



Public and
Commercial
Services Union



What's New?

Members' Briefing REVENUE & CUSTOMS GROUP

To: **All Members**

cc: **Branch Secretaries, Group Executive Committee, Equality Chairs, VOAC** (for info)

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NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR PAY, PENSIONS AND JOBS Strike Ballot launches on Monday 26 September

- *Ballot to be launched on 26 September and will run until 7 November*
 - *National anger growing*
 - *Beating the anti-Union laws*
 - *Vote; then tell us you've voted*

On Monday 26 September, PCS are launching our national strike ballot to demand fair pay, to demand pensions justice, and to defend jobs and our redundancy scheme. The ballot will run until Monday 7 November. This briefing reminds you why it's critical that you vote and that you vote **YES** for action.

National anger growing

After a decade of our pay being devalued through government-mandated pay restraint, last year in HMRC we managed to secure a pay deal which, at the time, made some inroads into the huge losses we had incurred through that pay restraint. However, that deal comes to an end next summer, and since we agreed that deal:

- The CPI rate of inflation has gone up from **0.7%** to around **10%**
- The energy price cap has rocketed from **£1,138** to **£2,500**
- The Bank of England base interest rate has jumped from **0.1%** to **2.25%**.

So even though this year's HMRC pay rise has been higher than nearly every other civil service department, **it's still effectively a 5% pay cut**; at the same time, fuel bills have doubled, and mortgage interest rates are beginning to spiral.

It's looking like another two years until the next General Election, and in today's "mini-budget", the latest Tory Chancellor made it clear whose side they're on; by abolishing the cap on Bankers' bonuses, abolishing the top rate of Income Tax, protecting the bloated energy companies and scrapping the planned increase in Corporation Tax; all this, while cutting benefits – including some in-work benefits – which will impact some of the poorest in our society.

Unashamedly, it's a budget aimed at lining the pockets of the rich and, as we've said, if we don't challenge this nakedly cynical siphoning of money away from the workers and to the bosses, we have at least two more years of this to come.

But there is hope. National anger is growing in just about every sector. Even now, all manner of workers are either already in dispute, are balloting for action or are preparing for a ballot; including:

- Rail workers
- Postal workers
- BT/Openreach engineers
- Dockworkers
- University and College lecturers
- Nurses
- Teachers
- Firefighters.

Like civil servants, all of these workers provide essential services which keep the country running. If we all act alone, the government may try to sit-out the campaign, but all of us acting together, will put the government under the kind of industrial pressure not seen for decades. Acting together, we can win.

Beating the anti-union laws

The first hurdle we have to overcome is the UK's anti-union laws, which are the most draconian in Europe. In an age of electronic voting, in strike ballots we're made to vote by post; and even then, if we don't make sure that at least 50% of our members vote, they'll declare any strike illegal. **So, when you get your ballot paper, the only way to ensure that that every member's vote counts - however you decide to vote - is to make sure you post your vote.** And don't forget; when you've posted your vote, you should let PCS know you've voted.

Join PCS

PCS is fighting for your pay; for your pension; and for your job. If you've read this briefing and you aren't yet a member of your trade union, then [join today](#).

Get involved!

Remember, HMRC applies restrictions on the content of union circulars distributed using the department's email system, so make sure that you stay in touch with your union. You can find your membership number in your latest email digest from PCS.

If you haven't already done so, let PCS have your personal/non-work email address and your mobile phone number. We'll only use it to keep you informed about PCS matters. You can update your details securely online by registering for [PCS Digital](#) or by contacting your local PCS rep, and asking them to enter your details securely on the PCS Organising App.

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