

No: 365/24

20<sup>st</sup> November 2024

**For the Immediate Attention of All:**

Postal Branches  
Divisional Representatives  
Area Distribution Representatives  
LGV Representatives

Dear Colleagues,

**JOINT STATEMENT BETWEEN ROYAL MAIL NATIONAL LOGISTICS AND THE CWU REGARDING BANK HOLIDAY RESOURCING FOR NETWORK PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS, CHRISTMAS 2024/25**

Colleagues will recall that as an integral part of the 2007 Professional Drivers Agreement, Bank Holidays effectively became normal working days for Network LGV Drivers and while we have long had an understanding with the business that, where possible, attendance would be on a voluntary basis, in reality our members can be compelled to attend on those days where sufficient numbers fail to volunteer. In line with the PDA, all staff who attend are credited with a lieu day.

Branches and representatives will be aware that, in addition to the generic Christmas Arrangements Agreement, the department has in previous years reached agreement with Royal Mail Logistics on specific guidelines covering the resourcing of Network LGV duties across the Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays.

In line with previous arrangements, discussions have therefore taken place with the business and the attached Joint Statement has been concluded and endorsed by the Postal Executive.

The Joint Statement reaffirms the following commitments:

- Advance planning;
- A wholly voluntary approach to any attendance on Christmas Day;
- The use of the full range of resourcing options to reduce the burden on our members;
- A commitment to only run essential services on Bank Holidays;
- A commitment to minimise any mandatory attendance – no driver asked to attend on both the Boxing Day and New Year Bank Holidays.

Much like in previous years, the department believes that the attached clarification provided in relation to the arrangements for 2024/25 will be welcomed by representatives and members.

Any enquiries in relation to this LTB should be addressed to Davie Robertson, Assistant Secretary, email: [jrodrigues](mailto:jrodrigues) quoting reference LTB 365/24.

Yours sincerely,

**Davie Robertson**  
Assistant Secretary

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# **JOINT STATEMENT BETWEEN ROYAL MAIL NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND THE CWU REGARDING BANK HOLIDAY RESOURCING FOR LINEHAUL (NETWORK) PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS**

## **Christmas & New year 2024/25**

### **Background**

The National Agreement for the Implementation of the Road Transport Directive and the Introduction of the Professional Driver (PDA) created the Professional Driver as a new and distinct grade. For Linehaul (Network) Professional Drivers, in return for industry leading terms and conditions, this progressive agreement between Royal Mail and the CWU predicted the growth of customer activity during the weekends and on Bank Holidays and provided the commitment and the remuneration for drivers to attend on these days as part of normal working.

Since 2007, attendance during the weekends and on Bank Holidays has progressively increased due to retail activity and increased customer demand as internet fulfilment has grown considerably. The deployment of the Professional Drivers Agreement in this regard and the utilisation of its full range of resourcing options has ensured that the business has been able to meet its commercial commitments, however both parties recognise that the significant increase in Bank Holiday attendance has created some challenges in regard to a fair approach to allocation and attendance.

In particular, it is recognised that the Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays are in general viewed as distinct and special by Professional Drivers and their families. Given the increase in demand for services on these days in recent years both Royal Mail Logistics and the CWU believe that it is appropriate to agree supporting guidelines to the PDA, to ensure fairness in resourcing, maximise opportunities for time off and limit individual mandatory commitment whilst maintaining efficient customer service.

The safety, health and wellbeing of all employees remains jointly our first priority at all times and throughout this year's peak operation.

### **Approach to Christmas and New Year Resourcing**

The business has a clear commitment to provide robust resourcing arrangements to ensure customer and operational needs and USO obligations are met during the Bank Holiday period over the Christmas and New Year, while balancing the aspirations of the workforce to spend time with their families over the festive period.

A consensus has therefore been reached between Royal Mail and CWU to maximise the availability of leave on these critical Bank Holidays to Professional Drivers over Christmas and New Year. The following principles have been developed between the business and CWU in order to ensure fairness in resourcing for Linehaul (Network) Professional Drivers at all of the Vehicle Operating Centres and Distribution Hubs. These should be utilised to shape local resourcing arrangements for the Christmas and New Year holiday period, the aim being to work collaboratively in order to achieve the optimum agreed outcome in line with these principles.

- Both parties reaffirm that there are no current plans to operate a nationwide service on Christmas Day; as such no Professional Drivers will be compelled to attend on this day. Exceptionally where any customer driven services are required on Christmas Day, it is agreed that our aspiration for attendance will be on a wholly voluntary basis with work covered utilising the full range of resourcing options detailed below.
- Forward planning is becoming increasingly difficult and customer volumes and product volatility is a particular challenge over the critical Christmas and New Year period. As far as possible, Royal Mail will commit to planning attendances well in advance providing certainty to the Professional Drivers and enabling them to arrange their personal work life balance in as much time as is practically possible.
- Resourcing plans will be reviewed and agreed locally as a matter of urgency and no later than Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024
- Royal Mail has the aspiration to ensure that the resourcing requirement for our directly employed Professional Drivers is as low as possible and commits to using the full range of existing agreed mixed resourcing options available. Equally workload will be scheduled on the basis of commercial or operational necessity, as such non-priority work will not be scheduled during these Bank Holidays.
- On the Bank Holidays where a National Linehaul (Network) operation is run it is anticipated that most VOCs will be open and operational. There may be instances however where for operational reasons a VOC remains closed. In such cases it is agreed that such closures should not result in a net increased workload obligation at neighbouring operational VOCs.
- Royal Mail will seek to resource the Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays through volunteers as far as possible. Where there are insufficient volunteers an open “fair share” approach will be developed across the Professional Drivers. (Driver hours’ limitations may restrict the pool of available drivers).
- With regard to Boxing Day (26/12/2024) and the New Year’s Day (01/01/2025) Bank Holidays it is agreed that wherever possible, any mandatory attendance requirement in line with the PDA Agreement for any individual will be limited to only one of these days.
- The business will look to complete operations as early as possible on Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve, and it is expected that drivers will support modified attendances to support this objective. Drivers will take a maximum of two Bank Holidays for Christmas and one for New Year (two in Scotland).
- Both parties recognise the context for Bank Holiday attendance over Christmas and New Year is covered within the Professional Drivers Agreement and the remuneration has already been addressed. Where a driver is required to attend during a Bank Holiday a day will be added to that employee’s annual leave entitlement to be taken under current arrangements where authorised in line with operational requirements. However in line with local arrangements in recent years, for the festive Bank Holidays only, where it enhances the availability of volunteers, drivers may elect to receive remuneration at overtime rate for the hours worked on the Bank Holiday as an alternative to the days leave.

This Joint Statement covers the scheduling and working of Network Professional Drivers within National Logistics only. It is recognised that any requirement to resource MGW workload on Bank

Holidays will be progressed in line with the terms of the generic National agreement on Christmas Arrangements 2024

Local discussions on resourcing should be completed at the earliest possible juncture to give the maximum levels of certainty to all our drivers. Discussions should be progressed in line with the IR Framework and the Network Working Group will be available to assist should it become necessary.

This Joint statement covers the Christmas and New Year Bank Holidays only. Resourcing for all other Bank Holidays will continue to be progressed in line with the terms of the Professional Drivers Agreement.

Any issues of interpretation should be referred to the signatories of this agreement.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Dunn', written over a thin horizontal line.

**Nick Dunn**

National Distribution Director

Royal Mail

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Davie Robertson', written over a thin horizontal line.

**Davie Robertson**

Assistant Secretary

CWU

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024