

TRADE UNION BILL OVERVIEW:

KEY RESTRICTIONS ON UNION ACTIVITIES

INDUSTRIAL ACTION

The Bill includes:

- a requirement for 50% turnout in all industrial action ballots
- in certain public sector employers, an additional requirement that at least 40% of members vote for industrial action (this covers health, education, fire services and transport – it does not apply to CWU employers)
- a four month time limit from the date of the ballot in which industrial action can be taken
- an increase in the notice period for industrial action from 7 days to two weeks
- new technical balloting rules that will give employers new grounds to prevent action being taken if these are not complied with

The government is also proposing to allow employers to bring in agency workers as strike-breakers.

PICKETING

The Bill would require unions to:

- appoint a picketing supervisor, who is familiar with the Code of Practice on Picketing and who must wear some form of identification, such as an armband
- give the police the name and contact details of the picketing supervisor
- give the picketing supervisor a letter of authorisation which they must show to the employer or anyone acting on their behalf on request

Alongside the Bill, the government is also strengthening the Code of Practice on Picketing to restrict the use of social media (like Facebook and Twitter) and crackdown on wider protests away from a picket line during a dispute.

POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING

On top of the existing requirement for the existence of a political fund to be balloted on every 10 years, the Bill would:

- require members to opt-in to paying into the fund individually, in writing, every five years; and
- from the date the Bill becomes law, unions would have 3 months to get existing levy payers to opt-in, before their contribution to the fund would cease.

FACILITY TIME AND CHECK-OFF

The Bill would give the government the power to bring in regulations to:

- cap facility time in the public sector
- end check-off in the public sector

We believe these provisions are likely to cover the Post Office (though other CWU employers should currently be exempt).

CERTIFICATION OFFICER

The Bill changes the role of the Certification Officer ('the CO'), which can currently only act to uphold a member's complaint. It will give the CO the power to run its own investigations into how we operate and to fine the union up to £20,000 if we fail to comply with various technical legal rules. Together with other unions, we will have to pay a levy – likely to cost us tens of thousands of pounds – to fund the new CO.



THE TRADE UNION BILL – TUC WEEK OF ACTION

THE CWU IS FULLY SUPPORTING THE TUC WEEK OF ACTION. WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO MAKE THIS CAMPAIGN SUCCESSFUL AND WE ARE ASKING YOU TO DIRECTLY ENGAGE IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Tuesday 9th February – at 12:30, TUC General Secretary Frances O’Grady will be hosting the ‘biggest ever workplace meeting’ online. We realise that many of our members will be working at this time but for those that are able to, please visit heartunions.org for full details of the meeting with Frances.

Thursday 11th February – this is where we are asking all CWU branches and members to really focus your efforts through organised workplace protests. The plan for this will be discussed today.

This day is about CWU members showing everybody that you are proud to be a member of our union.

Regions are being asked to organise leafleting at mainline train stations on the day to further highlight the roles that unions play in society.

We would like CWU branches and members across the UK to take selfies and workplace photos using the poster on the other side of the membership communication that we will be sending to all home addresses. Once you have taken them you should post them on to the CWU Facebook and Twitter pages using the hashtag #CWUandProud

Branches should also identify key workplaces where large numbers of CWU members will engage with this activity.

Be creative with your images – engage colleagues, celebrities and the public. The more photos we receive the greater the impact the CWU can make on this day. We want to be the most active union in the movement.

#CWUandProud

KEY MESSAGES ON THE TRADE UNION BILL FOR CWU MEMBERS

Across the country, people are coming under ever greater pressure in work – this is why trade unions are important. Whatever the issue – from performance management and pay, to revisions and job security – your voice has to be heard. But the Trade Union Bill is an attack on your ability to stand up for your rights in the workplace:

- it imposes new restrictions on taking industrial action
- new rules allowing agency workers to be brought in as strike-breakers during a dispute
- new rules on picketing requiring the CWU to give individual members’ details to the police
- changes to political funding that will restrict how the CWU can campaign on your behalf on things like The People’s Post campaign, employment law on agency workers in the telecoms sector or post office closures
- significant new administrative costs that will have to be paid for out of your union subscription

**SIX MILLION PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY ARE MEMBERS OF TRADE UNIONS.
WE ALL NOW HAVE TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST THIS ATTACK ON OUR RIGHTS.**