

London Overground guards to strike on bank holiday

London Overground guards are to stage a 48-hour strike over the August bank holiday weekend.

The strike will begin on 00:01 BST on Sunday, covering the two-day Notting Hill Carnival.

The Rail Maritime and Transport Union (RMT) said members were balloted after Transport for London (TfL) announced plans to axe their jobs and introduce driver-only trains.

Alternative travel arrangements for affected routes are being planned.

More than one million people are expected to attend the carnival over the two days.

The RMT said its members voted in favour of the strike action over threats to 130 jobs.

The union's general secretary Bob Crow said: "RMT have sent out a clear message over the appalling, cash-driven assault on our guard members and the absolutely essential role that they play.

"These are the very same staff who have been praised for safely evacuating passengers from emergency situations and who are the eyes and ears of the service at a time of growing violence and thefts on our trains."

Mr Crow argued that it was a "lethal proposal that has been brought about as result of the 12.5% cut in TfL funding announced in George Osborne's Comprehensive Spending Review".

'Disappointed'

Peter Austin, from London Overground Rail Operations Limited (Lorol) said that if industrial action goes ahead, Lorol should be able to run a regular service on the majority of its network, with "alternative arrangements for the routes affected".

He added: "We will update our customers when we have more information."

Mr Austin said he was "disappointed by the result" of the ballot.

"We believe industrial action is unnecessary," he said.

"Lorol continues to give the RMT assurances on employing conductors in alternative customer service roles and offering a generous voluntary redundancy package to those who want it."

Lorol added that East London routes and Watford to Euston services already operated without guards on board.

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