

FROM THE PAPERS

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19.06.14 NEW CIVIL ENGINEER – University of Cambridge engineers are attempting to create what they refer to as the world’s first “smart tunnel” by developing a new monitoring system in a disused London rail tunnel. The Mail Rail tunnel is doubling up as an underground laboratory for the University. Engineers are monitoring its movement in real time as a gigantic new Crossrail tunnel is constructed just beneath it. Hundreds of sensors have been installed in a 30m stretch of the cast iron lined Mail Rail tunnel 25m below Liverpool Street station, just a few metres above the excavation of one of Crossrail’s new stations. The engineering team wants to measure the amount of movement, what form it is taking, and whether it is within acceptable limits. Four low-cost sensing technologies are being used to detect movements as small as 0.01mm

01.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – Commuters could face travel disruption when an 8-day strike by LU power workers starts today. Members of UNITE and RMT are due to walk out from 20.00. LU said it will have no impact on services, although unions have warned there will be disruption.

02.07.14 METRO – Power workers on the Underground last night started an 8-day strike – but TfL has insisted the dispute will not affect commuters. Up to 40 staff in the power control team are walking out in a row over pensions. The RMT says trying to run a service is “provocative and dangerous”.

03.07.14 NEW CIVIL ENGINEER – LU has revealed that travolators remain a core part of plans to upgrade Bank station after a redesign of heating and ventilation systems. The travolators were the key innovation that won Spanish contractor *Dragados* the complex £625M upgrade contract. LU’s evaluation system was deliberately weighted to reward schemes that cut passenger journey time and congestion in the station. *Dragados’* solution in which the two 94m long travelling walkways play a key role, cuts an average 11 minute journey time through the station by more than 90 seconds. But the plans were threatened when early design work showed that a heating and ventilation control room would block the path of the travolators. However, LU programme manager Simon Addyman said the control room has now been moved and the travolators can be installed.

04.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – SERCO has lost a £125M-a-year contract to run the DLR to a joint venture partly controlled by the French Government. The outsourcing giant had been operating the DLR since 1997 but was beaten by Keolis/Amey Rail in the tendering process. Keolis’ major shareholder is France’s state railway operator, SNCF. SERCO said: “We will continue to provide DLR passengers with the best possible service until the new operator starts later this year and we will work closely with them to ensure a seamless handover”.

07.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – TfL bosses have thrown out plans to transform their art-deco headquarters at 55 Broadway, into a 5-Star hotel and affordable housing, in favour of selling it off for luxury flats. Details of the original proposal for a hotel employing dozens of people, homes, offices and a theatre leaked to the Standard, reveal that TfL was approached by Bangkok-based hotel group *Dusit Thani* earlier this year about the “sensitive renovation of the Grade 1 listed building”. The scheme centred around a 190-room hotel aimed at “high end Asian business and tourist visitors”. It would have included a 24-hour brasserie, a steakhouse, upmarket Chinese and Thai restaurants, and street level food court including Singapore-style food stalls. Modern buildings used by TfL surrounding 55 Broadway would be knocked down and replaced by new offices with roof gardens. Other new buildings would be used for affordable housing and a medical centre. Other features include a multi-purpose theatre that could be used for lunchtime classical concerts and Las Vegas-style “star performances by foreign household names”. But the ambitious scheme was rejected in favour of the apartments option, after “detailed analysis” revealed that this would raise the most money for TfL.

07.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – Pop newcomers *Rixton* after cracking America, showed the fame has not gone to their heads as they took the Underground between two London festivals. The band are mobbed by fans and paparazzi when they are in the US, but it was a quieter affair for them over the weekend as they took the Underground from their Shepherd’s Bush hotel to the *Wireless Festival* in Finsbury Park. The group later took the Underground again to get to Hyde Park for *Barclaycard*

Presents British Summer Time. One band member said: “We love it. Coming from the North, the Underground’s still a novelty for us”.

09.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – TfL spent more than £1,000 putting up pictures of the late RMT union leader Bob Crow in Underground stations. It revealed it cost £1,050 to “acquire the rights to Mr. Crow’s photograph”, which it put up in tribute to the RMT leader, following his death on 11 March this year. Mr. Crow who earned £145,000 a year was described as a “firebrand” and had regular battles with Mayor Boris Johnson and TfL. TfL said there were no free images of a high enough quality for the posters.

10.07.14 METRO – Look out for a new series of summer programmes on the Underground that celebrate the centenary of Welsh Poet Dylan Thomas, plus other poems and poets from Wales. Posters featuring the poems will also be available from the Poetry Society and the LT Museum. Alongside the poems on the network, copies of the works are being distributed across London, Wales and online.

16.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – About 350 Central Line drivers are to be balloted for strike action in a dispute caused by “a breakdown in industrial relations”. ASLEF said it centres on late running, forced overtime and LU’s alleged failure to grant leave or observe agreements”. The ballot will end on 13 August.

16.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – Transport chiefs failed to carry out sufficient checks before awarding a major Underground signalling contract which collapsed leaving tax payers with an estimate £100M bill. A KPMG report, commissioned by TfL, found that Canadian firm Bombardier was awarded the £354M deal in 2011 as the cheapest bidder, without sufficient consideration being given to whether it was up to the complex job. KPMG also said LU failed to do its homework on a signal upgrade involving Bombardier in Spain, mistakenly believing it had been carried out with minimal disruption. The “good news culture” at LU meant that bosses were slow to react when the project, to upgrade the Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan, Circle and District lines, began to unravel. The report made 23 recommendations of lessons to be learnt. LU said it had implemented most of the recommendations.

17.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – A graduate was offered a job with a top insurance firm less than 12 hours after he stood outside a City Underground station with a sign advertising his skills. Omar Bashir used patter he learned on his father’s Petticoat Lane market stall to sweet talk potential employers. He has a 2:1 degree in economics from City University, but could not progress from his entry-level marketing job despite sending 100 applications. So he took advice of his father, who told him: “You can sell anything”. He initially went to Bank station with his sign and 40 copies of his CV. He had several interviews but no firm offers, so he headed for Cannon Street station. On the morning of his second day he met the CEO of an insurance brokers and advisers and eventually had an interview that day and by 18.30 walked out with a job.

18.07.14 WATFORD OBSERVER – *Letter by Sally Gilmartin* – “Does Dorothy Thornhill know something the rest of us do not? Why would commuters leave their cars in the revamped Cassiobury Park car park when the Watford Metropolitan Line station is to be closed following the building of the Croxley Rail link?”

18.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – Hong Kong rail experts MTR have been awarded the £1.4B contract to operate Crossrail services when the line opens in 2018. The Company will hire 1,100 staff including 400 train drivers, and will begin by talking over the Liverpool Street to Shenfield line next May. MTR, which already runs the Overground in partnership with Deutsche Bahn, is expert in running high-frequency metro services – Hong Kong is even busier than London, carrying 4.5M passenger a day – and its 24-hour service there provides inspiration for London’s Night Tube plans. The £1.4B deal covers concession payments to MTR over the eight-year contract term.

21.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – At a cost of several £m pa, the three Stratford stations would be moved (from Zone 3) to the boundary of Zone 2/3, reducing fares from central London and Zone 2 to this area.

23.07.14 – 05.08.14 RAIL – A joint venture between Laing O’Rourke and Ferrovial has been named as the preferred bidder to build the £600M LU Northern Line extension. The project is subject to final approval by Secretary of State Patrick McLoughlin, which is expected in the autumn. If approved, work will begin in spring 2015 and be completed in 2020. The head of the Northern Line upgrade

said: “If I’m really lucky, the extension will be finished before Crossrail”. The project includes new track, tunnels and stations. The tunnels will link to the existing Northern Line from the Kennington loop – the line will then extend 1.93 miles/3.1 km along the northbound section and 2 miles/3.25 km on the southbound, including crossover and stabling tunnels west of Battersea. New stations will be built at Nine Elms (where a new US embassy and high rise housing are being built) and at Battersea (adjacent to the power station re-development).

23.07.14 – 05.08.14 RAIL – Construction of Crossrail’s new stations is now 50% complete, with almost 3 miles of new platform and station tunnels created under London. New stations are being built at Paddington, Bond Street, Tottenham Court Road, Farringdon, Liverpool Street, Whitechapel, Canary Wharf, Custom House and Woolwich. Once the underground areas are complete, fitting them with platforms, escalators and other systems begin.

23.07.14 – 05.08.14 RAIL – *By Columnist Barry Doe* – “I have made no secret of my belief that for a large heavy rail system, the information provision on London Underground is archaic. This also applies on its web site, which was always appalling but recently changed to become even worse. Incidentally, I recently wanted to check a time at Chesham, and entered it on the LU journey planner. It asked me if I wanted “Chesham, London”! I know LU would love to take over the world, but has nobody told the operator that the reason Chesham is in Zone 9 is precisely because it is NOT in London? Last month I arrived by bus from Barnes at Hammersmith bus station, and wanted the Underground (Hammersmith & City or Circle Line) to Paddington. Signs pointed to the Underground, but only to what I knew was the Piccadilly and District Line station. Nowhere was there a signpost to the Hammersmith & City station. I asked someone, who pointed me across a road and round a corner. However, still no sign, until I suddenly found the entrance set back and unadvertised. Inside, three trains were waiting. An indicator said the next train was Platform 2, but gave no indication how long it would be before it left or where it was going. I joined it, and literally 30 seconds before departure an announcement said it was for Aldgate East (so it wasn’t a Circle line service – fine if you were only going as far as Paddington, but not if you were travelling for Aldgate and beyond). National Rail would never get away with this, and I cannot understand how it is tolerated in a city full of tourists”.

23.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – *By Columnist Richard Godwin* – “In theory, the Underground should improve in July, as regular commuters take their annual leave, and free up valuable seating. But theory only gets you so far when you’re contemplating the braised neck-folds of a Midwesterner at Covent Garden. It is worst, I find, on the Piccadilly Line. The trains begin their journey at Heathrow, already full of suitcases, then pass through all the dimmer tourist hot-spots, from the hostels of Earl’s Court to Harrods, Buckingham Palace, Piccadilly Circus, Theatreland, M&Ms World and the Eurostar terminal. Normally the doughty workhorse of the Underground, in summer it becomes the Idiot Line, full of pushing and panting and panicking, getting-on-before-people-get-off and not-moving-down-the-carriage. The loss of its regular passengers means there is no one to uphold the rules, either. The sensible alter their commute accordingly”.

24.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – Network Rail and Waltham Forest council have agreed to fund the £11.6m reopening of Lea Bridge station, which will have a half hourly train service and an expected footfall of 350,000 a day

24.07.14 METRO – DANONE is providing LU with 250,000 free bottles of Evian water. They will be given out at some of the busiest stations on the network this summer to encourage passengers to carry water during hot weather. The company has also agreed a three-year partnership with TfL, which will see additional water distribution days across the Underground network during the summer until 2017. LU said: “We know travelling around London during the summer months can be uncomfortable but we are making real headway towards cooling the Tube”.

25.07.14 METRO – This contained an update about the escalator replacement work at Embankment – all the old escalator equipment has been stripped out and removed. Steelwork has been erected and reinforced concrete foundations constructed and the new escalator models have all been delivered. Additional parts such as stainless steel balustrades and decking are now being delivered. In addition 80% of the 4100 square metres of new floor and wall tiles have been completed, along with much of the painting work. A new station operations room is being fitted out with improved communication and safety equipment. Work is expected to be complete early November.

25.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – A barrister who failed in an unprecedented 30 “vexatious” employment tribunal claims over 4 years, that cost other parties an estimated £500K, has been barred from ever bringing legal action again. John Iteshi, 40, qualified in 2007 but was unable to find work as a barrister after failing to acquire a necessary training position known as a pupillage. Instead, he began bringing cases on behalf of himself and others in tribunals, alleging race and sex discrimination against a host of prospective employers after rejection for jobs. Four were against his current employers TfL and LU. He is currently an LU customer service assistant, and the ruling means he is forbidden from starting any new employment-related proceedings without the permission by the tribunal. In one case against TfL, he alleged their lawyers and witnesses lied on oath as he was defeated in four separate claims of victimisation and discrimination after unsuccessfully applying for eight posts and failing to pass the first stage of tests to be a train driver and a duty manager.

29.07.14 WESTERN MORNING NEWS (CORNWALL EDITION) – Passengers fought to get off Tube train after alarm. Screaming, shouting passengers battled to get out of a locked Tube train they thought was on fire, an RAIB accident report has described, that occurred in the evening of 25 August 2013. There were “rising levels of panic” as smoke and a smell of burning entered a Central Line train. The train stopped in Holland Park station during the Notting Hill Carnival, after the passenger emergency alarm had been activated, but the doors remained closed. Travellers could see no staff on the station to help them and hearing screams and commotion from other parts of the train, 13 passengers, including 2 children, climbed through the gaps between the carriages to reach the platform. “Very quickly fear spread through the train”, said the report and it was 4 minutes before the driver opened the doors in the incident. The report said the driver had “a lack of training and experience to deal with incidents involving the activation of multiple passenger emergency alarms”. The RAIB said that despite no-one being hurt, a number of passengers, including children, reported being “extremely distressed and in fear for their safety”. LU said: “LU has an excellent and continually improving safety record and such incidents on the Underground are very rare. We recognise that some of our customers involved will have found the incident distressing and we have apologised”.

29.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text by Vicky Hall-Newman* – “Thank you to everyone who stayed seated on the Tube on Friday while my 4-year-old had to stand and stumble about while holding onto a pole. Is there no Tube etiquette?”. *Your Editor can remember in his childhood that he had not to occupy a seat if others (adults) were standing and had to sit on his parents’ lap. He also believes that one of the conditions of a child rate ticket included the requirement that he could not occupy a seat if others were standing. Now that’s “Tube Etiquette”!! How times have changed.*

30.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text by James Foran* – “Vicky Hall Newman asks where Tube etiquette has gone when her 4-year-old is left to stand on the Tube. I am 41 and the etiquette in my day was that the child gave up their seat for the adult – unless I blinked and missed a fundamental change, I am left baffled as to why she thinks it should be the other way round. I’m sure no lasting damage has been done to her child by having to stand – who knows, it might even go some way in helping to build a selfless character”.

30.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text by Nigel Freeman* – “Vicky, reel in the self-righteousness that seems to have deprived you of the power of speech. If you felt your 4-year-old needed a seat, why not ask?”

30.07.14 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Susan Henderson* – “Standing children stumbling into seated adults is far, far safer than the reverse”.