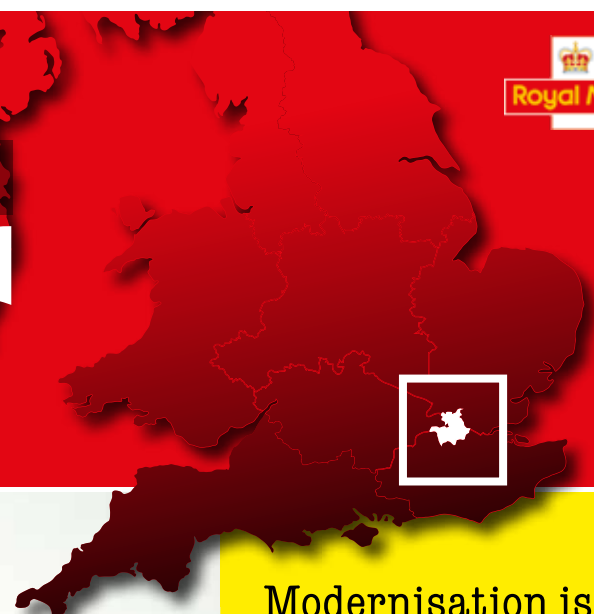




THE ROYAL MAIL NEWSPAPER

DECEMBER 2011

Courier



Modernisation is happening across the London region. In this 'wrap' around your normal copy, Courier highlights what's happening.



LONDON

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WELCOME



The past few months have seen a huge amount of change for the London region, especially in processing.

Earlier this year, due to a sharp decline in traffic, Royal Mail announced the decision to close East and South London mail centres. As part of this decision, the business also announced a large investment in Mount Pleasant mail centre and the relocation of the Rathbone Place delivery operation into the new modern working environment at Mount Pleasant.

I know the change we are going through is difficult, but it is vital that we modernise our operations to lower costs and improve customer service.

Despite the huge amount of change the region has faced, I have been really impressed with the professionalism and hard work demonstrated by London colleagues. Over the coming months, we will continue to work closely with the CWU to complete the mail transfers and continue to try to match colleagues to the role preferences they have given us.

Ian Songhurst
London regional operations director

DIFFICULT, BUT RIGHT FOR CUSTOMERS AND OUR BUSINESS

WITH fewer letters and more packets to process and deliver, it's important we have the right number of mail centres in the right place to meet our customers' needs.

Huge investment is going into Mount Pleasant mail centre as part of our plan to modernise operations in Greater London, reported in November's Courier.

The whole centre is being transformed and operations from other centres are moving to the Mount.

South London mail centre at Nine Elms and the East London mail centre at Bromley-by-Bow will close in summer 2012.

Greater London will have five remaining mail centres, at Mount Pleasant, Croydon, Greenford, Jubilee and Romford. The process is now well under way, with outward collections moved from East London and International work now being done at Heathrow Worldwide Distribution Centre.

The changes were planned for many months, with full union consultation, as part of the mail centre modernisation strategy.

With a 25% fall in the average number of daily items in five years, we have to close mail centres across the UK.

This is a really difficult time for many of our processing colleagues as they decide what they would like to do with their future.

As part of the programme, support has included Clear Choice, one-to-one discussions and advice for those leaving the business.

The project team is meeting with union reps on a weekly basis, progressing job matching while looking at new ways to support colleagues through the changes. The formal job matching process is currently being agreed with the CWU and will begin early next year.

Staff at Nine Elms tell us about the impact on them and the options they are taking. >



DOMINIC EMIANTOR, MECH OPERATOR: 'I've asked to transfer to Romford or Gatwick, because voluntary redundancy at my age with a family just wouldn't work. Some people don't want to agree that the company has to respond to changes, but it's clear to me that it's the right thing for us at the moment.'



JOY NJIE, POSTWOMAN: 'I'm taking voluntary redundancy because I have small children and moving somewhere else just won't be possible for me. I know that some are scared about the future. For me, however, this is a kick up the backside to do something about my career instead of staying in a comfortable job for ever.'



SANDRA HENRY, POSTWOMAN: 'I'm hoping to transfer to Croydon because it's just down the road from where I live. I don't know if I'll definitely be able to go there, but I'll adapt to whatever happens. In the current economic climate, you have to work with the changes that are thrown at you.'



NNANNA CHUCKWU, MECH OPERATOR: 'I'm taking voluntary redundancy. Clear Choice has been very helpful and I've been on workshops to help me with CV writing and how to set up a business. Now I'm spoilt for choice on what to do.'

People from South and East London mail centres have moved across to Romford, Croydon, Greenford and Jubilee. We spoke to a few of them to see what their experience has been. >



DILVIR JEER ON IMPS CAME TO ROMFORD FROM EAST LONDON: 'I was nervous at the start. New people and new machinery. It's a much smaller office here, but it's getting easier.'



ROBERT LEWIS MOVED TO ROMFORD FROM MOUNT PLEASANT IN JANUARY INTO A NEW ROLE AS EARLIES ENGINEERING TEAM COACH. He's been made to feel welcome by colleagues like engineer Greg Hunt (right), who's been there for 40 years.

Robert says: 'I was apprehensive to start with and it was hard because we had all new machinery to work with. No one likes change, but we're getting there, and we all had to learn how the IMPs work together.'



SALLY DAVIES MOVED TO METER SORTING AT CROYDON FROM NINE ELMS IN AUGUST: 'This was my second choice after Mount Pleasant, but this is all right because it's not far to travel. It's a very peaceful place and I've met nice people here.'

The East London mail centre at Bromley-by-Bow will close next summer and everyone has their own story. >



RALIAT ABDULAH, POSTWOMAN: 'I've asked to transfer to London Central because it's nearer my home. I do feel that it has to happen because of the current economic climate, but it's very sad.'



TREVOR PICKETT, POSTMAN: 'We've made our preferences and keep asking what we've been allocated but we're yet to get answers. We don't know what is going on with allocating jobs on some of the shifts.'

At Heathrow Worldwide Distribution Centre, a number of people have made the move from other sites. >



ASHLEY BUFFIN, COACH IN CUSTOMS: 'I came here from Nine Elms because this was the most accessible site, but there are problems with car parking. But I've had lots more training opportunities here, and now I'm a coach - that wasn't an option before.'



ALBERT LAMPTEY, POSTMAN: 'I left Mount Pleasant and think the job security is the main reason people moved, but it's very noisy and the automation takes getting used to. I've had good support from people here. When I came on the tour in June I vowed I would never work here and when I first came, I wanted to go straight back, but it's getting easier.'



KIRAN PATEL MOVED FROM NINE ELMS TO PACKET SORTING AT CROYDON IN AUGUST: 'I only made one choice and this was it. It's slightly nearer for me, but I would have preferred to stay at Nine Elms if I could. Everyone is friendly here and they're welcoming as soon as you walk through the door.'

A woman with short reddish-brown hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a blue high-visibility safety vest over a light blue collared shirt, is smiling slightly. The background is a blurred industrial or warehouse environment with overhead lights.

MODERNISATION IS HAPPENING IN DELIVERY

WITH FEWER
LETTERS AND MORE
PACKETS TO DELIVER, WE
HAVE TO CHANGE THE WAY
WE DELIVER MAIL SO WE
DO IT IN THE MOST
EFFICIENT WAY AND MEET
CUSTOMER NEEDS

9
delivery revisions
have happened
with many more
planned for 2012

42
shared vans have
been introduced

63
more Postal Digital
Assistants (PDAs)
are in operation

LONDON

Pictured is Maria Lidia Frazer at Heathrow Worldwide Distribution Centre. Look out for Maria's views on the changes on myroyalmail.com. On the front is Suresh Sonagara in the newly refurbished ground floor at Mount Pleasant.