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RM/CWU Dog Awareness Week 25th – 30th June 2018

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

- To raise awareness and encourage responsible dog ownership, the Union and Royal Mail will jointly launch their sixth annual Dog Awareness Week on Monday 25 June 2018.
- The number of dog attacks is still too high and every dog attack is one attack too many. The official number of dog attacks in the UK on postmen and women last year is 2,275 but unreported minor attacks take that up to 3,000 in our estimation.
- The number of dog attacks on postmen and women increases during summer holidays, when children and parents are at home and dogs are more likely to be out in the garden with the family.
- Royal Mail Dog Awareness Week is supported by the Communications Workers Union and a wide range of organisations and animal charities including Battersea Dogs & Cats Home, Dogs Trust, PDSA the National Police Chief's Council, and the National Dog Wardens Association.
- A special Dog Awareness Week postmark will be applied to all stamped items from Monday 25 June until Friday 29 June 2018.
- 3,000 Postmen and Women were attacked by Dogs in the UK last year, that's 44 a week or 7 a day.
- ASRs, Regional Health and Safety Forums, Branches and Regions are asked to fully support the week and work locally with Royal Mail and supporting organisations on the campaign.

The Following Press Statement Has Been Issued by Dave Joyce CWU National Health, Safety and Environment Officer:

CWU National Health, Safety and Environment Officer Dave Joyce said "The failure of Dog Owners to control their animals remains a major concern for postal workers and the public. The number of attacks has risen, with yearly hospital admissions for dog bites increasing by 76% between 2006-2016. Seven postal workers are attacked by dogs every working day of the year which is unacceptable and the whole idea of Dog Awareness Week is to highlight the problem and the repercussions for dog owners and the victims, many of whom

are seriously injured. 82% of dog attacks on postal workers happened at the front door or in the front garden and that number is increasing as we deliver more online purchased parcels. We are appealing to all customers who are dog owners to work with us and think TWICE when the postman calls. Put the dog away in a secure room before opening the door to collect and sign for your delivery. The vast majority of our customers and their dogs aren't a problem but irresponsible and reckless dog owners are. Customers are always pleased to see the postman or postwoman arrive as they're eager to take delivery of the goods they've ordered and paid for on the internet but thousands of them unfortunately don't give a second thought to the postal worker's safety by putting the dog in a safe, secure place. There are tough court penalties and a criminal record for irresponsible dog owners including prison and unlimited fines so it's in their best interest in more ways than one to make sure the dog doesn't bite the postman/woman. One owner from Romford, Essex paid fines and costs of nearly £9,000 after his dog injured a postwoman's fingers as she put letters through the door. Another owner from Oxford was handed a 16-month suspended prison sentence and banned from owning dogs for life after his dog badly injured a postman's hand. Dog owners need to fully understand that their actions usually are the cause of a dog being dangerous and simple precautions can prevent the pain for everyone concerned. No matter what breed of dog is involved, the dog can present a substantial danger to postal workers. Worryingly there's been some very serious Dog attacks this last year in Boston, Newquay and Wrexham which could easily have ended in fatalities if it wasn't for the intervention of the owners and good Samaritans".

The Following Engagements have been arranged for Dave Joyce CWU National Health, Safety and Environment Officer during Dog Awareness Week:

On 25th June – Dave Joyce will be giving Radio and TV interviews on Dog Awareness Week.

On 26th June – Dave Joyce will meet with the Scottish Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, Annabelle Ewing, to discuss dog attacks on postal workers following the recent debate in the Scottish Parliament on 8th May to discuss the post legislative review of the Control of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2010 plus Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal and Police enforcement and law interpretation issues.

On 27th June – Dave Joyce will be at the House of Commons, Palace of Westminster, to give oral evidence to a The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) Parliamentary Select Committee's Inquiry into Dangerous Dogs Legislation. (The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014) after the NHS reported that the number of dog attacks have risen, with yearly hospital admissions for dog bites increasing by 76% between 2006-2016.

(This will be televised at 9:30am on the Parliament TV Channel).

Further LTBs, Dog Awareness Week materials and information will be issued in due course.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer