

UK Branch Meeting 2013

The following 3 motions passed:

1. Shortage of British Seafarers
2. MNOFP Old Section De-Risking
3. The UK Ferry Sector.

No motions have been put forward by NL and CH in 2013.

Motions

These motions were adopted at the UK branch conference 2013.

1. Shortage of British Seafarers

This UK Branch Conference notes that the shortage of British seafarers and the low numbers of young British Seafarers which is in keeping with the apathetic attitude of successive governments towards the UK shipping industry.

At a time of high youth unemployment in the UK, the maritime industry provides opportunities for work which young people might otherwise not have access to.

However, it is of great concern that recent increase in the UK ship register corresponded with a decline in British seafarers working on ships under the UK register. Vacant positions onboard UK registered ships are being filled with non-British seafarers at an alarming rate and this is driving a 'race to the bottom' in terms of pay and conditions onboard, as well as reducing the availability of jobs for young newly qualified officers.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

This branch calls on the union to:

- Continue highlighting the need for British seafarers.
- Petition the government to ensure they understand the critical requirement of British seafarer training and emphasise the need to expand the training scheme to fill the shortfall in British seafarers.
- Continue to fight to preserve and expand the availability of SMaRT funding.
- Ensure that the expanding UK ship register will provide increased employment opportunities for British seafarers.
- Work with industry and government to ensure that newly qualified British seafarers are able to secure suitable employment opportunities, ensuring valuable work experience can be gained and the future deficit in experienced senior British seafarers can be reduced.
- Work with industry and government to promote the maritime industry as a viable work opportunity for young people and a way of reducing the levels of youth unemployment.



2. MNOPF Old Section De-Risking

This UK Branch Conference notes that the MNOPF Old Section could not rely on the 250 remaining employers (out of the 3,500 participating since 1937) nor on the Pension Protection Fund (because of the multi-employer nature of the Section) and thus the security of pensions was insufficient. The Conference therefore supports the work of the MNOPF Trustee providing additional security to the 40,000 members of the Old Section by arranging a 100% insurance buy in with two insurance companies. Conference further supports the next logical step of a buy out i.e. an individual insurance policy for each member and urges the member nominated Trustee Directors to achieve this as soon as possible.

3. The UK Ferry Sector

This UK Branch Conference taking place in Glasgow on 1st October 2013;

NOTES that the British ferry sector continues to be one of the most important areas of training and employment for British seafarers;

FURTHERMORE notes the problems faced by long established and quality operators caused by unfair competition, including the use of flag of convenience ships and/or seafarers from low cost labour supplying countries;

HIGHLIGHTS in particular the experiences of the change of contract for the Northern Isles ferry services; the potential for further problems ahead with the 2016 tender for the lifeline ferry services operated by Caledonian MacBrayne; and the recent news that a new operator plans to set up in competition with the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company thus jeopardising the jobs of members employed there;

REGISTERS its profound concern at the on-going threats to jobs, pay and conditions including pensions as a consequence of the governments open coast policy and failure to act to protect British seafarers jobs;

CALLS on Nautilus to redouble its efforts to campaign to protect jobs and conditions including pensions in the forthcoming tendering process for Scotland's lifeline ferry routes, and;

URGES the Union to remain vigilant against new threats such as those faced by members employed by the Isle of Man Steam Packet and to further develop effective inter-union campaigns to protect employment, training and decent working conditions throughout the UK ferry sector.