

RMT confirm strike on Caledonian Sleeper at the end of the month

RAIL UNION RMT today confirmed a package of strike action and action short of a strike on the Caledonian Sleeper services after the operator, SERCO, reneged on pledges to address a raft of serious concerns raised by staff that have ruined working lives and placed the workforce under intolerable pressure.

As a result of the company failures RMT has announced the following action:

Members will not book on for any shifts between:

•12.00 hours on Sunday 29th September 2019 until 11.59 hours on Tuesday 1st October 2019.

Additionally, members have been instructed not to work any overtime or rest days, not to perform higher grade duties and to work to their original job description from 00.01 hours on Wednesday 2nd October 2019 until further notice.

RMT representatives have had a number of meetings with the company through the agreed joint working party and have reported back that insufficient progress has been made and that middle management have been openly hostile to finalising a settlement.

RMT's regional officer has met the senior management team with

local and company council representatives this week and has informed the employer that due to their failures to deliver on the promises made, and the fact that the members have had enough of their broken promises, we have no option but to move to a programme of strike action and action short of strike action.

RMT General Secretary Mick Cash said :“The union is angry and frustrated that promises made to us to address the serious concerns of the Caledonian Sleeper staff at the end of July have not been honoured and that leaves us with no choice but to activate our industrial action mandate.

“RMT members have been put under intolerable personal stress as a result of the company’s mismanagement of the sleeper service. They know it, they have promised to do something about it but they have failed to deliver. The move to strike action is entirely SERCO’s fault and the public will understand that. Everyone knows that when it comes to failure they are global specialists.

“The union remains available for genuine and serious talks.”

Scottish Greens Transport Spokesperson John Finnie MSP said: “Serco is an entirely disreputable company that has a long record of mismanaging public services.

“I have repeatedly raised concerns about the management of the Caledonian Sleeper franchise and fully support the RMT’s decision to take industrial action. The health and well-being of staff must come first, and it’s clear this isn’t a priority for Serco.

“The Scottish Government should strip Serco of the Sleeper franchise for its dismal performance, and stop doing business with this predatory company.

“Ministers are due to award the contract for the Northern Isles Ferry Services in the coming weeks. I’m calling on the

Transport Secretary to rule out giving another important contract to Serco.”

