



union for professionals

# PROSPECT ATCOs' BRANCH TC Section News

THE LATEST ON ISSUES AFFECTING YOU  
APRIL 2008

## **FROM THE SECTION CHAIR**

**S**wanwick has now been our home for a year and a half now but although the pace of change outside the Ops. Room has been unrelenting the TC Section continues to work extremely hard on your behalf. Even though we might feel secure in our future, those in the support staff grades, who provide us with the professional service we expect, face redundancy or other real threats to their future employment. This is a new NATS, one that is now bound by its need to produce profit and commercial gain. If we are naive enough to think this does not affect ATCOs, we will be facing a future that is not influenced by us, but driven by the very managers we fundamentally disagree with.

Our relationship with Management is good at the moment. The senior management team at Swanwick is virtually completely new, which results in natural uncertainty. We therefore we have to establish trust and a rapport with the new GM's team. The integrity of the Ops Room and the membership in it are the forefront of everything we do, and the Section is well placed and organised to face the challenges to TC in the immediate future. Please keep talking to the Watch Reps, and look at the new ATCOs Branch website, launched, mid April.

Included in this TC newsletter are a report from the Special Delegates Conference, a catering update, where we are with pre-tvc R/T and a challenge to the watch supervisors regarding day shifts.

Finally I must report that Bob Neville will be leaving NATS early in the Summer. TC should feel itself very fortunate to have had such a committed, intelligent and respected trade union representative

working for us for so long. He will leave a gap in our Section that will be impossible to fill, but we will survive and continue, because we have to. I have never known Bob to lose his temper and he has been there to provide advice to Reps whatever the hour. He has worked tirelessly on your behalf and he will be sorely missed. Bob we thank-you, and wish you a long and happy retirement.

Chris Edwards  
Section Chair

## **TRAINING PAY**

*The Section has recently reached agreement with Management on revised processes for payment of Training Pay. The new arrangements which bring in a system similar to that used for AC were planned to come into effect from 1st April. Due to resourcing issues, the full processes and training are not yet in place and it is now proposed that the new arrangements will become effective from 1st July.*

*Following that date payments for training hours will be made separately and in a different month from the payment for being an "active OJTI."*

*Trainees will become responsible for logging training hours electronically and OJTIs will be provided with a breakdown of the information upon which their hourly payment has been based. All ab-initio and extension trainees will be provided with appropriate training on the new systems.*

*The Section continue to seek clarification as to why the safety reasons are relevant to TC but not to AC in an attempt to understand Managements position.*

## **SPECIAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE**

You may be aware that the Branch Executive Committee recently called a Special Delegate Conference which took place in Fareham on 21st / 22nd April.

NATS have recently entered a contract with Manchester Airport Ltd to provide ATC services which, it is understood, will require some cost reductions in order to make the contract viable. You may well be wondering why any company would enter a contract that will loose it money.....so are we.

NATS have indicated that they will need to make savings through changes to our members terms and conditions not only at Manchester but throughout the organisation to, in their words "...become competitive in the marketplace".

Whilst the SDC was primarily devoted to matters initially concerning NSL, be under no illusions that this issue does not affect members within NERL. It does not take a great imagination to work out where this could be heading.

Delegates at the Conference were firm in their resolve to remain united as a group of NATS ATCOs.

For more information speak to your Rep or check out the new Branch Web-Site (see below)

## **TRUCE**

*For some unknown reason a number of TRUCE sessions for 2009 were rostered on day 8 of the cycle. This was contrary to the existing agreement and the SORT will in future plan all TRUCE sessions for day 9.*

**NEW ATCOs' BRANCH WEB-SITE**

**[www.atcos.co.uk](http://www.atcos.co.uk)**

FOR THE VERY LATEST ON PAY AND OTHER ISSUES THAT WILL AFFECT YOU

## CATERING UPDATE

Following the Customer Survey last Autumn, Aramark have come back with their proposals based on the results. NATS/ARAMARK have, after consultation with trade unions agreed some changes to the package we will be offered.

1 After the results from Coffee tasting we will be changing from Starbucks to Costa Coffee. We have agreed some price changes that result in NATS staff still paying 40% less than the High Street price for Costa products, but the normal filter coffee will remain at the same price. Typically the 95p Starbucks will now be a £1.25 Costa, on the High Street this would be £2.05.

2. We are going to introduce a High Street quality boxed sandwich selection to replace the made on site product, this will have nutritional/product information displayed on the packaging as requested through the survey.

3. The deli bar will remain open for on demand wraps/sandwiches etc.

4 A 'Theatre' style food offering will be made available (stir fry's, omelettes tossed salads). This will replace one of the hot food choices.

5. Following extensive research the timings of the hot food in the evenings will be changed. At present there are on average only 4 meals served between 1830-1930 at Swanick, so by reducing the service time we will cut wastage and use the resource to introduce our new FEAST point product. I know I have your attention now so please read on.

6, The food from these new vending facilities is very good. There are going to be some FREE yes-FREE food tasting organised at Swanick/CTC/PC. This will provide much better facilities for nights and for those who cannot get to the restaurant before the service ends as those members will now have access to a good evening meal.

7. At Swanick the new Costa Coffee will be available in the Coffee lounge Mon-Fri as well as in the res-

taurant. The Coffee lounge will now be the Costa Lounge

8. Queuing was highlighted by the survey as a big issue. We are working towards a cashless system hopefully in 6-9 months, which will help alleviate this issue.

9. At the CTC the FEAST point will replace the counter service for shift/simulator staff and will be located close to the simulator where the current vending facilities are. Please try to attend the tasting for the new FEAST points, you will be impressed.

As ever there are some compromises here but I recommend the new arrangements to you. Please continue to fill in the comment cards, good or bad, so we can deal with issues as they arise.

David George  
Catering Committee Rep..

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## CHANGES TO DAY SHIFTS

As a result of discussions with Swanwick management the TC Section agreed to provide an additional D2 shift for GSs and an additional 0600 core shift for Heathrow.

'The G2 shift is a response to a request from the Watch Supervisors for more cover at 0600, especially in the Airport GS role. The extension of AMAN to KK/SS/GW combined with the busy Heathrow operation at that time of the morning has the potential to overload the night shift resources. If, as has happened before, the extra G2 shift is proven to be unnecessary this summer then we will look at the situation in the autumn as part of the Working Practice review that always takes place at that time.

As regards Heathrow the extra 0600 is required to address safety issues that have been raised regarding the number of handovers that take place in a very short, but

very busy period. We have been very vulnerable on Heathrow to very high levels of traffic at a time when many are fatigued at the end of a night shift, without the comfort of a spare person. At any other time of the day we provide contingency cover but custom and practice has been to make do with what we have in the early morning. Should the 0600 presently rostered fail to turn up we are even more exposed. This is a long overdue remedy but the challenge to Watch Supervisors is to ensure that from May 1 (when these changes will take place) we have sufficient rostered staff especially in the lunch-time period when both 0600 starts will complete their shifts. Should that not be the case then we will have no choice but to insist that the staff underpin is reinstated. Combined with the changes outlined above we will roster 2 x D5 shifts (instead of a D3 and D5) and the D12 will revert to 1600-2300 otherwise we would exceed our weekly hours limit.'

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## PRE-TVC TRAINING

The Section have for some time been pressing Management to allow ab-initio trainees to be permitted to carry out initial training (including live RTF) prior to attending a TVC. The proposal, similar to the arrangement in place next door in AC, was supported by Swanwick Training Section and a change to the UTP that incorporated a specified number of pre-TVC hours was agreed. The Section is disappointed to report that negotiations on this matter, which would have allowed for OJTI payments to be made for the pre-TVC training provided, have now unfortunately broken down. Swanwick Management have cited unspecified "safety reasons" for refusing to implement the changes.

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