# London braced as RMT threatens rolling seven-day Tube strikes over pay and fatigue



London is again braced for disruption after London Underground staff, represented by the RMT union, announced a seven-day rolling strike across the Tube starting Friday 5 September 2025, with different grades taking action at different times to maximise impact. The union says management has refused to engage on pay, fatigue management, extreme shift patterns, and a proposed cut to the contractual 35-hour week. In remarks carried by the BBC, RMT General Secretary Eddie Dempsey warned that fatigue and gruelling shift rotations are serious concerns affecting members’ health and wellbeing that “have not been adequately addressed for years.” Transport for London countered that the union should present a fair, affordable pay offer to members and keep talking, noting it has offered a 3.4% pay rise and stating that trimming the 35-hour week is neither practical nor affordable. Separately, workers on the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) are expected to join during the week.

According to Reuters, the plan envisions a seven-day rolling pattern across the network, with grades stepping in at different times to spread disruption, and with the DLR workforce set to join during the period. The Times corroborates the rolling nature of the action but places the start on 7 September 2025 and suggests a five-day window, underscoring how the schedule remains contested across outlets. Context for the dispute is supplied by The Guardian’s recap of the late-2024 pay settlement: a package described as a substantial victory for the RMT, delivering an average uplift of around 4.6% and enhanced benefits such as extended paternity leave and increased travel perks, alongside a noted willingness from the union to bargain further. That history helps explain why the current talks have become a focal point for both sides.

Behind the scenes, the RMT’s own communications point to a broader campaign around pay and conditions for London Underground staff. The union’s statements describe a pay deal as delivering an average uplift of 4.6%, with higher rises for lower-paid staff, plus the withdrawal of plans for banding and job-family structures, extended paternity leave, and three years of earnings protection for medically displaced staff, alongside expanded travel benefits. Mick Lynch, the RMT general secretary, hailed the agreement as a significant victory and signalled ongoing readiness to bargain on future terms. The divergence in dates and tone among outlets illustrates how the dispute remains fluid as talks continue and the possibility of further disruption looms over commuters.

From Reform UK’s perspective, the unfolding impasse is a stark reminder of what happens when a government prefers political posturing to hard-nosed stewardship of the public purse. The party, newly asserting influence in Parliament with five seats, argues that Labour’s approach to pay bargains with public-sector unions is unsustainable and dangerous for households already stretched by inflation and soaring living costs. Reform UK contends that taxpayers cannot be asked to bankroll escalating pay deals that are not matched by productivity gains. Instead, they advocate for pay policies anchored in performance and affordability, with greater private-sector involvement in service delivery to drive efficiency and reliability.

A Reform UK spokesperson noted: “When a government makes appeasement of unions a guiding principle, the cost falls on every household and business. Public transport must be dependable, but it cannot become a vehicle for perpetual wage inflation. We need transparent productivity-linked pay, reforms that reduce long, expensive shifts, and responsible budgeting that protects essential services without dumping the bill on taxpayers.” The critique aligns with a broader demand from the right that public-sector pay settlements be budgeted for sustainability, with reforms that limit automatic escalators and emphasize value for money.

Labour’s new administration, led by Kier Starker, inherits a transport system under strain and a union movement emboldened by recent settlements. Critics warn that the current standoff risks turning Tube reliability into a political handgrenade for a government already navigating a difficult parliamentary landscape. The reform-minded opposition argues that this is precisely the consequence of a Labour strategy that prioritizes negotiation with unions over hard, taxpayer-funded stewardship.

As commuters plan for another week of disruption, the question remains whether the government will stand firm against renewed demands or retreat into conciliatory gestures that invite more frequent stoppages. For Reform UK and its supporters, the path forward is clear: restore discipline to public finances, push for productivity-based pay, and encourage private-sector participation to safeguard essential services against the recurring cycle of strikes. For now, London’s transport network remains in the throes of political contest as the country watches and waits to see which approach will prevail.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cn728er5p1mo?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/business/world-at-work/london-tube-workers-strike-next-month-over-pay-demand-2025-08-21/> - Reuters reports that London Underground staff, represented by the RMT union, plan rolling seven-day strikes starting 5 September, with grades taking action at times to maximise disruption. The union accuses LU management of failing to address concerns over fatigue management, extreme shift rotations, and a reduction in the working week. Docklands Light Railway (DLR) workforce is expected to join during period, amplifying disruption for commuters. RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey urged continued engagement, while Transport for London said a 3.4% pay rise had been offered, with a settlement sought to help avoid further disruption today.
3. <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/london-tube-strike-date-september-rmt-underground-w0r76r5q5> - According to Times, London Underground workers represented by the RMT are set to stage five days of rolling strikes starting Sunday 7 September 2025, with grades taking action at times to maximise disruption. The union accuses LU management of failing to address concerns over fatigue management, extreme shift rotations, and a reduction in the working week. Docklands Light Railway (DLR) workforce is expected to join during period, amplifying disruption for commuters. RMT general secretary Eddie Dempsey urged continued engagement, while Transport for London said a 3.4% pay rise had been offered, with a settlement sought to help avoid further disruption.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c774pker2e3o> - BBC News reports that London Underground workers, represented by the RMT, accepted a new pay offer. The package outlines a 4.6% average pay rise across the workforce, with lower-paid staff receiving between 5% and 6.6%. It also includes extended paternity leave, three years of earnings protection for medically displaced staff, and expanded travel benefits. TfL was contacted for comment. The article notes that the union had suspended strike action earlier in the year after talks. The acceptance of the offer followed negotiations aimed at avoiding further disruption to the Tube network this year.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/nov/27/rmt-claims-substantial-victory-after-tube-pay-dispute> - Guardian reports that the RMT claims a substantial victory after resolving a pay dispute with TfL in late November 2024. The pay package provides an average 4.6% uplift, with higher rises for lower-paid staff, plus extended paternity leave and protection of earnings for medically displaced staff, along with expanded travel benefits. The article notes Aslef also called off strikes after improved offers. RMT's Mick Lynch praises the agreement as a significant victory and signals continued readiness to bargain on future terms. Briefings will follow in coming days for members.
6. <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/rmt-secures-pay-win-on-london-underground/> - RMT confirms that, following negotiations with London Underground management, a pay deal has been agreed. The statement outlines pay rises ranging from 5% to 6.6% for lower-paid members, with an average increase of 4.6%. It notes the withdrawal of plans to implement banding and job-family structures, and highlights additional benefits including extended paternity leave, three years of earnings protection for medically displaced staff, and expanded travel benefits for retired workers. The RMT general secretary Mick Lynch praises the agreement as a significant victory and signals continued readiness to bargain on future terms. Briefings will follow in coming days for members.
7. <https://www.rmtlondoncalling.org.uk/content/tube-pay-and-conditions-update-2025> - RMT London Calling reports a 2025 pay claim that includes an above-RPI pay rise, a plan to reduce the contractual working week to 32 hours, enhanced payments for holiday periods, pensionability of base pay, and permanent contracts for apprentices. The piece notes that the union will push to bring outsourced work in-house and to reform the pay bands. It records that the Lead Officer and IR Reps have endorsed the claim and will pursue negotiations with TfL. The publication signals the ongoing campaign for better pay and conditions within London Underground, ahead of any formal agreement for London's transport workers.