

7 November 2023

PCS responds to ‘reckless’ and ‘vindictive’ minimum service levels legislation unveiled during king's speech

PCS today condemned the government for promising to rush through anti-strike laws which would effectively criminalise strike action for thousands of our Home Office members in the Border Force and the Passport Office.

As announced during the king's speech this morning, ministers will today lay regulations for so-called ‘minimum service levels’ (MSL) in rail, the ambulance service and border security.

PCS has previously refused to engage with the government’s consultation processes on MSLs due to our absolute opposition to what are essentially political attacks on our members’ democratic right to take industrial action.

The only change PCS supports is the scrapping of all MSL legislation, which are an attack on human rights and a fundamental trade union principle, both of which are protected under UK and international law.

Mark Serwotka, PCS General Secretary, said:

"This blatant attack on trade unionists would strip away from our members in the Home Office who work as border security staff and in the Passport Office the democratic right to take strike action."

"This hostile legislation is an attempt by one of the most right-wing governments in recent history to essentially criminalise the act of strike action and to punish civil servants, railway workers and ambulance staff for their audacity over the past year to demand a fair pay rise at a time of skyrocketing inflation.

“Given the important nature of the work that our members in the Border Force and Passport Office carry out, this legislation, which is at odds with international law, is dangerous and reckless.

"That is why we will have no choice but to resist this vindictive attack on our members and workers across the movement by building mass opposition, which may include a strategy of non-compliance and non-cooperation to make this legislation unworkable."