

London Overground guards start 48-hour strike

London Overground guards have begun a 48-hour strike covering the two-day Notting Hill Carnival.

The strike, over plans to axe jobs and introduce driver-only trains, started at 00:01 BST.

The Rail Maritime and Transport Union (RMT) said members were balloted after Transport for London (TfL) announced plans which would threaten 130 jobs.

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

'Delays and disruption'

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

"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 said east London routes and Watford to Euston services already operated without guards on board.

Alternative travel arrangements for affected routes are in place.

Conservatives on the Greater London Authority said 43% of staff balloted had voted in favour of strikes.

Transport spokesman Richard Tracey said: "It is absurd that tens of thousands of passengers could face delays and disruption on the London Overground this bank holiday weekend because 43% of train guards - a mere 53 workers - have opted for strike action."

Bob Crow, general secretary of the Rail Maritime and Transport Union (RMT) said: "The fact is that the mayor and all the Tory members of the GLA (Greater London Authority) would have to stand down if they applied the same brand of democracy to themselves that these clowns are trying to impose on the unions."

"This policy on one form of democracy for the political class and another for the working class has the whiff of the military junta about it."

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