in. The way I have been treated by Bristol City Council has affected my whole well-being, including my self-esteem and confidence in my own ability. I can now start to move forward in a positive way. I would like to thank GMB South Western Region for its support and continued belief that I have been victimised by my employer on the grounds of my trade union activities." Organisation Officer Rowena Hayward said that this case highlights the fact that the law relating to dismissal on the grounds of trade union activities needs to be strengthened - "Bob has shown a great deal of tenacity and resolve to keep going throughout this whole situation, where many would have crumbled. We wish Bob a very happy, healthy and successful future."

When GMB Organisers in the Region received information of proposals to transfer work from Gwent Council members to the private sector, they sprang into action. The Council's intention was to transfer 1,300 weekly hours of home care from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council employees to the private sector.

GMB Organisers made the first protests at the Joint Trade Union meeting, with the Chief Executive present, followed by meetings with the Service Directors; however the final decision lay with the Council Budget Committee. Consultation meetings took place with GMB members and a demonstration was planned to take place on the 2nd March 2009 when the Budget Committee was due to meet. More than fifty Home Carers, all GMB members, attended the demonstration at the Project Office in Ebbw Vale, supported by service users and opposition Councillors from the Wales Labour Party. The ruling Councillors and officers attending the Budget Meeting were taken aback by the demonstration and lobbying from GMB members, they were also mindful of the presence of the local press. As a result of this activity the recommendation to outsource to the private sector was defeated. The hours will now remain in-house. The GMB again proving it is the campaigning Union! So well done and congratulations to the Home Carers from Blaenau Gwent for standing tall and fighting for what is right.

GMB South Western Region was well represented by Activists and Officials at the "Put People First" demonstration, which took place in London ahead of the G20 Summit in March. It was evident from the crowds that people from all walks of life are interested in and concerned about the state of the world's economy and climate change. Whether they were people from the trade union movement, who are involved in a daily battle to save member's livelihoods, or they were people concerned about climate change and the environment, everybody was committed, dedicated and a valuable presence on the march. The GMB South Western Region was proud to take part in this demonstration to highlight the concerns for employment and the economy in the UK.

The GMB South Western Region enjoyed a high profile presence at the Wales TUC Conference held in Llandudno during May 2009. GMB General Secretary, Paul Kenny, spoke to GMB's motion in the economic debate and GMB also took part in several debates and Conference fringe meetings. The Conference was presided over by GMB member Vaughan Gething as Wales TUC President, and was further enhanced by having the GMB South Western Regional President, Sheila Bearcroft, speaking to Conference as National TUC President. In her address Sheila told delegates at the Conference how proud she was to be the first Welsh woman to hold this position. Regional Secretary Allan Garley also addressed the Conference on how the Labour Government must reconnect with working people.

GMB members from the Region joined around one hundred Trade Unionists at the TUC South West Regional Conference which took place in North Devon during April 2009. A full programme of speakers addressed Delegates, including TUC General Secretary Brendan Barber, who highlighted the difficulties facing Unions with the recession and the need for Unions to keep the pressure on Government to support members facing job losses. Delegates debated motions concerning job and budget cuts, redundancy consultation and pay. The Region seconded a motion calling on the Government to increase support for our members facing loss of employment through increasing closures within the retail, manufacturing, public and the private sectors. GMB Delegates also emphasised the need to make it more difficult for organisations to close their UK facilities as a provision to protect their European interests. The Region is pleased to confirm that Wendy Weston was elected to the Women's Committee Shamin Baloo was elected to the Race Committee and Rowena Hayward, Organisation Officer retained her seat on the Executive Committee. These Committees will push issues to help workers in the Region by influencing Government policy. South Western Region maintains its strong presence on the various Committees within the Wales TUC and South West TUC.

The Region is proud to record the presentation of Silver Badge and Certificate of Service Awards to Margaret Phillips, Wilf Grimstead and Ellis Brodrick who have given very many years of loyal service to the GMB and its members.

GMB's campaigning face was evident once again at a rally of workers employed in the Engineering Construction Industry. Organised by GMB South Western Region the rally took place in Pembroke, South Wales and had an excellent turnout of around five hundred activists. The purpose of the rally was to highlight problems in the Construction Industry arising from the actions of employers who refused to honour the terms of local agreements, particularly regarding the use of local labour on specific sites around the country. Regional Organiser Althea Phillips, who spoke at the rally made it clear that the Union will not tolerate individuals of any country of origin being excluded from work, confirming that the GMB will continue to insist on employment criteria being open and transparent, objectively based and free from any form of discrimination and due regard must be given to skills requirements on new project work, and to the contribution employees can make to the local economy. The Region will continue to recruit and organise workers on every site in the Region in order to defend the National Agreement.

In another new recruitment initiative for the Region, staff at the Alzheimer's Society in Wales and the West of England have been joining the Union. This Organisation has been undertaking a restructure, resulting in staff being relocated or potentially displaced. The employees were quickly attracted to GMB and the Region has been able to fully advise them on all aspects of the Alzheimer's Society's proposals. An approach has been made to the Alzheimer's Society for recognition purposes and a joint meeting has been arranged for the near future.

A recruitment drive at Wilkinson Stores has led a large number of staff to join the Union. Officers visited stores across the Region to explain the benefits of Union membership and the need for effective workplace organisation in the company. These visits have led to an increase in the number of Store Representatives, a crucial development that will assist greatly in promoting further recruitment activity at store level.

The Region is pleased to report significant increases have been made with regard to recruitment in ASDA Stores.

Ifor Williams Trailers Ltd applied to the Central Arbitration Committee to derecognise GMB at its North Wales site, despite GMB having represented members there for more than ten years. Branch Secretary Phil Hughes and his workplace Activists acted swiftly when the application was submitted, collecting names to support GMB and call for continued recognition. The response was overwhelming as loyal GMB members added their names to the list of supporters. This positive action led the Central Arbitration Committee to decide that there should be no call for a ballot and GMB should continue as the recognised Union. Mark Stevens, GMB Membership Development Officer, praised the members for their efforts and endeavours.

It is great news that the Region achieved full recognition in the North Wales Region NHS Trusts in summer 2009. This was a huge success as the Region had previously been unable to organise in the North Wales and North East Wales NHS Trusts, Organisers have now started visiting the Trusts for recruitment and organisational purposes.

A great deal of interest was shown at the Wrexham Maelor Hospital during the first visit in August, with further visits scheduled for October and December 2009. Visits are also planned for Bodelwythan, Llandudno and Bangor hospitals, with more to follow around the North Wales Region throughout 2010.

The creation of the Betsi Cadwallader Local Health Board presents new challenges to NHS workers and the Region will support staff through the merger process and beyond, providing first class representation and advice to all of its members in the Region.

The Region has been working to secure equality in the workplace, with claims registered against a number of Welsh local authorities on behalf of School Breakfast Club employees. In line with the Welsh Assembly Government's healthy eating initiatives for schools, funding has been provided for schools wishing to introduce breakfast club arrangements for pupils. While the Union supports this initiative and recognises the benefits it brings, it is recognised that employees should be fully covered by the terms and conditions of the mainstream National Agreement.

During a series of visits to schools, the Region has uncovered multiple examples of staff not receiving holiday pay, occupational sickness benefit or retainer payments in the school closure period, despite clear contractual entitlements to do so. Grievance claims have been registered with several authorities, with due consideration being given to entering the rights of staff at the Employment Tribunal. There are reasonable prospects of at least one or two councils being prepared to apply an appropriate remedy. In the event of a failure to do so, the Region will have no hesitation in seeking a resolution through the legal system.

The Region has continued throughout 2009 to consolidate and significantly increase its membership in Public Services and the Region is working actively in pursuing its policy of working collaboratively with such partners as the Wales TUC and the Welsh Assembly Government to tackle equal pay problems. Senior Organiser John Phillips said "that the GMB will leave no stone unturned", in its campaign to achieve fair and equal pay arrangements.

The Region has signed a formal recognition agreement with Eurofoods UK Limited, in Newport. The agreement means the Union will be in a stronger position to fight for better terms and conditions for members. Eurofoods is a cold storage facility, which supplies restaurants, supermarkets and caterers throughout South Wales and the West. It is one of the fastest-growing food suppliers in Britain and has factories all over the world, including facilities in Sunderland, Croydon, Bangladesh and New York.

Young people discovered what GMB does and why it's so important at an event held on the anniversary of the Chartist uprising in Newport, South Wales. The event, which took place on the 15th October 2009 in the Newport Centre, 'Our Voice, Our Vote, Our Freedom' was organised by the Bevan Foundation. An array of stalls filled the Newport Centre, including stands from GMB, Wales TUC, the Welsh Assembly, the Labour Party, the Chartist Trust and many more. Around 250 local students visited to ask questions and find out more about the work of Trade Unions, employment law and Government activities. GMB was proud to give these young people an introduction to trade unionism.

Throughout 2009, the Region and Union continued the on going fight for compensation for workers suffering from asbestos related illness, and special thanks must be given to Brian Legg, who has been at the forefront of the regional campaign activities.

The GMB campaign for a positive future for Remploy and other supported businesses and workplaces continues and remains as active as ever, in pursuing public procurement as the key focus in ensuring their long term success.

The Region will continue to put resources into recruitment activity across the Region in the Commercial Services, Manufacturing and Public Service Sections.

Last, but certainly not least, the Region is pleased to record that GMB South Western Regional President, Sheila Bearcroft has received the MBE. Sheila was awarded the MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list in June 2009 for her services to the Trade Union Movement. Sheila chose to have the MBE presented to her at the GMB Regional Office in Cardiff. She said: "I chose the regional office because I wanted GMB to be part of the ceremony. Having my friends, colleagues and all my family there was a very proud moment."

It has been well documented that in 2009 Sheila Bearcroft also completed her term as President of the Trade Union Congress and the Region can be proud at the manner in which Sheila proved to be such a sterling ambassador of the GMB. Well done Sheila.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	2
Membership Development Officers	3
Regional Organisers	9
Organising Officers	3
No. of Branches	167
New Branches	1
Branch Equality Officers	
Branch Youth Officers	

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	5,000
Total Disablement	
Working Accident	1,161.80
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	
Funeral	18,675

4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The Region has continued in being at the forefront of issues relating to the economy and as reported to Congress 2009, the Region has been a major player in the Welsh Government's Economic Summit meetings which encompassed all in Wales in the private and public sectors. The Region's involvement in these areas have proved to be extremely beneficial through the publicity and campaigning the Region has been involved in and this has reflected in the recruitment successes, despite the downturn in the economy and contraction of the manufacturing base.

The Region continues in its endeavours to be a front runner in campaigns in relation to the decline of manufacturing in Wales and support of the Public Services in Wales and the South West. It has maintained its focus through the National Assembly for Wales, the Wales TUC, South West TUC, the Welsh Labour Party and South West Labour Party.

The Region continues to maintain its established contacts with all areas of the media and utilising the press releases generated from National Office and responding to regional issues that affect GMB members and endeavours to maintain a full exposure via the media wherever and whenever possible.

The Region has been actively involved in the affairs and businesses of the Wales TUC and Wales Labour Party and equally through the business of the South West TUC and South West Labour Party.

The combined National and Regional magazine, which is distributed to all members in the Region three times a year, has continued to be very successful and well received by our members. We endeavour to keep members advised through this medium of news and current issues as well as being a very useful recruitment tool.

The Region continues with its policy of using determining factors with regard to sponsorship being granted, with the main factor in granting requests for sponsorship are publicity for the Union and the promotion of Union membership. The Region continues to maintain a strategy of a reduced and careful budget for sponsorship and advertising.

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) Occupational Accidents and Diseases (including Criminal Injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
349	345

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
470	157	0	313	0	£1,740,166.79
			£1,740,166.79	£	
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			808		

(b) Employment Tribunals (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	349
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
263	228		35		£63,365.25
			£63,355.25	£	£63,365.25
Cases outstanding at 31.12. 2009			403		

(c) Other Employment Law Cases

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
		£	

(d) Social Security Cases

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
19	11	

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

During 2009 the Region has continued to progress all areas of equality and endeavoured to use the structure at our disposal in getting equality issues over to our members, via Branch Officials, the Equality Forum and through our regional magazine Nexus and the Region is pleased to report that even more of our Branches are now producing their own newsletters where equality issues are highlighted and several branches have set up their own websites to progress all strands of union activities.

The Region maintains its membership and activity on the various Equality, Race, LGBT and Pan Equality Committees on the Wales TUC and South West TUC, along with representation with the Wales Labour Party and the South West Labour Party.

The Region continues to hold the Black and Ethnic Minorities seat on the Wales TUC General Council and as reported to Congress last year, Vaughan Gething was elected Chair of the Wales TUC, being the first BME member to hold such a position and this culminated in him chairing the Wales TUC Conference in May 2009. Vaughan was an excellent ambassador for the GMB throughout his term of office in all areas of equality.

In line with the GMB@Work initiative, new Shop Stewards are encouraged to attend and take active roles in regional conferences, speaking and supporting motions on all aspects of race and equality in the workplace. The GMB continues to have good representation, attendance and participation at all events encompassing equality such as Wales TUC Challenging Racism Conference, Wales TUC Women's Conference and the LGBT Conference.

The Region again was proud to participate in the Diversity Awards Wales and sponsor an award.

The Region's Equality Forum has nine members:

4 females

5 males – 1 of ethnic minority

7 TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Introduction to GMB (10 days)	3	20	7	27	270
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)					
GMB@WORK	15	100	28	128	384

(b) On Site Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(c) Health & Safety Courses (please specify subjects)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days

(d) Other Courses (please specify subjects / weekdays/ weekends)					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
3 day Representing Members	1	12	5	17	51
5 day Employment Law	3	24	8	32	160

(e) TUC (STUC & ICTU) Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
TUC	10			30	300

The South Western Region continues to provide a valued Education and Health and Safety Service to our Representatives and Members and this Department is now headed up by Nick Hughes, working in conjunction with colleagues in The Regional Senior Management Team. The Region successfully continues to encourage Health and Safety Representatives to train to a very high standard by promoting and supporting Representatives on IOSH and NEBOSH courses.

Workplace activity promoting health and safety issues and prioritising work place inspections has played an important part in the recruitment of new members which are reflected in the positive 2009 Regions' recruitment figures.

YORKSHIRE AND NORTH DERBYSHIRE REGION

1 MEMBERSHIP AND RECRUITMENT

FINANCIAL MEMBERSHIP	
Section Financial Membership (by each Section):	
COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION	13,791
MANUFACTURING SECTION	13,692
PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION	30,757
Grade 1 members	33,456
Grade 2 members	16,221
Retired, Reduced Rate & Others	8,563
Male Membership	29,323
Female Membership	28,917
Total number recruited 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	8,021
Increase/Decrease 1.1.2009 – 31.12.2009	1,077
Membership on Check-off	36,657
Membership on Direct Debit	14,062

THE REGION

2009 saw the continued growth and development of our region in a number of ways making it a very satisfactory year. Despite the deepest recession in the country for decades we set ourselves an ambitious task at the start of the year to grow by 1,000 members. In order to get anywhere achieving this it was important that we went pro-active and got out into workplaces and convinced people that, rather than try and save a few pounds by cancelling their union membership, there was never a more important time to stay in the union or join up if you were not already a member.

This achieved fantastic results on the membership front with the region growing by 1,077 (1.9%) from January to December 2009.

Such results can only be achieved through buy-in right across the region and with GMB@Work at the heart of everything we do, the Regional Management Team manage their teams of officers, staff, branches and activists to ensure first class delivery and support for our members.

The open, transparent, consistent and accountable style of management, now so firmly embedded across the region, has given people the confidence to use their strengths to make decisions and to take the occasional and justifiable risk that helped to deliver such a fine performance.

A huge amount of work has been done with branches to revitalise them and ensure they play their full part in the democracy of their union. The best indication of all, that our efforts had been worthwhile, was in November when we held a conference for branch champions.

110 activists gave up their weekend to come along to what was a fantastic event, combining work with fun. Those in attendance were inspired by Paul Kenny, our general secretary's speech and at the end they produced branch action plans which organisers are working through with the branches to full implementation.

The other key indicator is Congress with us receiving more nominations and motions than for many years and we are running a delegate election at the time of writing this report.

To support branches further we continue to provide them with computers on the proviso that these are used to communicate with their members in the production of newsletters, branch directories and even branch websites. The number of non-computerised branches is diminishing but for those our staff assist in the production and distribution of branch literature. This not only bridges the communication gap but also develops our staff towards the front line support of members. This was a central theme to our business plan for the year and we went a step further and actually democratically appointed 2 staff to organiser positions which sent a very positive message that we were serious in developing people who feel that have more to offer to members.

The regional website has become our main communication tool as it is kept up to date, fresh and relevant and receives numerous 'hits' and many positive comments and contributions. We even have hyperlinks from and to other organisations and the opportunities this brings us are endless.

Another major success story is on the training and education of our activists. In 2009 we not only appointed but actually trained 30% more representatives than we did the previous year despite that year being the best the region had ever performed. That is probably the most important and pleasing statistic of this whole report because again, in line with GMB@Work, it is them that, once trained, are best positioned to service, organise and recruit in the workplace so we are brilliantly placed going forward.

In line with Congress policy, we continue to do our bit on the green agenda and we have an eco friendly and recycling policy across the region that is strictly adhered to.

Congress also charged us with providing a better service to migrant workers, and I am delighted to report real progress in this area too. We have a project worker employed who is Polish, and he is working closely with our team in recruiting and organising migrant workers and the numbers are already in their hundreds. Added to that he has put on training on health and safety and being active in the union, obviously in their native languages and both were over subscribed.

Managing through clarity, consistency and compassion our agenda is here to stay. The regional team enjoy being part of something successful and are totally committed to the GMB@Work agenda to deliver even more opportunities and growth over the next 12 months.

ECONOMIC & EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

The catastrophic impact of the recession took some time to make itself felt in the section during 2010 but sure enough, by the end of the year job losses began to mount although these were felt much more by other trade unions rather than us thus evidencing the effect of the GMB@Work policy. Steady membership growth, effective retention and increased workplace organisation enabled the region to weather the storm by and large. For those who managed to stay in work, a year on reduced earnings through shorter working hours or lay offs, pay freezes or pay cuts has meant serious financial hardship.

The outlook for 2010 remains unclear with the green shoots of a recovery yet to be seen and only really expected in the second half of the year where economic growth is forecast. There will then be a lag as employers catch up before looking to recruit new staff. In the private sector there are warnings of austerity and in the public and third sector tough times are forecast, understood by most workers to mean the very real risk of budget cuts and subsequent job losses. Growing industrial tension is a very real prospect as our members rightly will look to do there own catching up.

Utilities Yorkshire Water annual salaries increased by 3%, plus non-consolidated merit bonuses in the final year of a five year deal effective 1st April 2009 based on the November 2008 all items RPI index.

Yorkshire Water: example basic annual salaries, 1 April 2009 ¹			
Band ²	Job example	Min, £pa	Max, £pa
1	Directors	Pay set by remuneration committee	
2	Function heads	50,291	86,753
3	Senior/middle managers	33,947	66,007
4	Management accountants; senior IT professionals	22,632	40,233
5	Process engineers, field technicians	16,345	28,918
6	Meter readers, operators	11,522	21,374

1. 37-hour week.
2. Each band has a lower- and upper-pay indicator, which are reviewed each year and adjusted in accordance with "company requirements or market factors". Yorkshire Water says the maximum pay indicator represents a salary that an individual in the band could achieve if the size of their role and individual contribution justifies it. It is not a target salary that everyone in the band will achieve.

This compares well with the median award in utilities which was reported as 2% which in itself is down on the previous year but ahead of the economy generally reflecting that they haven't been as hard hit as for example manufacturing. Talks for 2010 are at stalemate with the company offering a further five year deal linked to inflation which has been rejected. Reorganisation has also taken place but mainly amongst mid level management.

Britain's biggest coal miner, UK Coal, was expected to report hefty losses partly due to geological problems at Thoresby and Welbeck. Daw Mill was due to see significant investment to overcome difficult conditions underground. Regrettably there was a death at Kellingley following which the HSE ordered temporary suspension of mining. The company also faced ten charges over three deaths at two other deep mines in 2006 and 2007. Subsidiary company Monckton Coke & Chemicals at Royston, Barnsley had a 1% pay award imposed in June without agreement.

In November 2009 members at Northern Gas Network (United Utilities) were balloted for industrial action following the breakdown of pay talks which led to an improved offer being accepted.

Food and Drink Asda stores continued to be the focus for recruitment and organisation activity during the year based on the employer's continuing hostility towards GMB demonstrated locally by the dismissal of one of our workplace organisers. The regional aim to have at least one rep at each store across the region is well on the way to achieving. The night rate campaign and the four target store strategy continues with reps meeting quarterly to review progress. The 2009 Boxing Day redesignation campaign led to some success and all current workplace organisers have now received their GMB@Work training. We have been fully involved in the consultation process within the company concerning the new project, Leeds Home Shopping Store, which has no customers and is the first purpose built unit in the country. Organisers and reps have attended the new store opening at part of the best welcome at Bradford Living, Keighley and Morley home shopping store.

At Danish Bacon we have been successful in recruiting new members and discussions are ongoing regarding a formal recognition agreement.

Wilkinson Stores membership has remained steady with a concerted drive to recruit and organise. This with a background of short time, lay offs and redundancies within the sector although GMB has come out of it relatively unscathed.

The club stewards in this region were previously shared between numerous branches covering the different areas. Although this may have looked plausible in theory it did not represent a good structured branch and more importantly the members were getting different levels of representation dependent on the location of their club. Over the last 12 months we have been putting together one fully functioning club steward's branch complete with all relevant branch officials. The branch secretary is fully embracing the GMB@Work policy and in the New Year is committed to moving this forward into direct recruitment of a notoriously hard section to recruit in. All members now have a direct contact with the branch and any representation is done through the branch.

The ROT supported an initiative in South Yorkshire to get round all the pubs in the area targeting pub managers as part of the Pubco campaign reported on by the general secretary at Congress 2009. A number of pub meetings were held in association with the 'Sheffield Rebels' and 'Pub Revolution' with mixed results. The eviction of one of our members from his pub led to a high profile in the local press and regional television.

Reports on the sectional membership at Nestle, Haribo and Trebor Bassett (now Tangerine) are covered off within the Manufacturing Section report with Terry Suchard and British Sugar now closed.

Security There have been a number of difficulties in the smaller private security companies during the last year. The recession has presented a number of issues for this type of company particularly where those contracts they have are within the building industry. Where the building industry has found times hard this has had a knock on effect on the security industry too. Over the past year the main issue has been trying to maintain members' terms and conditions within their contracts of employment and in the main we have been successful in doing this. However, this has highlighted that these companies do tend to target non union members when looking at changing contracts or issuing redundancy notices giving rise to issues to campaign around on recruitment.

Amongst the larger organised employers, ie G4S, Securitas, Loomis and Security Plus, which are covered by national agreements, times are hard as ever with competition fierce. The induction sessions at G4S have reduced dramatically resulting in less new members being recruited. At Securitas GMB nationally signed off a recognition and bargaining structure agreement and following long discussions, reluctantly conceded on the payment of the SIA license fee for our members. Induction sessions are attended at Wakefield. The Sheffield branch of Loomis closed with some members redeploying to the Leeds branch.

Airports They also suffered the effects of the recession with fewer flights resulting in redundancies at Doncaster amongst Penauille Servicaire members. Contracted hours were also reduced in some cases amongst G4S. On the plus side new workplace organisers were elected at Peel Airports, Penauille and G4S.

Omniserve won the contract to provide security at Leeds/Bradford airport with all members TUPE transferred from G4S. The Aviance membership transferred to Servisair and as a result of ETO seventeen employees took voluntary redundancy.

Road Transport 2009 was a challenging year throughout all parts of the DHL business where the strategy of pay deferral for the 08/09 award secured members' employment with no large scale redundancies taking place. Reps are currently in discussion with the company for the 2010 claim.

DHL Express Domestic UK was put on notice that if it didn't turn the business around there would be no future in the UK domestic market. Despite a much improved performance in 2009, DHL announced the sale of their Express Domestic business to Home Delivery Network (HDM). TUPE consultation is ongoing.

Generally, and reflecting the DHL experience, pay has been frozen throughout the industry, a massive drop from the previous year's median award of 4%.

Action Housing and Support Membership continues to grow steadily with four new workplace organisers elected giving each office base its own rep. Joint quarterly meetings take place with the company and monthly workplace organiser meetings have been negotiated to progress the GMB@Work policy.

Legal Services Profits at Yorkshire law firms have plunged faster than the UK average during the recession according to the Yorkshire Post (26/11/09). Firms saw an average decline in profit per partner of 39% to £326,000 compared to an average fall of 30% for the top one hundred firms nationwide. The figures cap an unhappy year for law firms which have slashed jobs and put staff on part time hours. In September up to one thousand three hundred and fifty jobs had gone in Leeds alone over the previous twelve months. Two thirds of Yorkshire firms said they were 'not very confident' about revenue growth prospects. In line with other forecasts, the latter part of 2010 looked better. The Jackson report also casts a shadow on the personal injury industry with the prospect of trade union funding being severely hit.

Thompsons Solicitors

There is an evolving but none the less apparent deterioration in the working relationship with Thompson's Solicitors. During recent pay negotiations with management and the Thompsons National Committee a request was made for information to be provided to allow the committee to formulate a pay claim. The result was a refusal. The reason given was that financial information should not be shared. Following long and at times extremely difficult negotiations, it had now been agreed that this information will be shared with the negotiating committee members, however they have to sign a document to say it will remain confidential and will not be used by anyone or for purposes other than collation of pay claims.

Legal Services Commission

It is anticipated that the closure of many offices, and in particular that of the LSC office in Leeds will commence roll out this year with the loss of many jobs, and the service being transferred to 3 main offices.

MANUFACTURING SECTION

Manufacturing continues to suffer job losses throughout the region. PPG (formerly Kalon Paints) has lost over 50 jobs due to the economic climate. Many manufacturers are losing jobs but at a slower rate.

Wages have been subdued due to the recession with some firms holding pay freezes and in some cases reductions in wages. The future looks uncertain and there is no clear sign to the recession ending. More investment at Government and regional level is urgently required to slow down this decline.

Manufacturing in the region is at an all time low with little change on the horizon, 2009 has been a year to forget. 2010 looks very likely to continue in the same vein.

Arla Foods Within the last year we have had major issues with the company regarding pay negotiations. As this report is finalised we still do not have an agreement on the 2009 pay talks between the company and the joint trade unions. The company wished to impose a pay freeze for this financial year for both transport and process members. As the two sets of negotiations are held separately this in itself is becoming very problematic. The transport section has agreed to settle with the company regarding the pay freeze whereas the process side have rejected this by a large majority. The company offered the members a one off payment of £150 for this financial year but once again this was unanimously rejected. The joint trade unions have now had to seek permission to formally ballot the membership on industrial action. The company have not helped the negotiations by firstly trying to impose a pay freeze sighting the financial times we are living in; then announcing a new super dairy to be built in the south of England. This dairy will cost approx

£250 million pounds and will be the biggest in Europe. As we stand at the moment the company do wish to meet in early January to continue negotiations. Once this meeting is concluded a decision will be made by the joint trade unions side on whether to accept if and what the company offer, or to move straight to a formal strike ballot.

Trebor Bassetts_20 redundancies in 2009. Stabilised until the announcement of the takeover by Kraft.

David S Smith_A steady ship but change to working practices to ensure customer needs and profits.

Lafarge Production down. Around 9 redundancies through early retirements and volunteers.

Joseph Ash Production down.

Jeldwen_Production down. Site closing in Devon and production to come to Sheffield site in 2010.

Vesuvius Production down.

Robinsons Production down. 11 redundancies staff and supervisors. Changes proposed to working practices.

Fusion Early part of 2009 two batches of 35 redundancies. Production down.

K M Furniture_Production down. Company looking at downsizing size of site.

Brunton Shaw 4 redundancies in February 2010.

Phoenix Brick_Closed in December 2008. Re-opened in September 2009. 16 redundancies,

Remploy We continue to lobby for the establishment of a Remploy factory in the York area. We have also established a Remploy branch and have held joint shop stewards' sessions based around GMB@Work.

Symphony The above company have now opened a factory in Barnsley. We have established recognition arrangements at the new site and appointed new shop stewards. Further talks are scheduled for January which will be the first pay review for the Barnsley employees.

Haworth Scouring The above company reports that they are hitting their production targets, which is excellent news in the current economic climate.

Treves/Arcadia Limited redundancies have occurred at the above companies. All were made following the appropriate consultation with the GMB so that members' interests were properly protected.

Burberrys The Rotherham site closed in the spring and there were large scale cut backs in employee numbers at Castleford. During the negotiations we were able to secure redundancy terms that were substantial improvements to the normal Burberry's scheme.

Since the redundancies their order book has been above target and members are taking part in flexible working arrangements to ensure that orders remain in the UK.

Dalkia Industry & Healthcare 2% pay increase from 1st April further 1% from 1st November

Whitby& Chandler Ltd Peniston Pay freeze

Ronseal Ltd, Thorncliffe Sheffield. Pay freeze, union considering taking industrial action; The company is proposing changes in the annual working rota for production staff.

Multi Serve Group Ltd , Rotherham Some operations taken back in house by Outo Kumpu & Corus pay freeze

Marshalls, Stainton , Rotherham No pay increase offered at this point, union still in talks with management. Two site closure.

Balfour Beatty Rail Projects Sheffield Redundancies through 2009, 1 week unpaid leave taken due to poor orders. Company currently consulting on closing the Sheffield site.

Clarkson Osborn Sheffield. Site closed GMB members redundant.

Ross & Catherall, Killamarsh nr Sheffield. Redundancies reduced order book. 2 Year deal accepted for pay 0% 2009 2% +guaranteed £480 bonus for 2010.

Premdor Barnsley Redundancies.

Members of the ECIA and who work under NAECI agreement

Motherwell Bridge	C & D Insulations
Doosan Babcock	C.G.B. Humbertherm
John Young & Co	Ebor
TEI Ltd	J.S. Miller & Co
F.L.S. Milo	Jilland Engineering
Hertel Uk	Powertherm
Norec	Alstom Power
Cleveland Bridge	Vange
Howden Power	Deborah
Shaw Group	

A number of the above companies who are members of the Engineering Construction Industry Association (ECIA) and who work under the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI) have undertaken contracts during the outage periods on the power stations within the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region (Drax, Eggborough & Ferrybridge). GMB members within the NAECI voted to accept a new 2 year offer.

2010 - 2% plus uplift on allowances

2011 – RPI on base and allowances subject to a minimum 1% maximum 5%

The offer also dealt with issues around site representation, auditing, skills & competencies and an unemployment register.

Membership and workplace organisers are increasing and a national database has been set up to assist with future contracts and our unemployed members.

Denso Marston Retention and consolidation continues following 142 redundancies.

Ellbee Retention and consolidation continues following 60 redundancies.

PPG Architectural Coatings Retention and consolidation continues following 83 redundancies.

Dolux Beds I have to report that the work that John Fazackerley (workplace rep) has done in implementing GMB@Work into the workplace has had a significant impact on recruitment and retention.

Abn - Sherburn in Elmet The company has held up well throughout 2009 including a pay increase. The company have maintained all jobs but are going through reorganisation to increase productivity.

Allied Glass The glass container industry has suffered badly during 2009 with lines being closed, no wage increase and energy prices still are a serious concern. The overall manning is down and will be throughout 2010.

Ardagh Glass Due to the recession 77 jobs were lost at the beginning of 2009 and a pay freeze for 2010 has been agreed together with other cost cutting measures to retain jobs as a result of this we have been able to renegotiate an increase in 75 jobs from January 2010.

Cargill Cocoa Due to high increases in commodity prices the company announced a worldwide pay freeze to protect its business. The York site has maintained its staffing levels.

Emmerson Doors Went into liquidation and ceased to trade from October.

Ebor Concretes The company has suffered due to the downturn in the building industry and has suffered heavy job losses with no upturn foreseeable in the near future.

Kingspan Another supplier to the building industry which has seen a 50% reduction in its workforce throughout 2009 with no upturn as yet.

Mckechnies Vehicles Significant job losses were incurred during the early part of 2009 with the remainder of the workforce going to a 4 day week due to car manufactures closing production for 5 months. 5 day working will return in 2010 during the early part of the year.

Mckechnies Plastics Once again badly hit by the recession with the workforce reverting to a 4 day week to protect jobs. No upturn is seen for 2010.

Nestle - (York factory and distribution) Following restructuring in 2008 the company has had a very good year, output and quality up and employment prospects very good for the future and the overall workforce has increased . However, the company are jumping on the economic bandwagon seeking a worldwide pay freeze for 2010 when the York site has record outputs and profits.

Haribo The company remains competitive but is always reducing its costs but employment levels remain stable. Terms and conditions have come under attack with the company reducing breaks and increasing the working hours with no increase in pay.

Stolzle Flaconnage Another glass manufacturer who has come under severe financial pressures but the good news is that the furnace which provides all production is being rebuilt which will secure, hopefully, the sites for the future.

Pilkington Glass Closed production in May and transferred work to St Helens.

Tangerine (formerly monkhill confectionery) York and Pontefract Changes of ownership has seen severe cost cutting and imposition of pay awards albeit very small across all sites. Employment levels have reduced overall and peaks have been met with temporary labour.

PUBLIC SERVICES SECTION

Membership of the public services section within the region stands at 30,757 this is an increase of 1,752 on last year. Of these 21,614 are women, an increase of 1,083 on last year.

The last 12 months have been some of the toughest yet for our membership, who have faced pay cuts, job losses, outsourcing and disinterest from their employers Overall our members have responded with vigour to these challenges. We saw the appointment of more new reps in public services than ever before within the region, particularly across local government. Existing reps became engaged in GMB@Work activity through the roll out of consolidation training and we began to see public service branches becoming more closely involved in the campaigns and activity generated in the public service workplaces throughout the region.

Local Government

The 11-week Leeds street scene dispute was without doubt the defining event of 2009 across the region within public services and beyond. The strike, which involved around 200 members employed by Leeds city council in refuse street cleansing and related jobs, came to epitomise the worst of a local authority employer and the best of trade union solidarity and resolve.

The strike action started on 7 September 2009 over Leeds City Council's proposals to implement single status "in reverse" by cutting pay rather than by equalling up. GMB and Unison members faced pay cuts of up to £5,500 and the threat of privatisation if the pay cuts were resisted. For the first four weeks of the strike the Liberal/Tory led council refused to meet with the union negotiators unless we called off the strike action. Instead the Liberal leader of the council concentrated on publicly attacking the strikers and their unions. Agency staff were brought in and contactors hired. By week five it was clear that even though one contractor alone was costing over £150,000 per week, the rubbish was piling up and the city was a mess. We used the strike breaking rules to attack the agencies and four were stopped by the BIS from providing labour.

When negotiations restarted they quickly broke down when the council made it's 'final offer' which sought to close the pay gap for some but not all of the striking workers, which did so only if unachievable productivity targets were met and which even then left almost half the workforce facing pay cuts of £1,280.

On the 21 October 2009, week seven, 92% of the joint union membership rejected the proposals. Negotiations finally resumed in week nine, November, when the council leaders agreed to meet union negotiators. On Monday 23 November 2009 GMB and Unison members voted to accept a negotiated settlement which saw the removal of the pay cuts, jointly designed and achievable productivity arrangements, the removal of the privatisation threat and a commitment from the council to introduce productivity arrangements for women workers across the council.

Our members were applauded back to work marching behind a lone piper on Wednesday 25 November 2009. For 11 weeks they had held strong, kept a continuous picket line, retained the support of the Leeds' public, received the support and solidarity of the trade union and labour movement from across the UK and won.

Our members and their reps were an inspiration and as a region we are proud. Our thanks to all those across the GMB who supported the striking workers financially and otherwise.

Single Status

The root cause of the Leeds' dispute exists elsewhere across every other local authority in the region. Although most councils have now fully or partially implemented single status, we have had some notable problems in areas such as Sheffield City Council, where GMB members rejected the proposals and we continue to be in dispute with the council. GMB reps and our officer in Sheffield have worked tirelessly to inform, advise and lead our membership through this challenging time. At the time of writing this report all indicators are that Sheffield will seek to impose the new pay and grading structure and GMB members will be balloted on industrial action. Negotiations on single status implementation continue in Leeds (phase two), Bradford, Derbyshire Council and Bassetlaw District Council.

Equal Pay Campaign

GMB has just short of 10,000 equal pay claims lodged on behalf of mainly women members in local government. Claims are 'live' in the following authorities: Barnsley, Doncaster, Kirklees, Leeds, Sheffield, (on appeal). Settlement terms have been agreed in Wakefield, Bradford, Calderdale, Rotherham, Harrogate and York. We continue to campaign for pay equality and to organise and recruit on this key issue.

Contracted-out Branch

In recognition of the continuing pace of outsourcing, particularly as it affects school based staff such as cleaners and kitchen staff, we have piloted a new branch within Leeds which has been created especially for those members who used to work for Leeds City Council but who now, post transfer, work in the private sector for a contractor. With nearly a thousand members we hope to grow our reps and membership in this area and share their experience and common purpose within the branch. The co-operation of our existing Leeds local government branches was crucial to the success of this exercise, transferring their existing members into the new branch.

Local Authority Core Group

The region's local authority core group continued to meet and campaign throughout the year. The group brings together all senior local authority lay reps and local government officers to discuss strategy and organisation. The group has been an invaluable source of support and direction for all involved in these difficult times. The group has continued to receive reports and advice on equal pay from our legal advisors and to determine GMB@Work activity in the councils in the region. Co-tutor training was provided to those involved to ensure our senior lay reps are supporting officers in the roll out of consolidation training in local authorities.

In April 2009, John Healy, MP, Local Government Minister attended the core group and set out government thinking on the future of local government. He heard first hand what our members and reps were facing on the ground.

Schools Support Staff

We have continued our ROT led campaign of recruitment and organisation within schools, recruiting 1104 during the academic year 2008/2009 and appointing a records number of reps and contacts.

On the 27 March 2009 we held an inaugural meeting of our regional support staff forum. Over 30 school based reps attended and delegates expressed concerns regarding their second class status in many schools. Despite working in different local authorities, they reported the same problems, the passing on of teachers' duties, job titles that do not reflect duties and problems with head teachers. The SSSNB was discussed and our national delegates elected. A

further three meetings were held during 2009 and our school based membership and activity goes from strength to strength. Our membership density in schools is now at 32%.

National Health Service

The National Health Service continues to be an important sector of membership within the region. Workplace organisation across the NHS is improving and 2009 has seen the appointment of more new workplace organisers in the NHS than ever before. Recruitment activity has begun to show a steady increase as a result of GMB@Work training for new workplace organisers and as a result of consolidation training for existing reps which took place on 17, 18 and 19 August 2009. 500 members have been recruited to the GMB within the health service during the past year. Progress has been made with regards to recognition at York hospital following the support for the GMB campaign provided by the regional TUC. Unfortunately our attempts to achieve recognition within Sheffield Teaching hospitals has continued to be rebuffed by the Trust, although we continue to recruit and have 200 members across the three sites. We continue to meet with resistance from the staff side unions towards GMB achieving recognition.

Health service branches within the region have been steadily making progress on organising plans and branches such as Barnsley Health Service branch continues to be held up as an exemplary lesson in branch and workplace activity, combining to build membership and to raise the GMB profile within the NHS.

Yorkshire Ambulance Service

On 28 October 2009 we received formal and final confirmation from Yorkshire Ambulance Service that the Trust's recognition of the GMB which had been suspended in July 2008 had now been terminated. Despite many meetings and months of negotiations between officers, reps and the chairman and chief executive of Yorkshire Ambulance Service during 2008 and 2009, the Trust, we were informed, were of the view that 'recognition at this time would seriously disrupt the positive working relationships we have been able to develop with our recognised unions and that this would be to the detriment of patients/staff'.

This leaves 500 members of the GMB across the Yorkshire region and Midland and East Coast region without a formal collective voice and with the management team determined to tell our members which union they should join. Within the region and in conjunction with Midland and East Coast region we have committed to using every campaigning means at our disposal to restore GMB recognition within Yorkshire Ambulance Service. As this report is compiled our members are voting in an indicative ballot for industrial action with the aim of restoring their trade union rights.

Southern Cross

We have 63 Southern Cross homes within the region and 888 members which represents 44% of the workforce within the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region. Southern Cross continues to be a key organising target within the region and throughout 2009 we recruited 369 new members. Crucially we have been able to relocate all our Southern Cross members into an active branch and the support of the branch secretary, Harry Griffiths, has allowed us to establish a new regional committee for Southern Cross staff. The committee brings together reps from homes across the Yorkshire and North Derbyshire region and aims to ensure that our Southern Cross membership leads the organising activities we put in place.

2 GENERAL ORGANISATION

Regional Senior Organisers	3
Membership Development Officers	
Regional Organisers	15
Organising Officers	5
No. of Branches	106
New Branches	5
Branch Equality Officers	40
Branch Youth Officers	20

3 BENEFITS

Dispute	332,964.78
Total Disablement	
Working Accident	3,137.25
Occupational Fatal Accident	
Non-occupational Fatal Accident	
Funeral	39,010.00

4 JOURNALS & PUBLICITY

The 'new look Pulse magazine has been well received by members and from feedback received we seem to have hit the right note with the brighter, bolder colours. The magazine has proved to be invaluable in terms of highlighting GMB campaigns and success stories. It is used extensively across the region as a recruitment and organising tool and we actively encourage members to contribute to the magazine at every opportunity.

The regional website also received a revamp during 2009, which added additional content and functionality. Again, from feedback, both members and GMB reps have found the site to be a valuable resource, with lots of downloadable documents, including the Workplace Organisers' Toolkit and the Health and Safety Reps' Handbook. Each branch now has its own page on the site and is encouraged to advertise branch meetings and events.

On publicity we have had a very good year securing a high profile across all parts of the media.

As organisers fight and campaign for fairness and justice for our members, notably during the Leeds City Council dispute, through the recession the disgrace involving banks and bonuses and recently Cadbury. The GMB in this region is now the first calling point from media contacts when they want a quote.

The region continued to sponsor charities and organisations during 2009 and these were:

- Action for Sick Children
- Brainwave
- Remploy Fighting Fund
- The Prince of Wales Hospice
- Yorkshire Air Ambulance
- The Chernobyl Children's Project
- Bretton Boys' Football Team (not REC)
- Queensbury Celtic Football Club
- Whirlow Hall Farm Trust
- Dr Jackson Cancer Fund
- Morley Rugby Club
- Cancer Research
- SADACCA
- Circus Starr – Wheatfield's Hospice
- Bosom Friends & Bradford Cancer Support Fashion Show
- Brinsworth Whitehall JFC

5 LEGAL SERVICES

(a) OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS AND DISEASES (including criminal injuries)

Applications for Legal Assistance	Legal Assistance Granted
863	863

Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Withdrawn	Lost in Court	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
787	280	0	507	-	£3,566,155.96
			£3,566,155.96		
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009			1352		

(b) EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNALS (notified to Legal Department)

Claims supported by Union	188
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Cases in which Outcome became known

Total	Rejected	Withdrawn	Lost in Tribunal	Settled	Won in Court	Total Compensation
158	29	30	1	96 £187,559.71	2 £178,630.00	£366,189.71
Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009					200	

(c) OTHER EMPLOYMENT LAW CASES

Supported by Union	Unsuccessful	Damages/ Compensation	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
-	-	-	-

(d) SOCIAL SECURITY CASES

Supported by Union	Successful	Cases outstanding at 31.12.2009
22	7	34

The Legal Department is responsible for overseeing the region's comprehensive legal services. Much of the region's legal services are provided by Thompsons Solicitors. The biggest requirement for legal assistance continues to be in the area of personal injury and disease. The Legal Assistance Scheme also includes free legal assistance on work related criminal matters; a road traffic accident scheme; a free will preparation service; discounted rates for family law, probate and conveyancing. Members can access a free 30 minute legal advice session on any other legal question.

Most of the region's employment law work is conducted by the regional GMB legal department, with 'overspill' and, for example, public sector equal pay cases, referred to Thompsons as required. The regional legal department operates a professional and efficient Employment Tribunal casework management system and provides a first class successful service to members. Unfair dismissal claims made up the largest proportion of cases taken in 2009 with other cases taken under a variety of causes including equal pay, race discrimination and age discrimination. Over £200,000 was recovered in compensation for GMB members from Employment Tribunal claims during the course of 2009.

'In house' knowledge and practical experience of handling Employment Tribunal cases is utilised to provide regular employment law training courses as an integral part of the region's training agenda for lay representatives and activists. Empowering workplace representatives is aided by the department providing or arranging a wide range of employment law training. There is a monthly introduction to GMB legal services and a basic employment rights course as part of the induction of new representatives. Training is also provided in a range of employment law topics such as discrimination law, redundancy; and dispute resolution procedures (including the affect of the Employment Act 2009 on handling grievance and disciplinary issues). The region's full time officers are also kept abreast of new developments in employment law through the use of bulletins and briefings.

6 EQUALITY & INCLUSION

I am delighted to report that the Yorkshire & North Derbyshire region now has in place an Equality & Inclusion Forum. Following our regional conference, Yorkshire delegates attended the National Equality & Inclusion Conference. I am proud of our delegates who presented motions which were carried and also supported motions from other regions. Delegates for the region attended the Black Workers' Conference and the TUC Women's Conference.

We have in place a Community Participation Project in Sheffield; working with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities is well under way. Originally, we had agreed to work with the TUC; However, GMB Yorkshire will now

champion the project. We are building links within the relevant communities and will roll this project out across the region in the coming year. The work that Nikki Sharpe of Thompsons has contributed is exceptional and, I wish to thank her on behalf of myself and the region for her continued invaluable contribution.

We have held Equality & Inclusion workshops at our Sheffield and Wakefield offices. We have also facilitated equality reps' training and will have in place stage 2, equality champions training sessions commencing in 2010.

The Regional Equality & Inclusion Forum is now in place and we will offer all GMB work place organisers the opportunity to be involved in the forum.

We have in place a regional action plan for the coming year which includes the following:

- Dignity & Respect @ Work campaign which will be rolled out across the region. This campaign will be launched in January.
- To hold a Dignity & Respect day within the region.
- To ensure that we have a GMB Dignity & Respect ambassador in every work place.
- Dignity & Respect campaign in schools. This campaign will contribute to the recruitment and organising activities in the local authorities and work on this is underway.
- The Yorkshire Regional Equality & Inclusion Forum will produce a leaflet.
- A member of the Forum will contribute to ensuring the website is continually updated.

7 YOUNG MEMBERS

During the first six months of last year, young member activity focussed mostly on anti fascist and anti racist campaigning - including the sponsorship of two Love Music Hate Racism events - and on fund raising for such campaigns via volunteer work at one of the largest music festivals in the world, courtesy of the Workers' Beer Company.

Despite what has probably been our quietest period since the re launch of the Regional Young Members' Activist Committee (RYMAC) in late 2007, our key young activists have remained consistent in their commitment and resolve to build the GMB and essential work is ongoing.

The bar worker campaign switched direction to focus on Sheffield Hallam Students' Union when access to staff and recognition was promised, but hit a major stumbling block when SHSU management denied us access to staff because of existing recognition agreements with Unite and Unison – despite initial feedback that there was scope for us to organise alongside such agreements. However another door has since been opened with respect to Sheffield University Union. Management there have been receptive to our approach so far and plans are in progress to launch a campaign to organise young workers in the months ahead.

We participated in TUC Youth Conference in March – Piotr Plonka attended on behalf of the region and as one of 9 GMB national delegates. Unfortunately, something had been amiss for much of 2009 with respect to the channels of communication between national and local TUC and in this region local TUC involvement in youth activity has all but disappeared. One of our key activists, Gareth Hartley, has been involved in trying to get the forum up and functioning in recent months. Consequently we hope to have more to report in 2010 regarding our involvement in regional and cross union initiatives. In the past we have been very much a leading light on this forum and no doubt will be so again.

New steward and activist Sinead Donnolly (Leeds City Council) attended her first GMB Congress as Young Members' observer and was both impressed and inspired by her experience. Sinead also joined our team of ten volunteers at Glastonbury in June. Our team raised £1495.00 for their work at the festival which has since been used for a number of campaigns and profile raising initiatives amongst young workers and students. These funds were further enhanced by our participation at the Leeds Festival in late August when 13 volunteers served behind one of the event's many bars raising again just short of £1,500.00. Many thanks to all of those who volunteered their time throughout the festival season.

A number of our young activists took part in anti BNP actions organised by Hope Not Hate, Unite Against Fascism and local groups in the run up to the European elections and assisted in the mass leafleting exercises that were undertaken – sadly not enough to prevent the election of Andrew Brons – but tremendous thanks to all those who got stuck in and supported the various campaigns. We also worked with Wakefield TUC to stage a Love Music Hate Racism event in the city - RYMAC were one of the sponsors which meant that GMB logo featured on all tickets and publicity information for the event – see also the summer 2009 edition of Pulse magazine for Gareth Hartley's article. GMB Yorkshire & North Derbyshire Young Members' were also one of the sponsors of the huge LMHR event held in Stoke.

During the second half of 2009, despite the depletion in numbers amongst our leading young activists, we continued to play a significant part in a number of campaigns both inside and outside of the region and our involvement in anti

fascist and anti racist activities remained prominent throughout the rest of the year. The Regional Young Members' Committee elected to donate further from our Workers' Beer funds to both Unite Against Fascism events, Hope Not Hate campaigning materials and to sponsor the mobilisation against the BNP's Red White & Blue Festival, held in August in Codnor – with a number of our young members attending.

Ever determined to make links with workers' in struggle, the committee also voted to give £500 of their funds in support of those involved in the Vestas dispute. Our very own Daniel Randall took time out to visit the occupying workers in order to write an article for our regional magazine but also to pass on our messages of support for the inspiring stand that was being taken.

Closer to home, from September until pretty much the end of the year, the Leeds Refuse and Street Cleansing Dispute raged. Our young activists declared their overwhelming support by agreeing to donate £1000 of their money to the strike fund. David Kirkham, on behalf of the Regional Young Members' Committee presented the cheque to a number of our strikers on one of the main picket lines. Key young activists were also instrumental in making links with the universities in order to raise the profile of the dispute amongst the Leeds Student population and to publicise the Refuse To Be Beat Benefit gig. Thanks also to John Clark and John Manson – two of our shop stewards involved in the strike - who spent time visiting the universities to talk to students about the dispute.

In previous reports I have stated our intention to produce young member specific materials and whilst resources have been devised for a number of workplace campaigns, our intention is still to produce a booklet that can be used generally. We are nearly there – again thanks to Daniel Randall – and will be presenting a draft to regional management shortly for approval.

Whilst our young activists have been visible in a number of campaigns – thus raising our profile and our relevance further, I am conscious that there is still much to be done in terms of building young member activity and involvement in each of our branches and workplaces. Unfortunately the number of meetings and attendance at the meetings tailed off considerably in the last six months of the year – which essentially meant we could not get involved in as much as we had hoped to and to the extent that we had hoped to - but a meeting planned early in the New Year intends to address these problems and look at ways we can become more creative in attracting younger people into our movement. We are confident that we will take significant steps in cracking this conundrum in 2010.

8 EDUCATION TRAINING

(a) GMB Courses - Basic Training					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
GMB@Work	9	81	60	141	282
Introduction to GMB (2 days) inc. on-site 2 day	9	74	47	121	242
GMB/TUC Induction (5 days)	7	n/a	n/a	131	655
Branch Officers	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

(b) On Site Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Safety Reps & Right to Inspect	4	14	10	24	24
Redundancy	2	11	6	17	17
Constructive Dismissal Law	1	6	2	8	8
Grievance Procedures Best Practice	5	26	10	36	36

	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Steps to a Greener Workplace	2	9	4	13	13
Mangmt Regs & Risk Assessment	3	14	5	19	19
Go Green at Work	1	2	1	3	3
Discp & Grvnce procedures	2	16	8	24	24
Job Evaluation	1	3	5	8	8
DDA Disability	2	10	1	11	11
Age Discrimination	2	6	4	10	10
Disciplinary Procdrs Best Practice	3	18	8	26	26
ULR (3 day)	3	n/a	n/a	68	204
Dispute Resolution Update	1	8	4	12	12
Vrtion of Contacts & C/A	1	8	4	12	12
TUPE	1	5	5	7	7
Unfair Dismissal	1	6	6	12	12
Equality Reps 2 days	3	25	16	41	41
Equality Reps 3 days	2	17	4	21	21
Discrimination Law	1	7	3	10	10
Understanding Environment Issues in the Workplace 2 days	1	11	3	14	28
Co-Tutor Training	1	13	4	17	34

(c) Health & Safety Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
H&S 3 day	7	n/a	n/a	92	276

(d) Other Courses					
GFTU	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Total Courses	50	82	60	142	n/a
Northern College (5 days)					
Practical Employment Law	1	3	2	5	25
Specialist H&S and Environmental Impact	1	5	1	6	30
Understanding Pensions	1	1		4	20
Advanced Health & Safety	4	2	2	4	20
Understanding the DDA	11	6	5	11	55

(e) TUC Courses					
	No. of Courses	Male	Female	Total	Total Student Days
Diploma in Employment Law	1	3		3	108
Union Reps Stage 1	1	1		1	5
Health & Safety Stage 1	1	4	2	6	72
Health & Safety Stage II	1	2		2	10
Union Learning Reps	1	1		1	5
Disability Champions at work	1	1	3	4	20
Diploma in Occupational Health & Safety	1	2		2	72

Attendance figures for 2009 have increased for the third year running in respect of post-holding activists attending the regional training programme, in particular newly appointed representatives consistently undertake a short initial support training delivered by their organiser. The 2 Day GMB@Work course and the regional 2 day Induction course as part of the region's consistent approach towards all new post-holders undertaking the same training as their first step onto the educational progressional route. There has also been a trend of long standing post-holders returning to the educational pathway to refresh on previous training undertaken probably some years ago.

New developments within the programme, such as the environmental green courses have proved interesting for some activists who wish to pursue that goal. The introduction of short sessions surrounding employment law has also attracted convenors branch secretaries and accompanying reps to brush up on their previous knowledge in these areas.

Finally, I am pleased to say that yet again the regions education programme booklet went out on time to all the regions post holding activists via a mail out or electronically to their email address. It is also available on the regional website.

9 HEALTH & SAFETY

Running alongside education the department also has responsibility for health and safety in respect of safety reps' queries and members' enquiries. An assessment of the work undertaken by safety reps on behalf of GMB members has yet again shown that back in the work place we have well trained dedicated activists who truly understand the benefit of keeping GMB members safe within their workplace. This is reflected by the amount of telephone calls and enquiries sent direct to the H&S department is very minimalistic and quite often is nothing more than the safety reps needing guidance to support their original instinct. Since the region introduced the twice per year H&S forums attendance at these have increased each time and the dates will soon be available for 2010.

10 POLITICAL

Fortunes for the Labour Party have been difficult over the last 6 to 12 months and Labour are still significantly behind in the opinion polls.

Regionally it's been very tough, the loss of Richard Corbett's seat to the BNP was a very low point indeed.

The Euro Elections coincided with the expenses scandal with devastating consequences. It is totally unacceptable for MP's to show such disloyalty at election time and this clearly caused a major dip in the Labour vote.

Ironically the BNP vote barely rose at all it was Labour voters not turning out that caused the problem.

Richard Corbett, a GMB member and strong supporter of the region is a tremendous loss and we all wish him well and hope that he will make a speedy return to politics.

The region has been and continues to be heavily involved in campaigning. Several MP's including Colin Burgon, Linda Riordan and Mike Wood have been especially supportive in regional and national campaigns including the constant fight to support the Remploy workers.

In Leeds we have been involved in the longest strike since the miners strike in 1984. The Leeds Refuse Workers were on strike for 12 weeks eventually winning a great victory in a dispute regarding equal pay. The council significantly

lowered the grades of men and women to levels that were totally unacceptable, some loosing up to £500 per month, eventually 99% of the members were satisfied and the dispute was settled.

Many thanks go to Keith Wakefield, GMB Councillor's and the rest of the Labour group in Leeds for their support during the dispute. Many Leeds MP's including Hilary Benn attended the picket line in support of our members.

Colin Burgon played a key role, not only on the picket lines on occasions, too many to mention, but as a motivator at the weekly rally's. His many funny, poignant, moving and down right brilliant speeches will live in my memory for the rest of my days.

Tony Benn once said there are two kinds of politician, conviction and ideological types and weather veins who will blow in any direction that is popular at the time. Colin is and always will be a socialist by conviction, his retirement will be Parliament's loss and the institution will be a poorer place without him.

Colin's former seat of Elmet will be contested by Cllr James Lewis who is a GMB member and was also very supportive to our members during the refuse dispute.

As the election draws closer the region is now involved with the other unions in Yorkshire in a battle to stop the Conservatives winning the election. The region has in place a regional strategy to keep its key seats and also a General Election page on the website so its members can be kept up to date with what campaigning is taking place.

We cannot predict the result but we will fight all the way as a return to a Conservative Government would have disastrous consequences for our members.