



BECTU
BROADCASTING
ENTERTAINMENT
CINEMATOGRAPH &
THEATRE UNION

An open letter to all staff at MPC

Dear MPC Employee,

We are sure that you've heard rumblings about a bid by BECTU to achieve Trade Union Recognition at MPC. We thought that it was time for the union to write to you directly - addressing some of the concerns that have been raised with us over recent weeks.

We initially asked for union recognition in the Compositing and Roto-Prep departments of MPC because most of the staff in those departments asked us to do so.

Most of the staff in those departments (65% on the day that we lodged our request) were already BECTU members. Your colleagues did this because they want a voice in the industry that they work in. So many of you are on short-term contracts, and because of this, our members told us that they were frightened to raise their concerns because they feared being labelled as a trouble-maker.

We understand that, and we will not be disclosing the names of our individual members to employers.

Having a formal role for BECTU at MPC would end that worry anyway, and that's why your colleagues requested it. They have told us that they don't like the assumption that they will work long, arbitrary hours of overtime. They don't like getting emails - at 9pm - berating them for not being at their desks.

They don't like the culture of short-term contracts and short notice periods. They don't like the lack of structure in their careers with the company. In other sectors of the film industry, there are training paths and established career structures, and our members have a perception that their employers don't care about that.

Since we lodged our first 'recognition' letter, our membership at MPC has grown considerably. Our total London VFX membership is four times bigger than it was in Summer 2015, **and we are now thinking of broadening our campaign to other departments. But before we can do this, we need you to join the union.**

We would like to deal with one important issue that has been raised by MPC Staff.

Every single bit of union activity will be 100% directed by BECTU members. Our work will not be driven by BECTU Officials or the wider union. We are a very democratic union.

For a long time, BECTU has been trying to have a serious conversation with VFX employers about the long-hours situation. We have found it almost impossible to get the employers to engage with us properly, and because of this, BECTU's members asked us to mount a 'Paid Overtime' campaign.

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We have to run campaigns like that when we can't have a serious dialogue with employers. We would much rather sit down and negotiate ways that long hours can be limited and planned-for.

To be clear, we have no intention of asking for, or agreeing to, anything that will damage basic rates of pay. Other VFX employers manage this situation in better ways and we want serious conversations with MPC about how we can do this here. Paid overtime is only the solution if employers won't be sensible and negotiate properly on this issue. Just to underline...

- 100% of our policy positions with MPC will be decided, democratically, by BECTU members working for the company
- 100% of our negotiations will be directed by BECTU members working for the company

We will not argue for anything without agreeing it with our members first. Our members love their work and they want their company to succeed. We are not planning to do anything that will hurt MPC. We are attempting to make MPC do something that it plainly doesn't want to do: Negotiate with its staff about the working conditions that they are employed under.

Our members have reported that, since union activity started, that some working conditions have improved slightly, and one or two perks have started appearing in your inboxes. The 9pm emails have stopped.... for now.

We don't want to lose these gains

We hope that you will consider joining BECTU. We enclose a membership form that offers a discounted joining rate if we get your form back (in the enclosed FREEPOST envelope) before February 21st 2016.

In the meantime, please keep an eye on <http://vfxforum.org> - the VFX Union website - you will find details of our regular lunchtime meetups, and hear what other London VFX workers have to say about their working conditions.

We think that you deserve a voice.

With best wishes

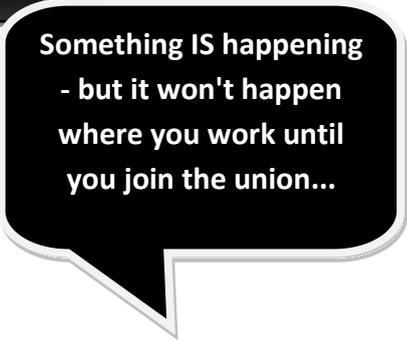
BECTU London VFX Branch

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<http://vfxforum.org>



I'm waiting to see if something will happen before I join the union....



Something IS happening - but it won't happen where you work until you join the union...