

26 April 2024

Signing up our cleaners, security staff

Ian Lawther, your lead negotiator on Facilities Management staff, encouraging branches to sign up your FM colleagues.

PCS, the largest trade union in the civil service, representing approximately 190,000 members, firmly believes that membership of a trade union is important for everyone.

PCS represent members from the lowest pay grades up to civil service grade 6. However, PCS membership is also open to all security and facilities staff working in civil service offices. These workers are often referred to as outsourced workers, as much of the work they perform was previously done by civil servants.

There's an ongoing campaign to recruit security and facilities staff to PCS, and there's no better time than now, during the current pay and pensions campaign, to raise the profile and visibility of PCS, and engage with our security guards and facilities staff; be they keeping staff safe and secure in their office, staffing reception desks, handling and delivering post, cleaning and keeping our environment a pleasant place to work, or performing essential maintenance in our buildings.

PCS currently collectively bargains with civil service employers on pay terms and conditions and are recognised for this by HMRC and other departments. The recruitment of sufficient union members from staff working in security and facilities, will enable PCS to build the membership, recruit and train new PCS representatives and seek formal recognition of PCS by the contractors that employ them, where we don't already have it. Once PCS has that recognition, collective bargaining on pay, terms and conditions can begin in earnest on behalf these workers. Some offices in Whitehall have already gained formal recognition, showing that this is achievable.

So, while you are talking to fellow members about union campaigning and activity, it would be great if you could also speak with our facilities and security

colleagues about the benefits of becoming a member of PCS. These benefits include access to the services and discounts offered to PCS members, support with issues that they may be having at work individually or collectively and access to free training to become a PCS rep so they can help their colleagues.

Reps should also speak with their PCS group executive committee (GEC) hub lead, to obtain a copy of the 2024/25 model pay claim for all outsourced workers that can be shared with our facilities and security colleagues as an example of what PCS is doing to improve their working lives.

Ian Lawther (East Midlands branch) – Assistant Group Secretary for Facilities Management staff and member of the NEC