

## FROM THE PAPERS

**MODERN RAILWAYS MARCH 2011 – “SPECIAL AWARD FOR NORTHERN LINE RUNAWAY TEAM”.** On 28 January 2011 The Institution of Railway Operators (IRO) presented Golden Whistle Awards to the Northern Line Service Controllers who were on duty on 13 August 2010. The award recognised their quick thinking under pressure on that day, when a rail grinding unite (RGU) became detached from its rescue unit and ran away in the wrong direction along the southbound High Barnet branch. The operators of the RGU baled out as it passed through Highgate station, gathering speed. In the Euston control room at the time was Derek Brimson, assisted by Barry Finn-Hurst and Keith Cherrill.

Trains were told to proceed non-stop and get out of the way of the RGU, with a passenger train in the path of the runaway at Archway the most at risk. Plaudits go to Hayley Gaskell, controller on duty at the crucial time. It was her quick thinking that sent the passenger train down the Bank branch and the RGU down the Charing Cross branch. The Bank branch is mainly downhill, but the gradients are more favourable on the Charing Cross branch. The passenger train non-stopped until Moorgate. The Formal Investigation Report by LU praises the controllers, “The quick decision-making by Service Control undoubtedly prevented the runaway RGU from becoming a more significant incident. The movement of trains out of the path of the RGU was swift and effective”.

The citation by the IRO judges concludes, “It is rare that such incidents happen on our railways and it is a credit to the Northern Line operators that they remained so cool headed when dealing with an unusual and stressful situation”.

**01.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – 10,000 more people an hour could pour through one of London’s busiest stations when high-speed trains begin to run, experts predicted today. Unions warned ministers not to risk a “major disaster” at Euston. Euston would be the terminal for the £32 billion high-speed network. An engineering report on the consultation states: “Euston currently handles a maximum flow of 7,000 passengers per hour heading for the Underground at peak periods”.

**01.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Tube and rail commuters are being targeted by an international fraud gang using skimming devices attached to station ticket machines. The audacious new scam involves copying the credit card details as passengers buy tickets. Fraudsters then send the numbers abroad where they are used to make fake cards. Police today warned commuters to be vigilant as they revealed that the gang has struck across London.

**01.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – A knifeman who planned “suicide by police”, when he held DLR train passengers hostage has been jailed for five years. Mohamed Hussain, 20, of Shadwell sparked an armed police operation, when after an all-night drinking session, he grabbed a kitchen knife, boarded a DLR carriage where he terrorised victims, including the elderly and children. During the ordeal, lasting more than an hour, some passengers tried to escape over the live rail risking death. Hussain had left a suicide note telling his family he was off to kill someone in a bid to get himself shot by police.

**03.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Underground passengers across the Capital are filmed on 12,000 CCTV cameras. The extent of surveillance on London’s transport network was revealed as a new study found the UK as being watched by 1.85 million cameras. This translates to one for every 32 British citizens. The research published in the magazine CCTV Image, provides the first reliable estimate of how CCTV has spread and has sparked fresh fears about a “Big Brother” society.

**03.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Underground chiefs are set to reduce the frequency of track inspections in depots and sidings from twice to once per week, in a memo leaked to this paper. Track inspectors study every inch of the rails, points and other infrastructure looking for cracks before they develop into broken rails. They also watch out for vandalism and security problems. The memo concludes “There will be three benefits to this: cost savings, reduction in headcount vacancies and safety benefits”. The memo states that halving inspections would reduce the risk to inspection staff who have to walk next to moving trains and over ballast beds, sleepers and “uneven surfaces”. A LT spokesman said the new inspection timetable only related to new track in sidings in the White City

area, which required less maintenance. Bob Crow, the RMT leader, said: "This may be starting at White City but this is a rolling programme across the network with dire consequences for the travelling public".

**04.03.11 THE TIMES** – The Coroner at the July 7 inquests thanked the bereaved families yesterday for their "dignity and restraint" in the "most appallingly distressing circumstances" after the evidence finished. Lady Justice Hallett, who has presided since October over the investigation into the 2005 suicide bombings, closed the inquests after 73 days of hearings involving 309 witnesses, 197 further statements and 1,173 pieces of evidence. The Coroner is expected to record her verdicts before Easter.

**04.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – On 1 March a presentation was given at Battersea Power Station about the proposed developments on the power station and surrounding areas which by 2031 would contain 16,000 new homes, a rebuilt power station, a new Covent Garden Market and tall offices surrounding the new US embassy, at an estimated cost of £1059 million, including an estimated £563 million for the Underground extension of the Northern Line that will have new stations at Nine Elms and Battersea. However the chicken and egg issue is this: without the Northern Line extension there will be no development, and without development there will be no Northern Line extension.

**07.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Underground bosses are in talks to run trains round the clock during the Olympics to cope with an expected one million extra journeys a day. The 24 hour service would operate during key parts of the Games to serve ticketholders as well as people attending late-night Olympic parties. Olympic bosses, who have pledged to deliver "an environmentally friendly Games", have warned commuters to keep off the packed Underground and walk or cycle to work instead. Extra services are likely to be needed on the nights of the opening and closing ceremonies to get the public home. But later trains will be needed throughout the Games as some events will not finish until near midnight. Particular concern focuses on the Jubilee and Central lines on which a number of the event venues are located. Details of the service will be hammered out in the coming weeks between LU bosses and the Tube unions, who are demanding a pay rise of almost six per cent for Olympic year. A TfL spokesman said: "We are on track to deliver all transport improvements well ahead of the Games and are confident of supporting a fantastic London 2012 Games and keeping London moving".

**08.03.11 METRO** – The East London Line Extension Capital Project has been awarded by the Institute of Civil Engineer, "*The Greatest Contribution to London Award*" in addition to the "*Community Award*". Thomas Lane, from the judging panel, said "Over on the east side of town, a tired and forgotten Underground line has been transformed into a shiny new service. It is a perfect example of how to reuse old bits of infrastructure to create something so much better and useful than what went before. A million people now use it every day with numbers expected to rise further, and those benefits make the new line fully deserving of these awards".

**09.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – More than 14 million Underground passengers suffered delays of 15 minutes or more for the 12 month period ending in January 2011. The delays were so bad that of those delayed, more than 11 million passengers were entitled to claim fare refunds – yet only 331,000 did claim. There were 1,818 separate incidents of trains delayed by 15 minutes or more.

**10.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Commuters were warned to be on alert for robbers who are targeting people carrying iPhones on trains in London. A surge in robberies in the capital has been partly driven by the popularity of expensive gadgets such as iPhones, Blackberries and iPads. These are popular among muggers because they can easily be sold abroad for hundreds of pounds. British Transport Police is warning passengers to remain vigilant. One Constable warned "Some of the muggers will snatch the phone, using violence if they are met with resistance, before making a quick escape".

**14.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – A Freedom of Information request has found that between 1 February last year and 1 February this year, the only day on which the Underground ran an entirely effective service was 11 May 2010. Problems have included escalator faults at Victoria, flooding on the District and Circle lines, radio communications failures on the Central Line and trains breaking down between stations on the Jubilee Line.

**16.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Underground boss Howard Collins today invited commuters to tell him in person what they think about the service. After months of delays across the network despite billions of pounds spent on improvements, LU Chief Operating Officer is to appear before the London Travel Watch consumer panel next Tuesday to answer complaints. Customers are invited to attend, or they can email or tweet questions in advance. Mr Collins said: “London has the oldest underground system in the world and we’re rebuilding every part of it. Despite this vital work, we are still operating close to record levels of service”.

**18.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Mayor Boris Johnson accused Underground and bus fare dodgers of being a “parasitic scourge” on London. The cost of fare-dodging rose to almost £75 million last year. At least 120,000 passengers are known to have “dodged” their fare and TfL believes many hundreds of thousands of journeys are made each year with no valid ticket.

**21.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Commuters checking whether Underground trains are on time are being “ripped off” by having to phone a premium rate phone number. A five minute call to the TfL customer service line costs up to £2 from a mobile phone. TfL changed their old 0207 number to an 0843 prefix, which is often more expensive when calling from a mobile.

**22.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – An engineers’ train was derailed on 12 May last year, because Underground track was in such poor condition it shifted and collapsed under the weight, according to a RAIB report. The report said that there was not enough staff to maintain the track properly and morale was low.

**24.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – A search has begun for a company to provide 60 new trains for the 73 mile Crossrail service linking Heathrow with 36 stations across Essex, Berkshire, Kent and London when it opens in 2018. The Mayor revealed that there would be no lavatories in the 220-yard long trains – expected to be similar to the new rolling stock on the Overground lines – nor at the six central London stations being constructed.

**24.03.11 THE TIMES** – Lady Justice Hallet, the Coroner for the 2005 7/7 suicide bombings, will announce the inquest verdicts on 6 May 2011.

**25.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Transport chiefs are pushing ahead with ambitious plans to enable wi-fi access at Underground stations and even bus stops. It is hoped that it will be in place on parts of the network in time for the Olympics. Mayor Boris Johnson said: “The roll-out of wi-fi across platforms and public areas of Underground stations will finally allow Londoners to use mobile devices to pick up emails, access social media sites and stay in touch with the world above while they traverse our subterranean network”.

**29.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Mayor Boris Johnson wants transport to be his lasting legacy. In spite of £7.6billion cuts the four year plans include upgrading three Underground lines (Northern, Victoria and Jubilee), new trains on five lines, progress on Crossrail, completion of suburban rail network and extending the cycle hire scheme. The Mayor said, “Transport would play a key role in delivering the Games and would provide a lasting legacy for the capital. Through negotiations, savings and efficiencies we have done what many people believed to be impossible”. Previous mayor Ken Livingston said, “The Mayor’s plans for transport increasingly involve aggressively squeezing the farepayer combined with cut to funding for the bus service and cuts that must start to hit frontline services”. Bob Crow of the RMT said, “With the tube lurching from crisis to crisis, it defies belief that the Mayor’s and his officials are jacking up their cuts target”.

**30.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – If most of the 750,000 Kate and Wills special “Wedding” Oyster cards are kept as souvenirs and not returned, then TfL stands to make between £3.75million and £7.5million.

**30.03.11 EVENING STANDARD** – There are plans to operate Underground services to run an hour later during the Olympics. A round the clock service remains a possibility after the Opening Ceremony which may finish as late as midnight.

**MARCH 2011 – THE TIMES SCIENCE SUPPLEMENT** – Moving house just a few stops along these London Underground lines can radically alter your life expectancy (in years).

Central Line:

Notting Hill Gate, M 84-3, F 88-9. Holborn, M 77-8, F 82-6    Bethnal Green, M 75-3, F 80-4

Piccadilly Line:

South Kensington, M 84-3, F 88-9      Holborn, M 77-8, F 82-6      Caledonian Road, M 75-1, F 81-0

**04.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Safety checks on the entire fleet of 80-strong fleet of Piccadilly Line trains have been carried out after a crowded train moved off with some doors still open. The train was leaving Piccadilly Circus station on 31 March when its control panel warned that some rear carriage doors were open. The driver stopped the train while these carriage doors were still in the station.

**05.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – The Speaker's wife, Sally Bercow, is in a strop with Mayor Boris Johnson. The Mayor had teased her with the promise that she would be able to Twitter incessantly from the Underground in time for the Olympics, only to leave her cruelly disappointed as plans to install a working mobile network on the Underground have been shelved. Sally had imagined herself tweeting and texting, and doing her Ocado shopping from the Circle Line. "The Tube is overcrowded, hot and sweaty, not to mention extremely noisy as it rattles its way through the tunnels. At least with a mobile and data signal you'd be able to take your mind off the odd passenger's overpowering BO or the pungent tuna sandwich the woman opposite is taking forever to eat".

**07.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – A confidential LU memo obtained by the RMT union on a major flooding incident from the water supply to the Trafalgar Square fountains being severed by contractors, that occurred at Charing Cross station on 24 March, included the following: 375,000 litres of water flooded onto the Bakerloo and Northern Line platforms, the tracks were covered in water, the 630-volt track current was almost turned back on twice while staff were working on the rails. The incident occurred at 10.00 and was finally re-established back to normal operation at 18.00. A LU spokesman "our staff worked tirelessly during this incident to restore services within eight hours of severe flooding shutting this section of the railway. LU is to carry out a full review of the response to this incident, which will take on board the views of everyone involved, and will take any steps necessary to address any concerns or reinforce safety procedures".

**07.04.11 RMT MEDIA OFFICE** – (See previous item). RMT leader Bob Crow demanded an urgent review of safety procedures. He said that there was "pressure" to get services running again, and the incident "almost ended in disaster". LU admit that:

- Charing Cross should have "remained closed to all traffic".
- There should have been one single point of contact to "monitor track access" at both Embankment and Charing Cross.
- A member of staff should have been logging "staff/contractor movements".
- "All involved" should have been using "correct lines of communications".
- Senior management involved on the day did not have the appropriate Formal Incident Management training.

**07.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – An army of Charlie Chaplins invaded London landmarks, including the escalator at Westminster Underground station, to launch a short film competition. The lookalikes also visited Big Ben and Covent Garden, and crammed into a Routemaster bus to promote Virgin Media Shorts, which is offering £30,000 towards the winner's next movie project, as well as mentoring from an expert. Entries, however, need not be silent.

**11.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Mayor Boris Johnson pledged today to "fix" the Underground in time for the Olympics. Concerns mounted over the Jubilee Line, the principal route for the Olympics, which is suffering repeated breakdowns because of problems with the new signalling system. The Underground's Chief Operating Officer, Howard Collins, admits there is "still a huge amount of work to do". The Mayor insisted that the Underground would be fit for purpose by July next year. Latest Underground performance figures from 9 January to 5 February 2011 show delays on the Jubilee Line rose by 26% on a year ago.

**11.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – London commuters came face to face with their Tokyo counterparts to day – albeit briefly – during a video link up on the westbound platform at Liverpool Street. Central Line morning rush-hour passengers should have been able to watch commuters at Shibuya Tokyo station travelling home, but the link failed, then stuttered into life for a few seconds before breaking down. It was in action by midmorning, so at least the Japanese can watch London commuters heading home. The idea is part of an installation by London-based artist Nasser Azam.

**11.04.11 FINANCIAL TIMES** – The new train standing at LU Baker Street station looks as if it is a visitor from the future when compared with the current Metropolitan Line 50-year old A Stock carriages. Brightly lit, air-conditioned and boasting sophisticated passenger information systems, the new S Stock offers a level of comfort and performance that would be beyond the passengers' imagination in 1960. The latest traction technology and lightweight materials offer the potential for vehicles to become significantly lighter and for energy consumption to fall substantially. Power constraints are part of the reason LU has still not found a way of putting air-conditioning on the deep level tube trains. Air conditioning is possible on the S Stock trains because they run on the shallower sub-surface lines. The S Stock train is a single, continuous tube, with flexible gangways between carriages. Because passengers are more visible to each other, there is less risk of crime. The train's computers track components for signs of problems and can alert maintenance staff. The trains have sophisticated power-management computer system and brakes that feed energy back into the power rail, known as regenerative braking, that reduces energy use by 20%. The S Stock's ability to accelerate and brake faster, cutting journey times will come into its own when more sophisticated signalling systems are eventually installed on the system, which will also run the trains with minimal driver intervention.

**12.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Tens of thousands of commuters suffered major disruption on an Underground line in the evening rush hour. It occurred just a day after Mayor Boris Johnson promised to "fix" the Underground in time for the 2012 Olympics. The disruption was caused by a trackside fire involving Network Rail cables near Putney Bridge station followed by a signal failure at Parsons Green. Commuters caught in the disruption said they did not trust the Mayor's promise. Work on a new £600million Underground signalling system will start in June this year and lasting until 2018. The Mayor said, "All the work that needs to be done before the Olympics, will be done. I am confident".

**13.04.11 METRO** – Major signalling improvements to increase capacity on four Underground lines came a step closer today after LU announced its preferred bidder, Bombardier Transport, for a new contract. The upgrade will create 65% more capacity on the Circle and Hammersmith & City lines, 24% more capacity on the District Line, and 27% more capacity on the Metropolitan Line. LU managing director Mike Brown said, "It was imperative that the contract offer value for farepayers' and taxpayers' money, and that those bidding for this contract found innovative ways to deliver the new signalling system without the need for the level of closures we have seen on other lines". There will still be a need for weekend work on track and platforms, but this will not mean closures to full lines as in previous upgrades.

**14.04.11 METRO** – As part of the Rhythm of London music festival, young performers aged between 16 and 25 from across the capital entered the Busking Underground competition by uploading a video of themselves to the Rhythm of London YouTube site. The top 54 were then given the chance to perform at busking pitches on the Tube network. Videos of these performances will be judged by an expert panel including singer-songwriter Newton Faulkner. The top 10 will perform live in an X-Factor style "busk off" in July.

**15.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – LU yesterday offered Underground workers a pay rise of 4% for next year and above-inflation increases for the following four years. However, the deal looks likely to be turned down by transport unions even though many in the private and public sector are experiencing pay freezes. Howard Collins, LU chief operating officer, said, "We have made what we believe is a very fair and affordable multi-year pay offer. We have asked the unions to respond by 28 April". A RMT spokesman said, "It is a disappointing offer. The union executive will look at the detail when they get it".

**18.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Male Underground passengers beware! The next time you see a woman reach for her phone, the chances are she isn't texting. Flirty females are using their smartphones to capture the dishiest of the Underground's commuters, and uploading the images of the unsuspecting men onto hit website TubeCrush.net. The cute commuters are then rated and commented on by admiring women, with surveys taken as to which Underground line has the hottest men (so far overwhelmingly, the Northern Line). Since the site was launched, it has attracted 22,000 users per month from more than 100 countries. TubeCrush receives more than 20 pictures per day, but only men who are "six-out-of-ten hot or above" make the grade. Inspired by its popularity, its

creators are considering taking the site to the next level by offering TubeCrushers the chance to meet their admirers. They are unsure whether the site will be expanded to include the fairer sex. If the tables were turned, would the women find it amusing? (*Such photographers would probably get arrested – Ed!*).

**20.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Thousands of passengers were trapped in Underground trains on the hottest day of the year yesterday, after a piece of equipment from a train fell on to the track at West Ham. At least 1,500 passengers were led along tracks and through tunnels from five Jubilee Line trains that were stranded at Finchley Road, St. John's Wood, London Bridge, Canary Wharf and West Ham, in temperatures up to 30°C. The Metropolitan Line was also shut down because Jubilee Line passengers had to be walked along adjacent tracks, to safety at Finchley Road. Circle and District lines were also affected by a signal failure at Edgware Road. Mayor Boris Johnson said "It's absolutely fair to say that what happened was a disaster. It was a devil of a job to get it running again and people were very badly affected by being kept in the trains. I apologise to all who suffered".

**21.04.11 METRO** – Underground passengers faced more disruption yesterday on a line that had shut during the previous night's rush hour, trapping some commuters for more than an hour. Services on the Jubilee Line were hit yesterday morning by a signal failure, leading to severe delays. TfL apologised for the disruption. Mayor Boris Johnson said Tuesday's incident was "totally unacceptable" and promised refunds.

**21.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Commuters who endured a second day of terrible conditions on London Underground today called on Mayor Boris Johnson to cut prices when disruption occurs. Passengers suffered delays throughout yesterday evening, leaving thousands stuck on platforms at temperatures of more than 30°C.

**26.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – Not everyone in London is welcoming the royal wedding with open arms. Bob Crow, RMT union leader, insists that for the union, Friday will be a normal working day. Its headquarters near Euston Station will be "open for business as usual". The union has a national policy of supporting the abolition of the monarchy, so no street parties there then. The union makes clear that it is not compulsory, but any staff who do work on the bank holiday will be able to take a day off in lieu.

**24.04.11 EVENING STANDARD** – New fears have been raised over the Jubilee Line after images revealed damage to a key part of a train carriage. One picture showed a power collection shoe which had been torn off. It had then fractured the support structure under the carriage. Investigators believe the train in the picture may have struck an object on the track. A spokesman said investigations are continuing but there is no initial evidence to suggest a maintenance problem or that it was connected with line upgrade work.

**30.04.11 DAILY MAIL** – Emergency services will be instructed to carry out a radical overhaul of their health and safety rules in the wake of the 7/7 inquest. The Coroner, Lady Justice Hallett, is expected to highlight that a number of victims of the terrorist atrocity remained alive long after three bombs were detonated on the London Underground in 2005. The inquest heard that some were left to die in agony because health and safety protocols which left firemen unable to rescue them. Police, fire and ambulance crews will in future be expected to show far more discretion in rescuing victims. The Coroner will also tell the emergency services to stop using incomprehensible jargon, which can lead to confusion at the scene.