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Research Note 69

Trade Union Rich List

The earlier TaxPayers' Alliance research note *Strikes in the public and private sectors* showed that public sector staff spent **15 times as many days on strike per worker in 2009** as those in the private sector.¹ Cuts in public spending are essential in order to deal with a crisis in the public finances, but the unions are already threatening fresh waves of strikes if cuts are put in place.

This new research note shows that many trade union leaders are receiving six-figure remuneration packages:

- 38 trade union general secretaries and chief executives received remuneration of more than £100,000 in 2008-09.
- This includes many of the big public sector unions that may strike in response to cuts in public spending or gold plated public sector pensions, for example:

Name	Union	Total Remuneration, 08-09
Dave Prentis	Unison	£127,436
Christine Blower	NUT	£124,483
Derek Simpson	Unite	£120,328
Matt Wrack	Fire Brigades Union	£115,804
Mark Serwotka	PCSU	£111,112
Bob Crow	RMT	£105,679

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¹ Available from: http://www.taxpayersalliance.com/strikes.pdf



Background

All of the three main political parties pledged to cut spending before the last election. Cuts are essential in order to reduce high government borrowing. Yet union leaders have pledged to fight against any reductions. Mark Serwotka, General Secretary of the Public and Commercial Services Union, wrote in the Guardian that:²

"Today in Brighton more than 1,000 Public and Commercial Services Union representatives from across the UK will debate plans to launch a massive campaign of resistance against what we expect will be the deepest, most damaging public spending cuts since Margaret Thatcher sharpened her axe and laid waste to millions of people's livelihoods and the services they turned to for help."

Dave Prentis, General Secretary of Unison, wrote in the Guardian that:³

"Make no mistake – any attempt to cut the pensions of local government workers will be met with stiff resistance. We will hold a strike ballot of more than a million of our members and I will urge them to vote "yes". I strongly suspect they will.

But this will be just one of many fights that face us in the months/years ahead."

It has been reported that, in order to fight against cuts in spending, the unions have prepared a £25 million "war chest". Overcoming that opposition will be key to the Government's ability to cut spending and avert a fiscal crisis.

As part of their battle against cuts, union leaders claim to be speaking for ordinary workers and the poor and attack high earners. In his article Dave Prentis cited the average pension of a local government worker as £3,800 a year. That is a misleading statistic and an attempt to obscure the reality that workers in the public sector enjoy far more generous pensions than their private sector counterparts,⁵ but it is indicative of how unions will approach the debate over public spending cuts.

That message is undermined by the fact that many union leaders enjoy generous compensation themselves. In 2004, the leaders of the Union of Democratic Mineworkers

² Serwotka, M. Fight cuts with co-ordinated union action, *Guardian*, 19 May 2010

³ Prentis, D. Cuts show this coalition is far from progressive, *Guardian*, 18 May 2010

⁴ Chapman, J. Unions build up £25m war chest and prepare to 'unleash hell' on Tories, *Daily Mail*, 17 December 2009

⁵ For more information on pensions, see this TPA report: http://www.taxpayersalliance.com/home/files/UK Pensions Crisis EMBARGOED 00.01 MON 3 NOV.pdf



were branded as "fat cats" in *The Guardian* because of their pay of more than £150,000 each.⁶

On 26 March 2010, in a discussion on the BBC Daily Politics show, TPA Research Director Matthew Sinclair cited the same figure included in this report, £127,000, as the remuneration of Unison General Secretary Dave Prentis. He claimed to earn "nowhere near" that figure. The TPA produced a video rebutting his claim and showing that the figure was sourced from the Annual Report of the Certification Officer, 7 who is responsible for maintaining a list of trade unions and ensuring that they comply with statutory requirements.

Pay Check: What is UNISON's Dave Prentis on?



Following on from that dispute, this research note shows that a large number of trade union officials receive six-figure remuneration packages.

⁶ Maguire, K. Strikebreaking union accused of profiting from sick miners, *Guardian*, 1 March 2004

⁷ The video can be viewed here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRlrfOCt8To



Remuneration for Trade Union General Secretaries and Chief Executives

Remuneration statistics are taken from the 2008-09 Annual Report of the Certification Officer.

	Trade Union	Title	Name	Salary £	Benefits £	Total £	Notes on Trade Union Leader
1	Professional Footballers' Association	Chief Executive	Gordon Taylor	824,730	31,277	856,007	
2	National Association of Colliery Overmen, Deputies and Shotfirers	General Secretary	-	244,919	5,449	250,368	Total paid in respect of two people holding office of general secretary within the period and is not the sum paid to one individual. Salary includes, as a substantial proportion, a redundancy/termination payment in respect of the outgoing General Secretary
3	British Dental Association	Chief Executive	Peter Ward	119,145	64,449	183,594	
4	Union of Democratic Mineworkers	Notts Section General Secretary	Mick Stevens	105,984	67,836	173,820	£94,128 of salary and £67,381 of benefits is paid in respect of the position of the President of the Nottingham Section of the UDM
5	National Federation of Sub- Postmasters	General Secretary	-	79,852	84,023	163,875	Total paid in respect of two people holding office of general secretary within the period and is not the sum paid to one individual
6	Royal College of Midwives	General Secretary	Prof Cathy Warwick	111,006	41,072	152,078	The General Secretary's salary and benefits are associated with all aspects of the College and not just the trade union
7	Lloyds TSB Group Union	General Secretary	Ian Partridge	95,550	50,598	146,148	



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	Trade Union	Title	Name	Salary £	Benefits £	Total £	Notes on Trade Union Leader		
8	Professional Cricketers Association	Chief Executive	Sean Morris	114,630	21,009	135,639	The Chief Executive's salary and benefits are associated with all aspects of the PCA Group and not just the trade union		
9	Society of Authors Limited	General Secretary	Mark Le Fanu	86,050	41,404	127,454			
10	UNISON: The Public Service Union	General Secretary	Dave Prentis	92,187	35,249	127,436			
11	National Association of Head Teachers	General Secretary	Mick Brookes	100,505	26,313	126,818			
12	British Air Line Pilots Association	General Secretary	Jim McAuslan	101,400	24,464	125,864			
13	Accord	General Secretary	Ged Nichols	101,130	23,871	125,001	£13,848 of salary is a bonus payment		
14	Nationwide Group Staff Union	General Secretary	Tim Poil	92,004	32,813	124,817			
15	Association of Teachers and Lecturers	General Secretary	Dr Mary Bousted	102,132	22,508	124,640			
16	National Union of Teachers	General Secretary	Christine Blower	99,846	24,637	124,483			
17	Prison Officers' Association	General Secretary	Brian Caton	63,275	59,783	123,058			
18	Union of Finance Staff	General Secretary	Alan Wood	93,811	28,621	122,432			
19	Unite the Union (Amicus Section)	General Secretary	Derek Simpson	62,077	58,251	120,328	One of two joint general secretaries of Unite. Payments made for a period of less than 12 months. These figures are different to those originally submitted by the Union in its annual return for the relevant period. This was due to the Union providing incorrect figures in that return. The differences are explained in a separate note which has been attached to that return		
20	Association of School and College Leaders	General Secretary	John Dunford	100,576	18,238	118,814			



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	Trade Union	Title	Name	Salary £	Benefits £	Total £	Notes on Trade Union Leader	
21	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers	General Secretary	Chris Keates	91,781	25,400	117,181		
22	Fire Brigades Union	General Secretary	Matt Wrack	66,389	49,415	115,804		
23	Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen	General Secretary	Keith Norman	71,381	43,997	115,378		
24	GMB	General Secretary	Paul Kenny	81,000	34,000	115,000		
25	Prospect	General Secretary	Paul Noon	95,750	18,517	114,267		
26	First Division Association (FDA)	General Secretary	Jonathan Baume	83,769	29,738	113,507		
27	Trades Union Congress	General Secretary	Brendan Barber	89,671	23,438	113,109		
28	Royal College of Nursing in the United Kingdom	Chief Executive and General Secretary	Dr Peter Carter	111,800	-	111,800	Includes payments made in respect of the General Secretary's role in the associated charitable trust	
29	Community	General Secretary	Michael Leahy	83,166	28,622	111,788		
30	Public and Commercial Services Union	General Secretary	Mark Serwotka	82,094	29,018	111,112		
31	Musicians Union	General Secretary	John Smith	80,519	30,321	110,840		
32	International Transport Workers Federation	General Secretary	David Cockcroft	93,118	15,168	108,286		
33	University and College Union	General Secretary	Sally Hunt	91,770	15,012	106,782		
34	National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers	General Secretary	Bob Crow	79,564	26,115	105,679		
35	Chartered Society of Physiotherapy	Chief Executive	Phil Gray	84,445	21,111	105,556		
36	Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers	General Secretary	John Hannett	81,742	22,921	104,663		
37	Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference	General Secretary	Geoff Lucas	103,403	1,110	104,513		



	Trade Union	Title	Name	Salary £	Benefits £	Total £	Notes on Trade Union Leader
3	8 British Medical Association	Chairman	-	-	101,138	101,138	Honorarium. This amount represents the total honoraria paid to two people, each of whom held the office of general secretary for part of the year