

FAA Newsletter

September 2025



Produced by: Jon Alcock, Communications Officer © 2025 FAA & Bectu (Broadcasting, Entertainment, Communications & Theatre Union)

PACT Negotiations

It may seem like your committee have been a bit quiet over the past few months but, in fact, the reverse is true. They have been at their busiest, trying to negotiate an update to our Agreement with PACT (the Producers Alliance for Cinema & Television). Last updated in 2022, a new version should have been in place by now but things are taking much longer than desired. One of the problems has been the sheer logistics of PACT's representatives (basically, their lawyers) communicating with the numerous Producers themselves while another has been the fact that they come to the negotiating table with all the enthusiasm of Vladimir Putin! Nevertheless, slow progress is being made on the proposals and counter-proposals for the terms and conditions that we would like to see changed and we will, of course, be contacting you all as soon as we have any sort of agreement.

The really frustrating part for us is that, at this stage, it's not possible to tell our members exactly what we are negotiating on their behalf. Be assured, though, that all of the proposed changes are the result of input from our members either through individual contact or at the branch meetings or AGM and the issues have been thoroughly explored in two separate questionnaires. If, when you see the final outcome, there is no sign of the changes that you'd most like to see it will be because we lost the particular fight.

Big Autumn Gathering 2025

By now, hopefully you have all had details of our annual get-together. (If not, phone the office and find out why you missed it.) It's going to take place on Saturday 11th October at the City of Westminster College's Paddington Green Campus, where it's been for the last couple of years. There is no onsite parking, unfortunately, but it is close to Edgware Road, Marylebone, and Paddington tube stations, Paddington and Marylebone Rail Stations and is served by several bus routes. Let's face it, if you can get to an unnamed field in the middle of nowhere for a shoot, you can get to Paddington Green!

It's due to start at 11:00 a.m. and is planned to finish around 18:30. Though when we all get chatting – sorry, networking – who knows what time you might actually leave? The event is free to members, though you'll be asked to pay a £5 deposit when you book your ticket as so many people registered last year and simply didn't turn up. This is refunded when you check in on the day.

There'll be an FAA Branch meeting and, once again, we are arranging for free head-shots to be taken. Come down and hear from Head of Bectu Philippa Childs and Mike Clancy, Prospect General Secretary, amongst others on the state of our industry.

Site Visits

Your union Officials have recently begun what we hope will be an ongoing series of visits to Productions to ensure that their shooting day is how we both want it to be. They might need to remind a few Assistant Directors of the odd clause in the Agreement while they're there but let's hope not. Some people believe that unions don't really have much in the way of teeth but few things focus any boss' mind like hearing the words "the union representative is here"! Not necessarily because they're breaking any rules but because this is the time to prove that they're not.

One of the purposes of their visits will be to talk to non-members and try to persuade them to join. You don't need to be a union official, or even a committee member, to do that, though. Hopefully all of our members are talking to their colleagues in crowd holding about the benefits of joining the union. The major ones should all be apparent: Your daily rates of pay and overtime, the supplementary categories for all the extra things you might be called upon to do, the infringement payments for short or late lunches, travel payments, cancellation payments, health and safety protections on set, even lunch are all things that at some time have been won for you by your union. More members means a more compelling argument whenever further changes are asked for. Sitting back and thinking they'll get them anyway might well be an attitude that bites them in the rear end!

Contacts

Deals: deals@bectu.org.uk – to report PACT jobs within the zone that do not comply with the Agreement.

Complaints and enquiries: lpd@bectu.org.uk.

Phone number: 0300 600 1878

New membership enquiries: joinfaa@bectu.org.uk

Website

The Bectu website has undergone a major overhaul in the last few months and new content will continue to be added. Use this QR code or the direct link <https://bit.ly/FAABranch> to access the FAA Branch area, check the details that the union holds for you and see what membership benefits are currently available. There are links to Prospect Plus, Bectu Extra, and Earlybird, the listing of upcoming film and TV productions.

Let us know what's not there that you'd find useful and we'll see what we can do!



Freelancers

In the last issue we mentioned that the Bectu conference had backed the union's existing attempts to fight for the rights of Freelancers like ourselves in an environment where the majority of workplace legislation is made with employed workers in mind. Just a few weeks later the government unveiled its Industrial Strategy and a key component of the Creative Industries Sector Plan is a commitment to appoint a 'freelance champion'.

Clearly this reflects the long campaigning for a dedicated freelance advocate to sit within government, rather than the vote in York but it is clear that government needs to improve its understanding of and support for these vital workers and the many challenges they face. This commitment is a real testament to the strength of our membership, and our influence, and your union has written to Minister Chris Bryant MP to outline our views on what the freelance champion role should look like - and the need for government to work closely with Bectu and other unions in setting it up.

The government has taken a number of other steps to back creative workers, including a strengthened commitment to tackling bullying and harassment in the industry, a new skills passport, and confirming the intention to support self-employed workers through the Make Work Pay agenda.

Tiredness

Also in the last issue, we highlighted Bectu's Broken Turnaround campaign and warned against the dangers of over-tiredness and, very sad to report, that even before that newsletter hit your in-boxes a Supporting Artist was killed in a car accident on their way home from a job. It's not absolutely sure whether this was the direct result of fatigue but it was a near-midnight journey after a job that many had travelled many miles to attend.

Please (as they used to say on "Hill Street Blues") let's be careful out there. Many of us habitually travel for jobs much further than our colleagues on the crew and, unlike them, often we're not back tomorrow which can fool people into thinking that they can rest later. First you have to get home safely.

We're assured that the producers themselves want to avoid situations where Turnaround payments would apply and this was the very purpose of the clause – it's not an extra payment, it's a deterrent. If it succeeds in changing working practices then it's done its job.

New Organising Officer

Just a few months after Negotiating Officer Emily Collin moved on to a different Bectu branch, to be replaced by Naomi Taylor, we've now also got a new Organising Official. Stefan Vassalos has been rudely poached by another branch, probably reflecting what a good job he was doing for the FAA, and we welcome Juliette Briot as his replacement. Here's a little introduction from the lady herself:

"After completing a master's in employment law, I started at Prospect in 2022 as a Helpdesk Advisor, where I first got stuck into supporting members with workplace issues. In 2024, I moved into my current role as an Organising Official in the Bectu sector, and I've really enjoyed working with freelancers in the film and TV industry ever since. I'll be supporting Naomi with branch casework and assisting your branch committee. I'm looking forward to working together!"

Prospect Conference 2026

We also mentioned in the last issue that next year there is no Bectu conference, instead we join together with our parent union Prospect for a three day conference in Brighton. Many people strongly associate unions with the political left but your union has no affiliation with any party. They do, of course, lobby government for changes and improvements to working terms and conditions but that is based on the needs and desires of our members, not political ideology.

Just looking at some of the other professions represented by Prospect should indicate quite how wide a spectrum of members are within our union. Prospect is known as the trade union for specialists and its other branches include many parts of the tech sector; civilian specialists in the MOD and working at the Atomic Weapons Establishment; and those working in energy generation, distribution and research roles in all parts of the UK. There are 10,000 members across the UK's heritage, culture and arts sector alone; Government departments such as the Department for Education, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department of Health, the Environment Agency, the Food Standards Agency and the Forestry Commission all have dedicated branches, as do the Health & Safety Executive, the Home Office, the Met Office, the Metropolitan Police, the Ministry of Justice, the National Lottery Community Fund, the Office for National Statistics, the Prison Service and Scottish Prison Service, the Serious Fraud Office, and Transport for London. Also within Prospect are Air Traffic Control Officers and Systems Specialists; Gatwick, Glasgow Prestwick, Stansted, East Midlands, Exeter, Norwich City and Bournemouth International Airports, the CAA, Easyjet, Loganair, and Scottish Aviation. And then there are the British Museum, English Heritage, Imperial War Museums, the Museum Of London, the National Football Museum, the National, National Portrait, and Tate Galleries, and the National Galleries of Scotland; the National Trust, the Natural History and Victoria & Albert Museums, the Royal Botanic Gardens (Kew), the Serious Fraud Office, the National Archives, and the Woodland Trust.

What can all these people possibly have in common? Quite simply, they work for a living. Which means they have similar concerns about working hours, health & safety in the workplace, tax and other financial issues, inclusivity, representation, bullying and other anti-social behaviour, and a host of other subjects. And that's why all of them – no matter which side of the political divide they favour – need their union.

Cancellations

A growing number of Supporting Artists are losing faith in the booking process. Jobs that were confirmed as definite bookings are increasingly becoming un-confirmed just before the cut-off point for cancellation fees and many are becoming tempted to double-book their diaries in the expectation of that happening. Thank you to everybody who has reported these incidences, your union officials have been in contact with more than a few of the culprits and are doing their best to discourage such practices.

Productions and Agents alike have been warned that there is a risk of the established system breaking down entirely due to a total lack of confidence that dates will be honoured. Please consider that if you decide to accept multiple bookings. It's their fault, but we'll get the blame.

The Up-To-Date Case Form

Sorry that the sexy QR code that we printed in the last issue to take you straight to the Case Form didn't work. A new one will hopefully be available soon. In the meantime, the direct link is https://bit.ly/FAA_Query

It really is important that you report incidences where the Agreement isn't being followed, which means every last clause of it. Productions cannot decide that they don't want to pay travel or will only pay for one haircut no matter how many days you're on the project. Your officials cannot support you if they don't know there's a problem and it's all too easy for bad practice on one production to become general practice within the industry if nobody picks up on it.

As always, please provide as much detail as possible and also make sure that your issue has already been raised with the AD (whose job was to stop it happening), and the agent (whose job is to represent you).

Somebody Ltd

After the omnishambles that was Mad Dog, many members are now concerned about Somebody Ltd which has strong connections to them. The FAA has requested additional information from the liquidators, specifically about a request that was made for a professional data cleanse.

Official Bectu advice is that if you are contacted by Somebody Ltd, who have acquired your data through the Mad Dog liquidation, and have concerns about them holding your data, you should Email them back to request that all your data be permanently deleted. Tell them that you do not wish to be contacted by Somebody Ltd in the future. If the agent does not comply with that request, then you should submit a complaint to the data controller at Somebody Ltd via the email agent@withsomebody.co.uk. If the matter is not resolved, you can also contact the Information Commissioner's Office to submit a complaint.

Just For Fun

Don't shout "House", shout "Location"!

Supporting Artist Bingo

Filmed at Pinewood Studios	Filmed at BBC Elstree	Filmed at Warner Brothers, Leavesden	Filmed at Elstree Film Studios	Filmed at Shepperton Studios
Filmed at Chatham Dockyard	Filmed at West Wickham	Filmed at Hatfield House	Filmed at Chatsworth House	Filmed at Greenwich Old Naval College
Filmed at Cardington	Filmed at Langleybury	Fitted at Angels	Filmed at Longcross	Filmed at Bovingdon
Filmed at West London Studios	Filmed at 3 Mills Studios	Filmed at Winnersh Film Studios	Filmed at Ealing Studios	Filmed at Twickenham Studios
Filmed at A Working Airport	Filmed at A Members-Only Club	Filmed at A Museum or Gallery	Filmed at A Pub	Filmed at A Mainline Railway Station

Film Artistes Association

Respected. Supported. Represented.

Making the difference for all professional supporting artistes