

No. 278/26

16th October 2026

Dear Colleague,

Update on DM26

The purpose of this LTB is to provide an update on developments since the CWU took the decision last week to pause the further deployment of DM26 until Royal Mail agrees a clear plan to address the units that are not working and completes the agreed formal reviews.

Why the CWU Took This Decision

The union took this position because Royal Mail was not adhering to the national agreement, which clearly states that:

- Where a unit is not achieving the key performance measures, including the quality targets set out in the Full Deployment Agreement, appropriate remedial action must be taken.
- Formal reviews must be conducted to assess whether both the indoor and outdoor operations are functioning effectively and, where they are not, ensure that the necessary changes are implemented without delay.

It became increasingly clear that Royal Mail was not prioritising either the review process or the units experiencing operational difficulties. Instead, its focus remained on deploying DM26 into units that had not yet gone live.

The CWU believes this represents a fundamental breach of the national agreement and is the reason we took the action we did.

Royal Mail's Position

Royal Mail's communication issued today claims that CWU statements do not accurately reflect the state of the business and that quality of service is improving.

We will address the wider challenges facing Royal Mail in more detail next week. However, claiming that quality of service has improved from an exceptionally low starting point is highly misleading. The volume of concerns raised by MPs, customers and the media demonstrates the scale of the challenge Royal Mail still faces in restoring quality of service standards.

It is equally difficult to understand why Royal Mail has allowed struggling DM26 units to continue operating without implementing agreed solutions, while concentrating resources on further deployment. At the same time, thousands of temporary part-time employees who have received uplifts in hours remain in limbo because of delays in completing the review process.

It is highly questionable whether Royal Mail would have addressed the issues in failing units had the CWU not taken the stance it did last week. Instead, it appears they would have continued to ignore these problems in pursuit of deploying all units.

The Current Position

Data supplied by Royal Mail on **9th October** highlights the scale of the issues that require urgent attention and resolution through locally agreed solutions, rather than being blocked through centralised processes.

Workplan Failures

Measure	Number of Units
Workplan failure between 10,000 and 189,000 items	172 Delivery Units
Workplan failure between 1,000 and 9,999 items	409 Delivery Units

Delivery Point Coverage

Measure	Number of Units
Delivery Point Coverage between 52% and 89.9%	94 Delivery Units
Delivery Point Coverage between 90% and 97.9%	321 Delivery Units

Part-Time Employee Reviews Outstanding

Category	Number of Employees
Part-time employees still temporary rather than made permanent	5,655
Part-time employees with increased hours still awaiting permanent uplift	2,348

These issues require an agreed resolution as a matter of urgency.

It should be noted that Delivery Point Coverage provides an indication of whether a unit is likely to achieve Ofcom's required performance targets, which are measured quarterly.

Generally, units achieving **98% or higher Delivery Point Coverage** are on track to meet Ofcom's new First-Class and Second-Class quality of service targets.

National Discussions Next Week

EP wrote to the CWU on Thursday confirming that they will be travelling to London on Tuesday to meet with the union to discuss:

- Fixing the units which are not working under DM26.
- The growing recruitment and retention crisis across Royal Mail.

It is essential that every Delivery Unit has the ability to address local operational problems through locally agreed solutions. Equally, we must secure meaningful action to tackle the recruitment and retention crisis, which continues to affect workplaces across the business.

Deployment Pause Continues

We can confirm that **no further Delivery Units will be deployed during the week commencing 19th October** to allow these discussions to take place.

In the meantime, Regional Steering Groups will continue their work reviewing and addressing issues in units where operational problems have been identified.

National Briefing

It is our intention to hold a **National Briefing during the week commencing 26th October** to update Branches on:

- Progress made during the talks with Royal Mail.
- The work being undertaken to resolve DM26 issues.
- The wider campaign to secure a sustainable future for Royal Mail.

Message to Royal Mail

Our position is straightforward. With fewer than six weeks before Black Friday, the joint focus should be on fixing Delivery units which are not working, completing formal reviews, making temporary part-time uplifts permanent, agreeing how DM26 works under Peak and urgently addressing the growing retention crisis.

Looking Ahead

Further information will be issued early next week outlining the serious challenges currently facing Royal Mail and why the CWU is calling on the Government to convene a summit focused on securing the long-term future of the company and protecting our members' jobs.

We will provide a further update to Branches and members later next week.

Any enquiries relating to the content of this LTB should be referred to the Deputy General Secretary (Postal) Department hford@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely,



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