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Circular 13/21 | 26 February 2021
circulation to: all RSSB members by email, Anglia South General Branch,
Anglia & London North East DC, SOGs, EC

RSSB: Pay freeze imposed

A further meeting took place this week to discuss TSSA's pay claim further.

RSSB's final position is as follows:

- a pay freeze for 2021 for all employees;
- a 'pot' amounting to 0.5% of total pay will be made available for 'exceptional' pay increases;
- the output from the independent benchmarking exercise completed by Korn Ferry Group will be applied to salary bands;
- an increase of 1% - the CPI rate in July 2020 - to the season ticket subsidy cap.

RSSB stated that its position is primarily driven by the member levy freeze; the levy uplift is used to fund increased costs including pay. The company is also concerned that member organisations of RSSB (Network Rail, TOCs etc) are experiencing financial hardship and imposing pay freezes in their businesses, and that RSSB being seen by its member organisations to grant a pay increase to staff "would be difficult to manage".

RSSB believes that it has looked after its people very well during the pandemic, providing flexibility to those who are finding it challenging to balance home and work commitments, introducing an allowance to buy equipment to work safely at home, and providing mental wellbeing support. RSSB remains committed to protecting the business model and the jobs which depend on it.

TSSA sought an assurance that senior managers would also be subject to a pay and benefits freeze, which was given.

TSSA sought clarity about the intentions of the company after it was communicated to staff in a recent Team Talk video that there may be "possible changes to RSSB's employee package". TSSA was assured that there were no plans to change the contracts of employment of the staff.



TSSA stated that security of employment was the most important issue for its members going forward, and RSSB confirmed that whilst it could give no guarantees about the future, there were no plans for large scale redundancies.

TSSA asked about bonuses, stating the union's fears that 2021 would see no bonus for staff. TSSA stated that no bonus would mean that the staff would view the freeze on salaries even less favourably.

RSSB stated that it was too soon to take a view, but seemed to suggest that a bonus this year was unlikely.

TSSA has pushed RSSB hard on increasing its financial support to staff working from home, and further discussions will be had.

It is clear that RSSB is in a relatively healthy financial position, and the company's decisions on freezing both the membership levy and the pay of its staff have been taken more to appease the member organisations than out of financial necessity.

With the Williams Report and the associated government White Paper expected shortly, it is likely that a new Railways Bill will be enacted later this year. This will bring significant change to the rail industry, and once again RSSB along with other rail industry staff will be pawns in a highly charged political game.

What that means for RSSB is not yet known, but members can rest assured that TSSA will do all it can to protect and defend the staff through those changes, whether they be employed in RSSB or in other parts of the rail industry.

TSSA members in RSSB can help by talking to colleagues, and persuading those not already in membership to join the union. The more members the union has, the more power it has in the workplace, and the more influence it has in shaping the views of key decision makers.

It's so easy to join online!

Just go to: <http://www.tssa.org.uk/en/join-us/index.cfm>

