

Dear Colleague

Ref: OCA Pay and Conditions Review 2015/16

As you will be aware, earlier this year Unite members, working under the Offshore Contractors Association Agreement, rejected an offer from the OCA in a ballot vote.

It was clear that one of the key issues in the Oil and Gas industry relates to “equal time” shift patterns and in particular the three on three off shift rota.

In an attempt to further progress this issue we held informal discussions with senior officials of the OCA and proposed that a working party be set up to look at the issue of offshore rotas to see if this matter could be resolved. It was also proposed that these talks would come under the auspices of ACAS. These proposals were agreed with the working party ultimately consisting of. ACAS, Unite Offshore Workplace Representatives, along with Unite and GMB Officers.

You will be fully aware as to the economic back drop to these talks which the union and our members are not blind to when entering such negotiations. The situation offshore is not getting any better with a recent report indicating that over 65,000 jobs have been lost in the oil and gas industry which has had a significant effect on workers and their families.

Latest information shows that the price of a barrel of oil it is not anticipated to rise above \$50 per barrel before 2020 coupled with the UK Government doing nothing to assist the industry in the recent Comprehensive Spending Review.

So colleagues, that’s the reality of the current situation we are facing, but as I said, it is a reality you will be fully aware of.

For your information and consideration I have attached the report from ACAS including the OCA revised offer which is the outcome of the joint working party talks held throughout November.

The revised proposals secured by the small working party have clarified the position of “equal time” against the background of ongoing problems in the industry. It has to be emphasised that these proposals are only **interim** given the current state of the Oil and Gas industry.

You can be assured that once there is an upturn in the industry the Union will be looking to recover any loss our members have incurred during the present situation.

We would ask you to note that In respect of the issue surrounding holiday leave this will remain at 4 weeks, and you will be entitled to now request a **complete trip off from actual work time**, that is 3 weeks holiday from work time on an equal time 3/3 rota and 2 weeks holiday from work time on an equal time 2/2 rota. The remaining one or two week’s holiday leave would be taken during your field break.

The improvement in holiday pay is that it will be calculated on average earnings which in most cases will result in over £1000 extra holiday pay per year.

These extra holiday pay calculations and all other improvements will be backdated to 19th June should the offer brokered through ACAS be accepted by you, the members.

You can be assured that Unite, along with all other offshore based Unions, are concerned about the change to 3/3 rotas and **this offer now includes the assurance from the OCA that these 3/3 rotas will be monitored throughout the early months of 2016 culminating in an independent review of the operation of the 3/3 rota which will be conducted under the auspices of ACAS in June next year.**

That independent review will cover your health and safety concerns especially relating to fatigue and including our concerns about the work life balance for offshore workers.

Unite intends to take all steps to ensure our members are clear and aware of the discussions concluded with the assistance of ACAS, and on that basis, and against the current economic background, the revised **offer is being recommended by Unite Offshore Workplace Reps and Unite Regional Officers.**

Colleagues - It is fair to say that despite considerable work by Unite Workplace Reps and Unite Officers and Organisers to maximise a high ballot return from our members, unfortunately, postal ballots are not giving us the desired high percentage ballot returns we would like to get from our members. It is of course vital that we reach out to all our members and they cast their votes accordingly. As ever, it is you the member who will determine the outcome of this ballot.

Please make sure that you exercise your digital vote no later than 12.00 noon on Friday 8th January 2016 and encourage your fellow Unite members to do likewise.

Yours sincerely



Tony Burke
Assistant General Secretary



Pat Rafferty
Regional Secretary

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