

CAMPAIGN AGAINST TUBE PRIVATISATION (CATP)

TUBEWORKERS' JOBS: OUR SAFETY ON THE LINE

CATP SAYS: DON'T PUT PASSENGER SAFETY AT RISK

Passenger safety is under serious threat as London Underground (LU) cuts safety-critical maintenance checks and announces job cuts of almost 2,000 staff. Yet, this summer, there have been 2 fires in the Tube and a runaway train near-disaster on the Northern Line.



In July, automatic smoke detection systems at Euston failed to sound the alarm when a fire started on an escalator. The station was only evacuated through the experience and vigilance of station-based staff. But their jobs (as well as those of staff recently commended by the 7 July bombing inquiry) are among the 2000 that LU proposes to cut.

London Fire Brigade has formally raised the failure of fire detection systems to activate in an internal incident report.

The incident has close parallels with the Kings Cross disaster of 1987 that was caused by mechanical friction in the closed chamber underneath an escalator that ignited accumulated dust. An earlier fire in 1984 at Oxford Circus station was probably caused by a build-up of flammable materials in a contractors store.

THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

CATP supports the RMT and TSSA's demands on safety and jobs : Boris Johnson should call an immediate halt to the station job cuts programme and there should be a full, external investigation into fire detection systems on escalators across the Tube network. He must stop these frightening cuts that put all passengers at grave risk.

CATP also expresses its horror at the runaway train incident on August 13th at the start of the morning rush-hour. An engineering train leaving Archway broke from a failed emergency coupling. A collision with a passenger train was narrowly avoided just before quarter to 7am by quick-thinking staff in the central coordination unit. Overnight works on the Northern Line are the responsibility of Tube Lines (still managed by a private firm, despite having been bought by Transport for London). LU announced plans to double the length of time between safety-critical train inspections from 14 to 28 days. Managers are now ignoring safety agreements. Attempts to

improve disabled access have ceased and LU refuse to fill vacancies hence the Tube system is now in meltdown.

LU proposes cuts of almost 2,000 jobs – including station and engineering staff and 450 ticket office staff. The RMT tabled alternative cost saving proposals, including setting a maximum wage to curb “fat cat” salaries (the Commissioner of Transport received £393,551 last year), etc. But LU feel they cannot afford front-line jobs or regular maintenance. So, after many attempts at discussion, RMT and TSSA balloted their members for strike action. As passengers, we support action to defend our safety and security.



WHAT YOU CAN DO:

CATP asks passengers to:

- raise the issues in your local union branch or community group
- contact Boris Johnson at City Hall or mayor@london.gov.uk
- contact your member for the GLA at City Hall, Queen's Walk, SE1 2AA
- Join CATP supporters in leafleting a Tube station near you. Call Dave on 0207 837 3886 to find out where leafleting is organised or go to www.catp.info