



# Branch Newsletter

March 2009  
Issue 24

## UNISON Branch 20106 AGM



### Union in row with Trust Board

Union leaders are to quit meetings of the Regions Ambulance Service Board in disgust at not being allowed to be there for the whole meeting. Public Sector Union UNISON has had a non voting seat at Trust Board meetings since the East of England Ambulance Trust was formed in October 2006, but Health bosses have not allowed the Union Representatives to stay for the second part of the meeting, when the Public are excluded for discussion of confidential items, even though they were allowed in the whole Board meeting of the old East Anglian Ambulance.

The Board meetings are held every two months, and receive information on performance and finances, as well as making decisions on any changes to services. UNISON Branch Secretary Kevin Risley said; "It's a longstanding issue since the merger in 2006. At two of the previous Trusts, we had a staff seat on the Board which was an all encompassing seat for part one and part two of the meeting.

For some reason this trust decided they did not want us there in part two. We have approached them and said we would like to be there for the whole meeting. For their own reasons we are still excluded. We have invited them to meet with us and discuss concerns, and try to iron out any problems, but they still continue. We have taken the difficult decision to withdraw from the board hoping that will prompt them to re-think." "The more we are involved and the more we can work together, the better chance we have of sharing information, and we can deal with issues before they get out of hand".

Seamus Elliott Director of Human resources, and organisational development said; "We are sorry that UNISON has taken this decision at the moment as we are keen to continue and improve our 'Partnership' working. For example- Working in partnership with UNISON, we have just secured some funding to develop Union learning representatives, however the changing nature of the Trust's business requires the board to discuss more commercially sensitive information in private." End.

Article from the Eastern Daily Press of the 3rd March reproduced by kind permission of Sarah Brealey Health Correspondent.

The third Annual General meeting of the East of England Ambulance branch 20106 was held at the Holiday Inn at Cambridge on the 24th February, it was well attended, also present were- Greg Grant Regional Secretary- John Toomey Regional Organiser, and Jeeva Setha, Thompson's Solicitor. Prior to the Elections of Officers, Secretary Kevin Risley gave a report to the meeting summarising the events and activities over the past year.

From a branch perspective it had not been an easy one, Response times had dropped, the ASW proposals and Dynamic Deployment plans are all having detrimental effects on moral. Disciplinary's are on the increase and Partnership working seemingly decreasing. A rapid turnover of Directors within a short period, without realistic explanation, signals internal problems within the board-room which are spreading downwards throughout the organisation.

Branch Officers have been put in the invidious position of selective involvement, necessitating a withdrawal from the board meetings. Kevin thanked all of the branch committee for their support, and added his congratulations to Lesley Hilton for her achievements in Employment Law.

Comments were invited from the floor on the deteriorating situation of Industrial relations within the Trust.

The members voiced disappointment of the trust decision, making the point that the Trust as a publicly funded organisation is acting in contrast to its manifesto (Strategic Direction) of openness and accountability. Noted also was the Trust's inability to deal with Health and Safety issues in a timely manner. The branch Health and Safety Officer had served an improvement notice on the Trust dated the 18th February 09.

The meeting concluded that that Branch officers should continue to seek ways to resolve the current problems.

More AGM results overleaf-

E M Communications



Ross Stanton (Waveney)  
Chairman.  
Equalities Officer.  
International Officer.



Branch Secretary  
Kevin Risley.



Treasurer  
Steve Beckley  
(Potter-Heigham)



Barry Jarvis  
Norfolk & Suffolk  
Divisional Secretary



Jackie Robinson  
Beds & Cambs  
Divisional Secretary



Frank Ward  
Herts & Essex  
Divisional Secretary



Stuart Reeves  
Herts Lead County Rep.  
Young Members  
Officer.  
Membership Officer.



Lesley Hilton (HEOC)  
Beds Lead  
County Rep.  
Women's Officer (Job share  
with Carole Taylor).



John Davey  
Essex Lead County Rep



Tim Ingall (Thetford)  
Suffolk County Lead



Carole Taylor  
Norfolk County Lead Rep.  
Patient Transport Officer  
Welfare Officer (Jobshare)  
Women's Officer (Job share)



Ian Cook (Sudbury)  
Education Officer



June Felstead  
Lesbian Gay & Bisexual

# Elected Officers 2009



Darren Meads  
I.C.T. Officer  
Beds Lead County Rep



Dave Edwards (Norwich Office)  
Disabled Members  
Officer.  
Health Safety  
Lead Norfolk



Ian Mc Kenna (Stowmarket)  
Pensions Officer  
Retired Members  
Officer.



Cambridge Lead  
County Rep goes  
to Ballot-  
Nominations are  
Peter Davis Cambridge



-AND  
Tim Killick  
Huntington



Alan Chamberlain  
Welfare Officer (Job share).  
The Branch Health  
and Safety Officer  
Goes to Ballot with-  
Alan Chamberlain  
(Huntingdon)



AND  
John Lee  
(Waltham Abbey)



Eric Miller  
Communications  
Officer  
(Newsletter)



Present at the AGM,  
John Toomey  
Regional Organiser  
(pictured left) with  
Jeeva Setha one of the  
Solicitors represent-  
ing the Members on  
behalf of Thompsons  
for UNISON.

Please note- Where there  
are Ballots for posts pend-  
ing, the Status Quo exists.

There is a more comprehensive list to be found on the Branch Website  
and a fuller list to include all results will be published next month.

## Secretary's Corner

The branch held its annual General Meeting on the 24th February 2009, and a big 'thank you' goes to all those members that attended. The election of Branch officers took place on the evening, and a full list of the results of those elections can be found elsewhere in this Newsletter. I would like to take this opportunity to assure members that this branch will continue in its efforts, both locally and nationally, in representing your views to the very best of our ability in the difficult and challenging times that lay ahead.



One of our guest speakers on the night was UNISON Regional Secretary Greg Grant, and our thanks go to him for taking the time to attend. Greg gave a powerful speech on the state of the economy which certainly gave us all some 'food for thought'. It would be easy for us to assume at the moment that the news we hear about the economic downturn and the problems with the banking industry are only having an effect in areas such as retail, the motor industry and the building and mortgage sector.

We in the public health sector are now coming up to the second year of the 3 year Pay deal which will give us a 2.4% cost of living pay increase from the 1st April. UNISON were one of the lead organisations in negotiating this agreement, and the government have so far stated that they will honour year three of the agreement in 2010, however as Greg pointed out, as the National debt reaches the trillion pound mark and the very real threat of deflation takes hold, securing annual Pay increases in the future will be a very real and difficult challenge, as will negotiating adequate budgets from commissioners to carry out our work as Health care Professionals.

The other area of major concern is with pensions. UNISON were again instrumental in staving off the governments intentions for a complete reform of our pensions arrangements in the last couple of years, but again this is another area that the government will almost certainly be keen to revisit.

With all of this in mind, I would strongly urge anyone that is not currently a UNISON member to become one, it is only by having a strong membership base that will give UNISON the ability to negotiate at the very highest level, and will also give members the opportunity to vote and have a genuine say when these things are balloted on in the future.

Branch Treasurer Steve Beckley's article in our January Newsletter on claiming Tax relief on UNISON subscriptions has generated a level of interest from members, we have been contacted by some seeking further advice about how to go about this, we have also had a few enquiries recently on how UNISON subscriptions are calculated and banded. If anyone would like advice or clarification on these issues, Please contact your County Lead or Divisional Secretary who will be happy to explain.

There have been some occasions recently whereby members have contacted the branch seeking representation on issues only to find that their subscriptions are not being paid by payroll, and as a consequence their membership has lapsed. This can happen for a variety of reasons, one being when staff move from one band to another. It is the responsibility of individual members to ensure that their subscriptions are paid, and therefore membership is maintained to ensure representation from UNISON remains available.

Therefore I urge all members to keep an eye on the deductions section of their monthly pay advice and ensure that UNISON subscriptions are being paid, any problems, contact your local rep immediately.



The Dynamic Deployment Group will meet again on the 6th March to review the ongoing trial. This will include reviewing data from 'Lightfoot.' locally agreed DAP sites and feedback from Local SPF groups. Outcomes from those meetings will be communicated to Staff via the Branch Website and Newsletter.

Kevin Risley Branch Secretary

Pictured left– John Toomey and Regional Secretary Greg Grant at the AGM  
Apologies to Greg for the Camera angle or camera man !

# March 2009 main news Updates

## The Pay Award 2009/10

Despite strong UNISON representation the NHS Pay Review Body recommended not to re-open the previously agreed pay award for AFC staff. Therefore we carry on with Year 2 of the 3 year deal. So this year, it's a headline uplift of 2.4 % across the board.

HOWEVER– it has also been agreed to remove Spine Point 1, this has the effect of raising the minimum wage within the NHS which of course UNISON fully supports. As a result of this all the other spine points have been renumbered, ie (2 becomes 1) ( 23 becomes 22 etc.) Please don't worry about this as it will affect neither your pay, nor your incremental progression, it is just a technical adjustment. For example, if you are currently on the top of band 4 on spine point 18 (£20.818) you will still be on the top of band 4, however your spine point will now be 17 (£21.318).

There is also an increase in the value of the top pay point of band 5 by an additional 0.33% and some consequential re-spreading of certain pay points in band 5 and the first 3 points in band 6. The entire pay circular AFC 1/2009 is available on our branch website [www.eeas-unison.com](http://www.eeas-unison.com) which includes all details and a full set of Pay scales. This pay rise will be in your April Payslip, but do not forget that overtime paid in April was worked in March, therefore will still be at the old pay rate. As always the branch will be submitting a Pay claim on behalf of the few remaining staff on Trust Contracts.

Barry Jarvis Norfolk & Suffolk Divisional Secretary

## Deployment Plans sites progress



The Dynamic Deployment Working Group will meet again on the 6th March to review the ongoing trial.

This will include reviewing the data from– 'Lightfoot'. Locally agreed D.A.P. sites and feedback from the local S.P.F. groups. Outcomes from those meetings will be communicated to staff via the Branch Website and the Newsletter.

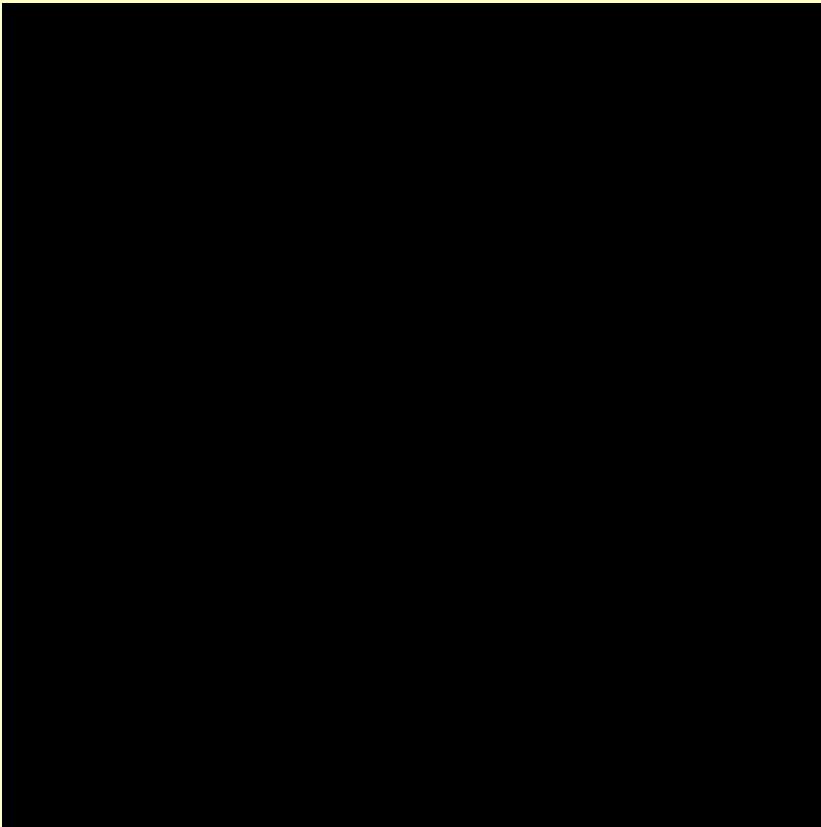
Kevin Risley Branch Secretary

## Response posts progress

As previously stated the Dynamic deployment Plan trial, and consultation period concludes at the 31st March. A great deal of hard work has been carried out, on your behalf around the regions by Staffside reps, in particular, the Beds and Herts locality area especially, where examples of best practice working are evident by Stuart Reeves– June Felstead and Jackie Robinson. Working templates, H & S results, early improvement notices concerning this area can be found on the Branch website at– [www.eeas-unison.com](http://www.eeas-unison.com) and are well worth a visit. EM Comms

## Branch Contact Details

Our branch website provides the most up-to-date information on UNISON's work within the Trust. Visit it at [www.eeas-unison.com](http://www.eeas-unison.com)



**UNISON**  
the public service union

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## Staff Reps Nominations.

**Have you** nominated your Station/ Department Representative yet?

Nominations are now well overdue for these posts for the year 2009.

Please consider standing again as Rep, or finding a committed person within your workplace who is prepared to act as a contact to do so.

Full training is provided with paid time off to enable your own full involvement at the negotiating table.

I have had several returns, but bear in mind there are 124 workplace sites to cover. !!

Please Contact your Branch Secretary K Risley

## Annual Leave

### Review –ongoing.

**This document** is to be reviewed from 1st January 2009, for consistency of administration, and amounts of leave outstanding. Do you have any feedback on your own experiences of the Annual leave Policy over the last year ?

Please feel free to contact Barry Jarvis or the Annual Leave W/ group at any time if you are unclear about any issues, or feel that you have any ideas to which could be incorporated into any review which would be to the **advantage of all staff employed at the Trust.**

Even better still, PLEASE tell us, if at the sharp end you have any observations or any new methods for improving the provision of the associated cover, which of course we all know is the essential ingredient to its enablement. E.M. Comms