

Update

An OCA

(Dis)Agreement

The Call for Sparrows to open discussion with Unite on where they may not be honouring the OCA Agreement has now been submitted.

Remember: The submission of just one employee grievance should indicate to a responsible employer that things are going wrong in their company and that action needs to be taken to rectify the situation. In this case 65 employees, with the full support and backing of Unite, are raising their concerns. A responsible employer, with an interest in treating their employees fairly will always take a reasonable and constructive approach to finding a mutually agreeable resolution.

By raising our concerns with reference to the relevant ACAS Codes of Practice, Unite is supporting you to exercise your rights at work. These rights are enshrined in UK employment law. However, even with the law on your side, it is still vitally important to stand together behind these actions. Collective power is still by far the strongest way to tackle the issues and problems you have at work.

What To Look Out For

Our expectation is that Sparrows will respond in a fair and reasonable manner and seek to work with Unite to resolve the concerns you're raising. However, you also need to keep an eye for anything negative coming from Sparrows.

For example you may hear or see any of the following:

Sparrows may say that they are disappointed that you have involved Unite. They may say that there is an employee engagement forum where issues can be raised with management. You must be aware from the outset that such forums rarely succeed in resolving employee concerns. This method of engagement is usually designed to skew the power balance well and truly in favour of management. The unfortunate truth is that employers will give nothing that they do not have to.



Sparrows may claim that they pay above OCA base rates. In the case of some residents this appears to indeed be the case. However, this is not what we are complaining about. That Sparrows are doing this is something that we should be aiming to have extended to all Sparrows workers.

The fact is that the residents have showed solidarity with those in the flying squad who are having great difficulty getting clear answers as to why it appears that they are being paid below OCA Base Rates. Additionally, there are other aspects of the OCA Agreement where it appears neither residents nor flying squad employees can get clear answers.

Keep a watchful eye for any attempt on the part of the employer to play a game of divide and rule. Remember: Offshore workers in Sparrows are *one* bargaining group. We need to stand together to combat the race to the bottom. Let's turn the tide and start pushing to emulate the best deals and secure clarity on the adherence to existing agreements.

As soon as you hear something from Sparrows you need to let us know so as we can provide you with the correct counter arguments.

PTO

Join Unite Today

Join Unite & Grow your Union

Remember: More Members = Greater Union power /Strength to win for workers. If you're not already a member join your colleagues as Unite membership continues to grow in Sparrows Offshore

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A reminder of what we're asserting

- That the spirit and intent of the Field Break Allowance is not being adhered to, with staff being paid the Field Break Allowance even when working offshore. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that the Field Break Allowance has been re-branded as a "Retainer Rate".
- That Sparrows Offshore are paying a Day-Rate that is significantly less, at least for some trades/positions, than the aggregated hourly rate associated with that trade/position under the OCA Agreement. As part of this it has also come to light that it seems Sparrows Offshore may be withholding 5% of salary until such times as staff have completed an in-house qualification.
- That our members who do Rope Access work are not receiving the Rope Access Uplift of £2 per hour. Many of our members have come forward and told us this is the case as a separate, though related issue.
- That when scheduled works come to an end before the anticipated date our members are not being paid the rates associated with being down-manned early (as per the OCA Agreement).
- That our members who are resident are being paid holidays as part of their annualised salary and not as and when they take them. While in principle this may not be a breach of the OCA Agreement, what our members are finding impossible to work out is whether or not they are being paid an accurate rate as per the OCA Agreement which reflects the recent court rulings around what should be included in holiday pay.

To help clear up any and all issues surrounding these assertions, Unite have written to Sparrows calling for further information to be released and an initial meeting to be scheduled to begin to look at the concerns members have been raising.

Unite Contacts

You have a small team at Unite who can provide in depth and hands on support. We firmly believe that the best way to develop a strong trade union that works for you is through face to face dialogue.

As people will know we have a range of different communications methods at our disposal. However, the best way of getting a good understanding of what we are looking to achieve is to talk things over in person.

Contact Peter Lawson or Derek Thomson and we will arrange to meet you at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Peter Lawson: 07817 103 909 or peter.lawson@unitetheunion.org

Derek Thomson: 07718 668 510 or derek.thomson@unitethunion.org

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