

**Composite #17: Fracking
(incorporating Motions 66 and 67)
CARRIED**

Conference recognises that the 2014 Unite Policy Conference adopted strong policy in opposition to fracking/hydraulic fracturing.

However, conference also recognises that specific forms of extraction of particular concern, such as Underground Coal Gasification(UCG), are not specifically referred to in that policy, licensing powers for some forms of fracking are devolved to Scotland and additional licensing powers relating to petroleum exploration are to be devolved to Scotland.

Notwithstanding this, Conference notes that Underground Coal Gasification is not classified as a petroleum activity, exploration licensing in relation to UCG remains a UK reserved matter and the coal authority license all coal exploration on behalf of the UK Government.

Conference believes that all Unconventional Gas Extraction methods, including Underground Coal Gasification (UCG), Deep UCG and Coal Bed Methane extraction (CBM) should be specifically included in Unite's policy opposing Hydraulic Fracturing (Fracking) and that the licensing powers for all such operations in Scotland should be devolved to Scotland.

Whilst calling for the further devolution of such licensing powers, Conference believes that all relevant levels of Government should use current and future licensing powers to prevent fracking and support a complete ban on any test drilling within the timescale of any current moratoriums on fracking.

Conference also calls upon Government at all levels to progress clear and unambiguous legislation to prevent any destructive and environmentally damaging extraction methods.

In adopting this policy, Conference recognises that significant numbers of Unite members' jobs involve the use of chemical and energy sources extracted by unconventional methods (such as the use of imported shale gas) and resolves to continue to protect the interests and jobs of these members and to seek to organise and represent workers engaged in fracking related work.

Whilst the union understands the impact fracking has upon the environment and in principle is opposed to this, it should be recognised that the union may have members working within this industry. Despite the Union's opposition, the union needs to support those people who find

themselves working within this part of the energy sector. As such Unite is committed to:

- ensuring that robust health and safety procedures are in place for those workers working within this industry;
- ensuring that there are minimum standards in place relating to pay, terms and conditions of employment for those workers within the industry.

**Composite #18: Action on Climate Change
(incorporating Motions 69 and 70)
CARRIED**

Conference applauds the ground-breaking lead given by the International Trade Union Council (ITUC) to the global trade union movement to get on board in the fight to save our planet from disastrous climate change caused by global carbon gas emissions. Sharon Burrow ITUC General Secretary famously said “There are no jobs on a dead planet!” She also placed the blame for the impending ecological disaster facing our planet squarely on the shoulders of global capital and urged trade unionists to lead the fight to win public investment in green/climate jobs and end our dependence on fossil fuels.

Conference congratulates Unite on sending a delegation to the ITUC Climate Jobs Conference in Paris in September 2015 and to the trade union delegation attending the Paris COP talks in Paris in December 2015.

Thanks to international trade union pressure led by the ITUC, the crucial Paris COP talks in December 2015 did deliver an international agreement recognising the seriousness of the threat posed by climate change. This agreement commits government signatories to reduce carbon gas emissions so that the global temperature does not rise by 2°, with a target of keeping the global temperature rise below 1.5°.

Whilst welcoming this important agreement on climate change, environmental experts are critical of the lack of commitment in the agreement to concrete action e.g. investment in renewable energy, or planned measures to transfer power generation away from fossil fuels etc. Indeed the agreement, which is not legally binding and lacks any concrete plans by each member state to deliver on the promises made, depends on an over-reliance on so-called “negative emissions” e.g. developing mass production of bio-fuels. The argument being that bio-fuel plant production (which normally replaces essential food production in developing countries) “sucks” carbon from the atmosphere. The truth is of course the transport of bio fuels across the globe to consumers is carbon-intensive and the burning of bio-fuels creates carbon gas emissions.

This union notes that:

1. Climate change is already destroying lives and livelihoods with more than 2.6 million people displaced by extreme weather events and changing seasons, and this will only get worse.
2. The Paris COP21 decisions acknowledge the challenges and move global action forward, but while the Summit conclusions refer to the target of a 1.5-degree limit, the capacity to leverage ambition on the scale required to stabilise the planet is still a question for the future.
3. 90% of the world's people want action on climate. Unions, civil society, responsible business and investors stood together in Paris asking for an ambitious long term goal of limiting temperature rises to 1.5 degrees, with a strong review mechanism to make it possible. Developing economies asked for the promised finance to assist with mitigation and adaptation. All governments were asked to respect human rights and a just transition for working people and their communities.
4. We face the biggest and most rapid industrial transformation in history. While a just transition for workers and the respect of human rights have been included in the preamble, many Governments, including the UK, refused to commit to it in the operational sections.
5. Unite's position as the biggest UK trade union, with many members in extractive and energy intensive industries, as well as other sectors key to climate action, means our union must take a strong role in organising for a Just Transition for workers and communities, and pressing for a national economic programme with climate justice at its heart - implementing, for example, climate jobs, technology transfer and energy democracy.

Conference congratulates Unite on agreeing a strong agenda at 2014 Policy Conference against climate change. But now we need to commit to being more proactive than hitherto in the global campaign to save our planet. This should include:

- concrete action to pursue the 1M Climate Jobs Campaign, including by distributing this excellent booklet widely amongst shop stewards and activists; developing UNITE education materials around this campaign; working with Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party on an investment plan for sustainable growth and green jobs for Labour's 2020 manifesto.
- plans for a "just transition" to defend those workers left behind by the new green energy industries. We refuse to accept that workers engaged in so-called "dirty energy" should face the employment scrap-heap (as has happened to thousands of workers including UNITE members who have lost and will lose their jobs as coal-fired power stations close down).
- to uphold the 2014 Policy Conference policy opposing fracking, including by signing the TUED (Trade Unions for Energy Democracy) International Moratorium on Fracking. Whilst opposing fracking in principle, Unite commits to recruiting and organising all workers engaged in fracking and giving them the full support of union power in this highly dangerous industry.
- Unite to take a leading role actively and vocally in the climate change movement including by its participation in TUSDAC (the TUC-led Trade Unions for Sustainable Development Advisory Committee), TUED (Trade Unions for Energy Democracy) and Campaign against Climate Change Trade Union Group and for regular reports to be fed back to Unite Executive Council.

We therefore call on Unite Executive Council to:

- commit to research and future work on proposals for a Climate Diversification Agency with the aim of bringing green jobs to those workers at risk of losing employment through the phasing out of “dirty energy”, and to work closely with Jeremy Corbyn’s Labour Party to make this a reality in the next Labour Government.
- consider how to raise Unite’s profile in this campaign, and therefore give consideration to nominating a senior national UNITE Official to take a lead role on behalf of Unite with a remit to engage lay members in active involvement in this important campaign to save our planet.
- develop a Just Transition programme which communicates with and involves our members in extractive and energy intensive industries to:
 1. understand the need for climate action,
 2. demand employer, sector and national plans addressing just transition and
 3. makes use of the skills and knowledge of our members to achieve good outcomes through
 4. diversification, democratic control and alternative production.
- take a lead in lobbying the Labour Party, the labour movement and other sympathetic social/political movements to adopt strong climate action policies at the heart of their programmes - to include:
 1. reducing economic inequality which is a driver of climate change
 2. replacing austerity policies and fossil fuel investments with policies of investment in energy saving and climate jobs (including caring jobs which are naturally low carbon)
 3. facilitating technology and knowledge transfer to less developed nations through similar regulation to that which enables production of generic medicines
 4. creating energy democracy by a massive shift to renewable energy owned and controlled by communities, collectives, municipalities and states.

Finally Unite welcomes Jeremy Corbyn’s proposal for an Energy Commission to explore effective policy proposals to green our energy supply and reduce our carbon gas emissions. Unite commits to playing a full and active part in this Energy Commission, including in the area of a “just transition” and the need for serious work on job diversification to protect our members’ jobs.

**Composite #16: Public Ownership of Utilities
(incorporating Motions 64 and 65)
CARRIED**

Energy is a basic requirement for all and utilities should be managed with common benefit as its first priority, not private profit.

All profits should be reinvested into infrastructure in order to ensure the best possible service to all and this can only be realistically ensured through state ownership.

This is not about renationalisation of old generating plant that private companies have not invested adequately in and would willingly pass back to public ownership now that they have extracted every last ounce of profit. It is about the UK Government building with UK public money, possibly through the issue of energy bonds, new generating capacity overseen by a modern day CEGB remote from short term politicking and therefore safeguarding the UK's long term energy infrastructure and interests. The Government needs to be held accountable for its inability to safeguard the UK's energy infrastructure. There has been tinkering at the edges but there has also been a failure by successive governments to address the real issue of adequate base load, spare generating capacity and energy costs which leaves UK citizens and industry vulnerable not just to blackouts but the total collapse of our manufacturing sector.

Conference calls upon Unite to:

- conduct a high profile national campaign to highlight the extent to which private ownership of utilities companies is to the detriment of both consumers and employees;
- campaign for Government to establish a modern day Central Electricity Generating Board and allow it to build with UK public money via 'energy bonds' if necessary, new, diverse generating capacity, fit for purpose, in the UK's long term interests and aligned with the union's energy policy.