

## Update on rota negotiations and UNISON position

4 March 2026

Dear Colleagues,

With the new rota due to start in April, we know members want one thing above all, certainty so you can plan childcare, leave, rest days and travel with confidence.

This update sets out.

1. what has been agreed through negotiation so far
2. what is still being worked through (including FRVs), and
3. what you should do if your station rota is not genuinely agreed, or if you are personally impacted.

Our approach remains member and mandate led. In January, you told us clearly through the UNISON survey that you want us to:

- *continue negotiations to resolve outstanding issues and*
- *use industrial action only as a last resort if issues cannot be resolved.*

That remains UNISON's position. We will not drift from the mandate members gave us.

### Joint trade union position (26 February)

At the joint meeting on 26 February, all unions agreed a coordinated approach, clear communications, continued negotiations, and a shared commitment to resolve issues without unnecessary escalation where progress can be made. UNISON's responsibility is to act on your mandate which was to secure the best outcomes through negotiation, while keeping all options under review if that becomes necessary.

### What UNISON has secured through negotiation so far

UNISON has pushed for practical safeguards so rotas are not imposed without genuine local agreement, and so members have routes to raise concerns and request changes.

1. Only genuinely collectively agreed rotas should proceed. Rotas must be staff-led and supported by a clear majority at station level. Where a rota does not meet that threshold, it

must be raised with SLT and the pause remains in place, with additional support provided to help the station reach resolution.

2. More predictability for relief staff. In many areas, relief staff will move to rota-type patterns, such as days, twilight and nights giving clearer visibility of days, nights and rest days.
3. FRV proposals are not concluded and remain an active negotiation issue (see below).
4. Independent review of the rota review process. A full independent review of the overall process will take place.
5. Built-in review points after implementation. Stations will have the opportunity to request rota adjustments at 6 and 12 months.
6. Flexible working. Flexible working agreements will remain in place, subject to individual review.
7. Individual support where the new rota causes difficulty. Any individual experiencing difficulties arising from a new rota can request a meeting so concerns are formally considered and reasonable solutions explored.

### **FRVs – mitigation, development and review (work in progress)**

Members have raised strong concerns about the proposed reduction in FRVs (28 to 14). UNISON has secured a set of principles and measures, with further detail still under negotiation:

- *A credentialing opportunity for current and displaced FRV staff toward a development pathway to an Associate Specialist Paramedic (SP) role.*
- *Creation of an Associate Specialist Paramedic role supported by additional dedicated vehicles (numbers still subject to agreement).*
- *A transparent Expressions of Interest process and clear progression route.*
- *Individual Education Plan interviews to identify required education/training/clinical exposure.*
- *Structured development support with Clinical and Education teams.*
- *Joint review of implementation and impact, including further mitigations where required.*
- *Further negotiations on funding model, timescales and governance to ensure delivery.*

**Important:** we will continue pressing for the detail members need (numbers, timescales, access criteria, governance) so colleagues are not left with uncertainty.

### **Why UNISON is not calling for delay at this late stage**

We understand why some colleagues want a pause. However, with only weeks to go, further delay risks creating more uncertainty for members especially around childcare, leave commitments, rest-day planning and financial arrangements.

Our priority is to lock in safeguards, ensure only genuinely agreed rotas proceed, and secure clear mitigations where change impacts people directly.

### **What you can do now**

If your station rota is not genuinely agreed:

- Tell your UNISON rep immediately with the key facts (station, what was proposed, what the majority view is, and what stage you are at).
- UNISON will support escalation to SLT and insist the agreed “pause + support” approach is followed.
- If the new rota creates personal difficulty: Raise it early and request a meeting so concerns can be properly considered and solutions explored (including flexible working implications).

### **We will keep you updated**

We will provide further updates as negotiations progress especially on FRVs and any stations where agreement has not been reached. UNISON’s focus remains certainty for members, negotiated outcomes, and clear escalation routes where agreement is not reached.

In solidarity

UNISON EMAS Branch



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