

FAA Newsletter

December 2025



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Negotiations With Pact.

Negotiations with Pact (the Producers' Alliance for Cinema & Television) are on-going in relation to changing terms and conditions in the agreement. Your FAA committee and officials hope to update you in the New Year on that.

Pact have issued their final offer for increases to the FAA ratecard. Your FAA committee will discuss this on 5th January and then a ballot will be sent out to members via email with information about the offer to help members decide how to vote. The ballot will run for a week. If the offer is accepted it will be implemented on 14th January. If it is rejected, then rates increases will be delayed and members will be updated on further developments.

In November, three members of your negotiations committee and both of your Bectu officials met with Pact at their London HQ to negotiate new terms for your FAA collective agreement. This meeting was also attended by representatives from several major studios and progress was definitely made. Proposals to change your FAA agreement are based on feedback from members in the 2024 survey.

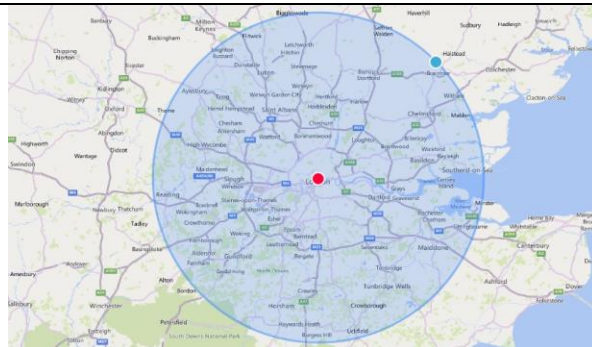
Your committee and officials are trying to address the booking, and especially the cancellation, process as well as attempting to get extra assurances regarding digital scanning and AI and the frustrations of limited access to phones. These are the “headline” issues, of course, and there are many other clauses that have come in for scrutiny which is part of the reason why negotiations have been going on for quite so long. The Agreement has also been worded and re-worded several times over the years and some of that has led to a lack of clarity. One of the intentions, therefore, has been to try to remove any confusion from some of the clauses that have been repeatedly tinkered with.

Alongside tightening up on what the Agreement already says we have been attempting to make some changes that we believe will simply make the whole film-making progress smoother, easier and less stressful for Production and SAs alike. As we all know – it's not always purely about the money! Some of it is, though, and we've been pushing hard for extra reward where we think it is due. Sadly, Pact have notoriously tight pockets so we'll have to see what we can achieve.

Travel Payments

One or two productions recently have been advertising jobs that are outside the FAA Zone and stating that no travel allowances will be included. This is completely against our rules. Pact productions outside the Zone should really be shooting on Equity terms but as long as the other union doesn't mind they are free to choose FAA terms instead. If they do, though, we expect them to honour every clause of our Agreement and that includes everything from travel to haircut payments.

If any such productions do try to cherry-pick which terms they fancy using, please report them to lpd@bectu.org.uk and our officials will have a quiet word with them.



The FAA Zone is not merely “inside the M25” but neither does it cover the entire South-East of England. It's always worth checking the location and the terms being offered. It is a 40-mile radius from Charing Cross station.

Happy Christmas One And All

Apparently there's something called “Yuletide” happening, for which some of you may have received an Availability Request. On behalf of your Officials and Committee, and no doubt all at your union, have a very Merry Christmas.

2025 Big Autumn Gathering

October saw members of many Bectu branches come together once again for the annual Big Autumn Gathering at the Paddington Green campus of Westminster College. Most significant for FAA members was no doubt the Branch Meeting where a discussion of the issue of over-booking again took centre stage. Please be assured that this is the number one topic of discussion between your union and the producers. They claim that they need the flexibility to alter shooting schedules but the FAA needs them to understand that our members deserve better than to be treated like disposable assets.

It has been strongly suggested that the real culprits are a handful of 2nd ADs who like to keep reserves in hand in case of drop-outs but this same charge has also been levelled at certain Agencies in the past. Advice is to communicate with your fellow Supporting Artists (without breaking any NDAs, obviously) to see which productions are doing this and, perhaps, decline them before they do the same to you.

Negotiations Officer Naomi Taylor updated members on the, regrettably slow, progress of the PACT negotiations and took feedback on the union's proposals for our next pay claim.

Branch meetings really are the best place to have your voice heard and several others held theirs the same day.

At the London Production Division's Annual Forum we heard from the LPD National Secretary Spencer MacDonald and newly-elected Chair Sean O'Malley, Philippa Childs the head of Bectu sector and Prospect General Secretary Mike Clancy. First and foremost, they apologised profusely for the recent cyber incident and clarified what steps had been taken to ensure there isn't a repeat of it. Bectu is far from the only organisation to be hit recently, of course, and we appear to have suffered considerably less than the likes of Jaguar Land Rover but the incident is being taken extremely seriously by Head Office.

A couple of distinctly political subjects were also raised and it was stressed that your union is not affiliated to any political party. They do, of course, talk to them in order to try to influence policy where it will benefit our members or where it is currently disadvantaging them.

Like the last couple of years, photographer Mark Thomas was present taking free head shots and the day ended with a social gathering. Which is union-speak for wine and beer with your mates.



Contacts

Complaints and enquiries: lpd@bectu.org.uk – the Case Form can also be found on the Bectu website.

Office phone number: 0300 600 1878

New membership enquiries: joinfaa@bectu.org.uk – for your non-union colleagues to become union colleagues.

What Have The FAA Ever Done For Us?

Your union cannot take credit for sanitation, medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, the fresh-water system and public health but they are responsible for more positives than you might think. Obviously the pay and conditions are the direct result of the FAA's negotiation with Pact and this includes the adoption of important clauses which protect you on-set and off. In contrast with the frequent accusations on social media, though, they also work tirelessly on your behalf when the hard-won terms are not being respected.

Recently, for instance, a Netflix Japan production, filming at The Globe (a Bectu-unionised venue, no less!) was being advertised below FAA rates which resulted in some firm emails from your officials to the production company. Very quickly afterwards, the agent involved confirmed that the production would actually be paying FAA rates and agreed to review some of the actions that led to this happening in the first place. Very few people will have been aware of this "win" but incidents like that constitute a great deal of your officials' workload. It's just that the union doesn't usually shout about them when it's busy fixing the problem.

There Are Rules, And There Are Rules.

Much of our advice to members comes from the pages of the FAA/Pact Agreement but please remember that there is more general legislation that also needs to be adhered to on-set (and off). Health & Safety laws and other Employment legislation does not become irrelevant merely because it's not mentioned in our little green book. There's nothing in there about stealing from your colleagues, for instance, but that's definitely frowned upon.

Working conditions such as extremely cold weather should be challenged if they become a problem and your hard-working AD team reminded of basic human rights should they temporarily overlook them. Let's be honest, you don't need to be able to quote chapter and verse of the exact legislation. Most people know, they just sometimes don't give it the consideration that they should in the hectic working day.

Cyber Incident

Regarding the communication on 9 October that Prospect union members' data was impacted by a cyber incident, it looks like the majority of members probably aren't at any risk at all.

If your data subject notification email included an offer of a free Experian Identity Plus membership and an activation code (if you didn't get this then you weren't affected), please remember that you have until 30 December 2025 to activate it. Membership lasts a year from the date it was activated. There's no such thing as "too safe" so Experian Identity Plus is there for your peace of mind.

CGI and AI

The use of AI in every industry is increasing at an alarming rate so it's worth reminding you that Supporting Artistes have the right to refuse being digitally scanned should it be asked of you. On an FAA/Pact job, there is strict control that these images can only be used on the production for which they are taken but you can still say "no".

A Parallel From Another Industry

Music fans will be familiar with the Pink Floyd album "Dark Side Of The Moon", one of the best-selling records in history. A small part of it was a 25-year-old session singer named Clare Torry who improvised wordless vocals over an unfinished track called "The Great Gig in the Sky". She was paid the standard session fee of £30 for her efforts and her name didn't even appear on the album. If you know the track then you'll know just how much she added to it.

Doesn't that sound a bit like what we do? Adding that extra something (no pun intended) to what the "real" creatives are producing. Getting a flat fee, no matter how successful the finished product might become. Anonymously contributing to what might be an artistic masterpiece. Improving the product so that it brings pleasure to millions for years to come. Be proud of your work!

Ms Torry's story ended rather well when she sued for song-writing credit, arguing that her improvised melody was a creative composition and Pink Floyd settled out of court. From 2005 onward, she was officially credited and got the recognition she deserved.

The FAA App.

Sorry but there are still no signs of a replacement for the out-dated App. One of the major issues is that a new version cannot be created until the developers know what to put into it and nobody can tell them that until Pact has agreed (or rejected) the latest set of amendments to the Agreement. It's also time for the rates themselves to be reviewed and travel rates will also likely be increasing with Transport For London prices in March so we need to make sure that the right numbers are involved.

A new developer has been identified and work will hopefully begin as soon as the new Agreement is in place so the wait shouldn't be too interminable. Luckily, as SAs, waiting is one of our superpowers. Whether it be the call back to set or the urn being refilled, it's just what we do.

Ask First.

This perhaps needs to become the unbreakable mantra of our industry. How many new Supporting Artists do not ask nearly enough questions before their first foray into background work? How many experienced Supporting Artists do not ask whether the day ahead of them will be on Standard terms or a Continuous Working Day? How many of us have lost out on Supplements because we haven't confirmed them with the Assistant Director at the time and they have somehow been forgotten as sign-out?

New agents occasionally appear on the scene and everybody needs to assure themselves that they are entirely legitimate. Those keen to start or further their careers are constantly offered new "opportunities", from head shots and show reels to non-paid shoots that promise exposure and contacts. The sad truth is that some are so desperate to get into our fantastic industry – and get their face on the telly – that they do not look before they leap. Others simply don't want to rock the boat and assume that it will all work out alright. Nobody will need reminding that Mad Dog worked out alright – until they didn't.

Ask the questions – to the AD, the agent and to each other about our shared experience. In no other job would you do your work not knowing what terms you were working under and how much you'd eventually be paid. Contrary to some people's impression, we are a professional workforce. It's not unreasonable to treat us as such.

25-0063/NOV25/VP-500

join bectu

TODAY

- The largest trade union for supporting artistes in the UK.
- Helping members negotiate and enforce your collectively negotiated FAA-Bectu agreement with Pact.
- Providing members with advice, resources and support at work.
- Working with members to negotiate your FAA-Bectu rate card with Pact.
- Chasing outstanding payments for members.
- Free entry to union events like the Big Autumn Gathering.

And much more... all for £5* a month!

bectu.org.uk/join

*The £5 rate is applied manually by Bectu staff, provided you indicate FAA or state that you are an SA on your Bectu application. If you experience any issues receiving the rate, please contact LPD@bectu.org.uk



Please assure your colleagues that, annoyingly, the process does give the impression that membership is £10 a month as the £5 p/m fee has to be applied manually by a person on the membership team. Make sure new joiners include that they want to join the FAA and/or they are a supporting artiste and the discount will be applied after the form is submitted.

Film Artistes Association

Respected. Supported. Represented.

Making the difference for all professional supporting artistes