

THE FIRE BRIGADES UNION

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Fire Brigades Union supports RMT industrial action on safety grounds

The company Tube Lines is putting safety on the London Underground at risk by underpaying their staff who are doing vital work in support of the rescue services on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines, the Fire Brigades Union said today.

“On safety grounds we support the 72-hour industrial action to be taken by the RMT starting on Wednesday” said FBU executive member for London Ian Leahair. “They should pay the same as Metronet pays. Safety should come before profits on Tube Lines’ agenda.”

Andy Dark, FBU deputy general secretary, said: “Tube bosses should not jeopardise safety on the underground network by cheapskating on their staff.”

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AROUND 1,000 members of London Underground’s biggest union working for the privatised Tube Lines infrastructure consortium are to mount two 72-hour strikes after voting overwhelmingly for action over pay and conditions.

RMT members at the company will down tools between noon on Wednesday August 20 and noon on Saturday August 23. The second 72-hour strike will begin at noon on Wednesday September 3 and end at noon on Saturday September 6.

Tube Lines workers voted by a margin of more than three to one for action after the company tabled an offer inferior to the deal already agreed by the union for staff doing identical work on Metronet.

Tube Lines maintains track and trains on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines, but it also operates emergency response units across the Tube network, and the stoppage is expected to have a serious effect on LUL's ability to run a service.

"RMT members on Tube Lines do the same work as colleagues on Metronet and they have today made it clear that they are not prepared to be left worse off," RMT general secretary Bob Crow said today.

"Tube Lines has made enormous profits on the backs of our members' hard work, yet they seem to expect that they will accept an inferior deal on pay, pensions and conditions.

"Metronet workers can join a final salary pension scheme, but Tube Lines wants to keep the door closed on it, and Tube Lines members are also denied the travel facilities that Metronet staff enjoy.

"Tube Lines' bottom line seems to be that it is OK for its staff to be treated as second-class citizens so long as the dividends keep rolling in for its shareholders.

"Our members are facing the reality of a five-per cent inflation rate and soaring energy and food bills, and if Tube Lines wants to avoid a crippling strike it should get back around the table with an offer that meets their needs," Bob Crow said.