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VIA E-MAIL

DB/JU/LS

28 August 2020

**TO: Branches with CWU Members in Openreach
CWU Openreach National Team
CWU Openreach Single Points of Contact**

Dear Colleague,

CONTRACTUAL OVERTIME (COT)

You will have already seen other communications from us on this subject, so this is just a short reminder of the CWU's position on the use of COT at this time.

You, our members, have supported the company over the last few months, keeping the country connected as key workers and you probably feel that you have seen little thanks in return. Instead, you have been rewarded for your hard work with yet another period of enforced overtime.

Whilst your CWU representatives at every level (National Teams, Regional Coordinators, and Branch Officers) have been telling Openreach management that they have got this wrong, the message back has been clear - they believe that we have got this wrong and that you, our members, are happy to be out working and that they are not putting you at any increased risk by forcing you to work more.

Our message to you, at this time, is to carry on asking your manager for your individual European Working Time Directive (EWTd) information. The EWTd is there to protect you, by ensuring that you are not working over the 48 hours a week limit, which includes travel time (even the unpaid travel time).

We have seen emails from some local managers asking you to sign an opt out form. We, as your union, would strongly recommend that you do not opt out of the EWTD. It is in place for a reason - to protect your health and safety. No manager should be encouraging you, or applying any pressure upon you, to opt out. If you do feel that this is happening, please let us know and we will raise this at every level. It is not company policy to ask employees to opt out and this flies in the face of their 'Safety First' claims. The option to reverse any previous EWTD opt out decision is also available to you and again we would strongly recommend this.

With regards to the forthcoming Bank Holiday, it is the union's position that any overtime commitment given during a period of COT, including volunteering to work on a Bank Holiday, should be counted towards your COT contribution. This has always been the way that it has been applied in the past. But, the company has taken a different stance on this COT occasion. Much to our disgust, they are saying that volunteering for the Bank Holiday will not be counted towards your COT contribution if the company decide to turn you down. We have picked this up at all levels, again locally, regionally and nationally, and the business has again shown a total lack of understanding around this issue and a lack of appreciation of how their workforce, our members, feel. It remains unclear to us how any Bank Holiday overtime commitments are intended to be applied in a fair and equitable way.

We are aware that you are under extreme pressure at the moment. Please be assured that we do not support the use of COT at this time. We are committed to supporting each and every member throughout this period at all levels within the union.

If you, or any of your colleagues, have any individual circumstances meaning that you cannot fully commit to COT, please get in touch with your local branch and we can support you. Don't struggle in silence.

We are here to help. Take Care and Stay Safe.

Yours sincerely,

CWU OPENREACH NATIONAL TEAM

On behalf of

DAVIE BOWMAN

Assistant Secretary