

APPENDIX A: PROPOSITIONS CARRIED AND REMITTED AT THE 2006 CONFERENCE

CARRIED PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 3/06 Training

That this annual conference deplores the loss of television production, studios and facilities. However, we recognise the need for new forms of media and experimental television but wish to ensure that employers such as the BBC and Independent Television give appropriate training in creative skills and health & safety to achieve professional standards and to pay the recognised remuneration for the duties undertaken.

We therefore request the NEC to formulate a suitable strategy to ensure that employers maintain proficient standards and working practices for all members of BECTU.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to seek the views of the Training Committee on this proposition. However, the Training Committee has had difficulty in obtaining a quorum at its meetings, and at the time of writing consideration had not yet been given to the specific terms of this proposition though it remains on the agenda.

Proposition 4/06 Union recognition

That this annual conference congratulates the staff of talkbackTHAMES, BBC Bristol Natural History Unit camera operators, and BBC Scotland freelancers, for voting for union recognition in last year's ballots and all the officials and members who worked so hard to achieve it.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed that this proposition needed no action.

Proposition 5/06 Film industry sustainability

That this annual conference welcomes the Treasury's announcement of continued fiscal support for UK film production, especially for inward investment and strengthening the cultural test to encourage more UK/European Economic Area employment among film crews and use of UK facilities, as requested by the union. Conference congratulates officials and members who lobbied the government and urges the union to monitor the detailed implementation of these plans in the 2006 Finance Bill.

However, concerns still remain over the sustainability and level of UK film production, distribution and exhibition. Therefore, this conference instructs the NEC, via the Film Policy Committee, to discuss, devise and lobby for measures to be taken by government and/or other relevant public or industry bodies to encourage and promote a sustainable base of UK film production, exhibition and distribution, be it an Eady-style levy, quota, or some other measure or means, to be reported to next year's conference.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to seek the views of the Film Policy Committee on this proposition. The Film Policy Committee had already met (7 June 2006) and discussed this proposition. It was felt that at a time when tax incentives were about to change, the sustainability of the industry could not properly be assessed. The Film Policy Committee will keep these issues under review.

Proposition 7/06**Alteration to rule 8**

That this annual conference, in a special rules session, approves the following alteration to rule under rule 45(b):

Re-letter existing rule 8 as rule 8(a) and add new clause (b) as follows:

Where a member makes a request for individual representation by an accredited official of the union in a matter that arose prior to the date on which the member is accepted as having joined or rejoined the union, or where the date of the act or event giving rise to a claim made by or on behalf of the member is prior to that joining or rejoining date, that member shall be required to pay a non-refundable contribution of £120 before such representation is provided. Payment of that amount shall not grant any entitlement to legal advice or representation as referred to in rule 21.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to publish a branch circular and an article in *Stage Screen & Radio* explaining the intentions of this rule change. The NEC also agreed that for practical purposes this rule change would not be implemented before 1 August 2006.

Proposition 8/06**Alteration to rule 9**

That this annual conference, in a special rules session, approves the following alteration to rule under rules 9(e) and 45(b):

In subclause (a)(i), after “or in subclause (ii)” insert “or (iii)”, then add new subclause (iii) as follows:

(iii) In their first year of membership, members shall be eligible to pay a reduced introductory subscription of £10.00 per month or £120.00 per annum (or such sum as may be determined by the National Executive Committee in accordance with rule 10). This provision shall not apply to members rejoining the union who have previously paid the introductory subscription rate.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed that as the union was in effect already working to this rule change, no further action was required.

Proposition 9/06**Alteration to rule 10**

That this annual conference, in a special rules session, approves the following alteration to rule under rules 9(e) and 45(b):

After subclause (i), insert new subclause (ii) as follows, then re-number the remaining subclauses:

(ii) where potential members are employed by a specified employer (whether or not that employer recognises the union) where the union is campaigning to recruit in order to improve its density of membership. Where the National Executive Committee exercises discretion under this subclause, it shall specify the period (not exceeding one year) during which new members may be recruited on reduced subscriptions, and shall report accordingly to annual conference.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to ask AO David Cormack to include this along with the other rule changes in a reprint of the rule book. The rules as altered 2006 were published later that month.

Proposition 10/06 Parliamentary committee

That this annual conference instructs the NEC to create a committee of MPs within parliament who are sympathetic to BECTU's aims, and who can promote the union's interests.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed that the AGSs and Andy Egan should draft a paper for the consideration of the F&GPC which would then make a recommendation to the NEC. At their meeting on 16 September 2006, the F&GPC agreed to recommend that a range of cross-party figures be invited to form BECTU's parliamentary panel. With the proviso that a gender and ethnic balance be sought if possible, the NEC endorsed this recommendation on 15 October 2006. The panel currently comprises Frank Doran MP, John Grogan MP, Kelvin Hopkins MP, John McDonnell MP, Roger Gale MP, Natascha Engel MP, Frank McAveety MSP, and Leighton Andrews AM.

Proposition 12/06 Copyright parity with Europe

That this annual conference instructs the NEC through the Copyright Committee to pursue and propose a policy document to establish parity with European states (e.g. France and Germany) entrenching authors' rights in the integrity of their work and appropriate fruits thereof.

This policy document should compare and contrast the status of UK creators with European contemporaries as set out in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Other interested parties (e.g. NUJ, Writers' Guild, Creators' Rights Alliance, PACT, British Council of Copyright, and others, as seen fit) should be consulted.

This policy document shall be presented to the next annual conference.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to seek the views of the Copyright Committee on this proposition. At its meeting on 16 September 2006 the F&GPC considered a paper from the Andy Egan on behalf of the Copyright Committee. This explained that the union's copyright consultant had advised that a detailed document as envisaged in the proposition would take over six months to produce at a cost of around £5000. However, she could provide a briefer interim document within her existing contract with BECTU. The recommendation of the F&GPC, that this interim document be commissioned, and the matter reviewed after the 2007 conference in consultation with the Copyright Committee, was endorsed by the NEC at its meeting on 15 October 2006. The document is given in **Appendix E**.

Proposition 13/06 Unesco Cultural Diversity Convention

That this annual conference instructs the NEC to lobby the government to ratify Unesco's Convention to Protect Cultural Diversity in order to help it become UK, European and international law. The NEC is further instructed to liaise with the 35 national cultural coalitions which fought for the Convention, through the Independent Film Parliament, or some other means, as part of BECTU's role in protecting and encouraging a range of cinema for UK audiences and healthy and diverse selection of British films on our screens.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to seek the views of the Film Policy Committee on this proposition. The Film Policy Committee had meanwhile (7 June 2006) already recommended that the NEC write to the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport encouraging the UK to ratify the Unesco Convention, and this letter was duly sent.

There was no response, though we understood that the government was not opposed in principle but had difficulties with the timescale. Since then the EU Cultural Consortium has been formed on the initiative of *inter alia* former MEP Carole Tongue, who chairs the UK's Independent Film Parliament. Carole has suggested that BECTU join the Consortium, but at its meeting on 18 February 2007 the NEC took the view that an FEU affiliation would be more appropriate, and is advocating this to the Federation.

Proposition 16/06 Ofcom and political advertising

That this annual conference instructs the NEC to lobby Ofcom to review its definition and prohibition of television and radio adverts they define as political. This proposition is being submitted because in September 2005 Ofcom banned television and radio adverts by the Make Poverty History coalition (representing nearly 500 voluntary groups).

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed that the union should write in the terms of this proposition to Ofcom, and a letter was duly sent on 14 June.

Proposition 17/06 Regional screen agencies

That this annual conference acknowledges the strategic importance and influence of the regional screen agencies in assisting the funding of film productions, encouraging new talent within the region, and developing new business in the sector. Conference believes that initiatives led by the screen agencies, for example on diversity or minimum rates of pay, could have an important knock-on effect on the rest of the industry within their region.

In view of the public funding that screen agencies receive and disseminate, BECTU believes that there should be full public accountability and greater input from the industry's workers within each region into the strategic direction that they take.

Conference instructs the NEC to ensure that BECTU is represented on the boards of these regional screen agencies.

Though there was no disagreement with the broader spirit of this proposition, it was explained at conference in 2006 that it is not within the power of the NEC to 'ensure' representation by BECTU since the constitutions of the regional screen agencies do not allow it. No organisations are represented on their boards. Film London has confirmed that the UK Film Council lays down the principles for board membership, which are based on individuals' skills and expertise and not on their representative status. We continue to be in dialogue with leading regional screen agencies on the scope for closer working with BECTU on particular projects.

Proposition 18/06 Extras' agencies

That this annual conference instructs the NEC to continue negotiations with the DTI, if necessary via the TUC, to tighten regulation of extras' agencies, with particular emphasis on the following:

- (a) licencing to be reintroduced and made compulsory before any new agency is allowed to trade, and all existing agencies to be given a set time limit to register;
- (b) new agencies to be vetted before allowing them to operate;
- (c) enforcement of ten-day turn-around of monies paid into the agency account on behalf of extras;
- (d) more stringent rules on up-front fees and commission rates,
- (e) abolition of the practice of offering people a one-off job and deducting fees from their

payment.

Conference further instructs the NEC to issue a written report on progress within six months, or to report to the next annual conference.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to seek the views of NO Spencer MacDonald. He explained that the union's position on the Agencies Act was now a matter of record at the Agency Standards Department at the DTI. The government had published a strategy document entitled Success at Work, which acknowledged there were a number of anomalies in the Act and asked for feedback from stakeholders, in particular on the question of up-front and book fees. It was felt important that BECTU and Equity should try to achieve a common approach, since Equity represents the vast majority of performers in the sector. The two unions, which had not hitherto spoken with one voice on the issue, drew up a joint response which was endorsed by the NEC at its meeting on 26 November 2006. There are clear signs that the DTI has taken the unions' representations on board and is now considering legislating in line with their demands.

Proposition 19/06 Service to freelance members

That this annual conference instructs the union to conduct a survey of all freelance members to ascertain whether the service the union is offering is appropriate to members who are very vulnerable to bullying and exploitation by some unscrupulous employers.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed to seek the views of the Regional Production and London Production divisional committees on this proposition, and of the Arts & Entertainment divisional committee in relation to theatre freelances. On 2 September 2006 the Regional Production divisional committee expressed support for the proposition. On 15 October 2006 the NEC noted a response from the London Production divisional committee welcoming a survey, and suggesting that it be conducted through the union's journal and website and that non-members be included. On 18 February 2007 the NEC noted a response from the Arts & Entertainment divisional committee to the effect that a survey of freelance theatre members had already been conducted in 2006 and no evidence of bullying had been found; any cases of exploitation were being pursued legally. A survey of freelances in the London and Regional Production divisions is therefore in preparation.

Proposition 20/06 Unpaid work experience

That this annual conference deplores the increasing practice by employers of using work experience candidates as unpaid labour. Conference requests the NEC to monitor such abuses where practical and remind employers of the supernumerary and exclusively training nature of work experience, in an effort to eradicate this practice.

This proposition was considered by the NEC at its meeting held on 11 June 2006, when they requested the views of the divisional committees. If there are any instances of abuse the divisions are under instruction to inform the NEC.

Emergency Proposition 1/06 Wood Norton

In the light of the emergency proposition passed at yesterday's BBC Divisional Conference, this Annual Conference gives their support to members of the Wood Norton branch in their fight to retain Engineering Training within the Corporation following the sell-off of Human Resources to

Capita and their threatened inclusion in this deal.

The BBC Charter has always contained a commitment to develop broadcasting and we believe that outsourcing this valuable facility would not only worsen the service to members within the BBC but also the wider broadcasting industry.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC noted with satisfaction that since annual conference the BBC had announced that the proposed outsourcing of engineering training had been withdrawn.

Emergency Proposition 2/06 Human Rights Act

This annual conference condemns the recent statement by the Prime Minister Tony Blair suggesting that the government should take powers to override judges' decisions based on the Human Rights Act. Conference regards this as an attack on democracy and the rule of law, and as an attempt to appease the most right-wing and intolerant elements of the press and employers. Conference instructs the National Executive Committee to communicate this decision to the Prime Minister and to the union's membership and the wider industry.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed that the union should write in the terms of this proposition to the Prime Minister. AGS Martin Spence was asked to draft and send an appropriate letter and this was sent on 24 July 2006. Though an acknowledgement was received, there was no substantive reply.

Emergency Proposition 4/06 Egypt

This conference condemns the arrest of at least 500 democracy protesters, including journalists, in Egypt since 24 April 2006.

This conference also condemns assaults on media workers by Egyptian security forces, such as the attack by six security men on cameraman Yasir Sulaiman who was repeatedly punched in the face and had his camera confiscated.

This conference notes that those arrested had gathered to support judges threatened with dismissal by the Egyptian government after declaring the Egyptian elections fraudulent and calling for the independence of the judiciary.

This conference therefore instructs the NEC to send a message to Counsellor Maher 'Abd al-Wahid, Egypt's Public Prosecutor calling for the immediate release of all those arrested and an end to attacks on media workers by security forces.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC noted that, at the request of the Bush House branch, a letter had already been drafted and sent to Counsellor Maher 'Abd al-Wahid, Egypt's Public Prosecutor.

Emergency Proposition 5/06 Iran

This conference expresses its grave concern at the referral of Iran to the UN Security Council on 29 March 2006 and the rhetoric used by the US and British governments which is reminiscent of that used in the run up to the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

This BECTU conference notes that:

- the IAEA has found no evidence that Iran is in possession of nuclear weapons
- the US intelligence agency, the National Intelligence Estimate, has estimated that Iran is at least 10 years away from obtaining a nuclear weapon
- Iran has a vibrant democracy movement
- sanctions and military action in Iraq have killed over one million people.

This conference therefore condemns any moves towards the imposition of sanctions or a military attack on Iran.

It further expresses support for the international week of action from 23 to 30 September 2006 against an attack on Iran, called by the European Social Forum and supported by CND and the Stop The War Coalition.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC agreed that the union should liaise with the European Social Forum, CND and the Stop The War Coalition in relation to the international week of action in September 2006. At its meeting on 3 September 2006 the NEC agreed to support the Stop the War national demonstration in Manchester on 23 September 2006 with a donation of £500, but noted that any question of affiliating the union to the Coalition was one for conference.

REMITTED PROPOSITIONS

Proposition 6/06 Freelancers and union duties

That this annual conference notes the rising proportion of freelancers in the industry and the difficulties they face when carrying out union duties. The NEC is therefore requested to look at and report back on the viability and desirability of payments to members for union duties, where they do not have an employer to provide time off for union duties.

The NEC opposed this proposition at conference on the grounds of cost and practicality. It took the view that the TUC should be campaigning for freelance representatives to be given the same protection and time off entitlements for union duties as staff representatives. Since conference 2006 the DTI launched a review of facilities for workplace representatives. At its meeting on 18 February 2007 the NEC endorsed a BECTU submission to this review, and commends it to conference 2007 as addressing remitted Proposition 6/06. The submission is given in **Appendix F**.

Proposition 11/06 Labour leader

That this annual conference instructs the NEC to encourage and then support prospective candidates for the Labour Party leadership who are sympathetic to the trade union movement.

At its meeting on 11 June 2006 the NEC noted that, as explained at the 2006 annual conference, in the event of a contest for the Labour Party leadership it would be the intention to follow past practice and ballot all members contributing to the political fund. There would be no further action required at this stage.