

CASE STUDIES



Case Study 1

Sita works for Greater Manchester Patient Transport Services which provides non-emergency transport to hospital patients. She is employed by Arriva who won the contract to provide these services for the period of 2013-16. She has colleagues who are directly employed by the Ambulance service who she works alongside - they get paid more, get more breaks and receive better sick pay. She often works with one of these colleagues on a 10-hour shift, doing the same job, but they can take two breaks and she can take just one. The Ambulance Service has refused to re-negotiate their contracts.

Case Study 2

Ali works for a National Supermarket in London. A proportion of workers across a number of stores are on flexi-contracts with guaranteed hours of between 4 and 16 hours and then 'available hours' on top. He is obliged to work agreed core hours and any hours that fall within his agreed availability window, providing appropriate notice has been given. He is sometime asked to stay extra hours mid shift and feels obliged to do so. Colleagues have been asked to do back to back double shifts to cover for staff shortages, in one case 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. and then 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. in a 24 hour period. Colleagues have talked about the pressure they were under to demonstrate flexibility with fear of dismissal if they refused hours.

Case Study 3

James works as a civil servant in a jobcentre in a remote part of Scotland. He has had his pay capped at 1% for the last 8 years. Once he reached the top of the progression scale, James has depended for years on the rate for the job increases negotiated by his union. This year his trade union put in a 5% pay claim which was rejected by the government. His union then held a national ballot on pay and asked members whether they were prepared to take industrial action.

Reps had restricted access to the workplace and were denied desk-dropping of ballot materials or displaying posters. Email correspondence from official government addresses could not contain the words "ballot," "strike" or "vote." James received his ballot paper in the post but he was taken to hospital, and with no visitors, he had no access to his ballot paper. James was denied a vote because of the restriction to postal voting. The ballot returned a turnout of 41.6 per cent. The Trade Union Act requires a minimum of 50 per cent of eligible members participating in a statutory ballot before it can be valid.