The Rate for the Job

WE’VE HAD an appeal for rates for a TV producer for a single documentary and for a TV producer for an entire TV series. (We have one response already below.) Please submit any of these you know via the Submit-a-Rate form: the web address is below. Thinking about work for a company you’ve not dealt with before? Simply look at the Rate for the Job to find out what companies in similar niches have paid. Then aim higher.

You can submit rates online, in confidence, at any time, at www.londonfreelance.org/rates – please give not only the basic rate (e.g. for FBS, First British Serial rights) but extra payments negotiated for extra uses, like the Web – or for print if it’s a Rate for the Online Job. These are shown as (eg) £400 + 100. We now record rates paid in Euro as well. Rates marked X are, in the editor’s fallible opinion, below par. Treat all rates as minima, even perhaps the happy ☞.

Broadcasting: Biographical documentary, producing and directing documentary (for Ten Alps), holiday pay included, all rights to company £900 X; Newsnight expert/pundit appearance £90, or appearance took 1.5 hours (car paid) £75 X; Sky News pundit shot recorded £100.

Photography: Mountain Bike Skills Manual supplying all photography for the book, worldwide licence £2000; Attitude half day shoot, no production exes, £225 X; ITN online filming short DV news package using company’s own equipment to be edited and voiced by others, licensed for online use, 8 hour shift, £100 XXXX; Pegasus PR event photos £100 XXXX; Geographical 6-8 pics £400; Sunday Times photo in Culture £120 X.

Shifts: Sunday People reporting day £150; SkyMag £140; Woman’s Own subbing day £120 XX; FT UK Pensions reporting day £85 XXXX.

Words, per 1000: Daily Mail news page lead £900; Sunday Express feature £625; Financial Times How to Spend It magazine feature £450; Leeds (alumni magazine) features, additional days’ research paid at Fees Guide rate; FBS £375; Economic and Social Research Council £375; Square Meal (Monomax) £350; Guardian £300; Mojo 500-word blog (per Mojo mag freelance agreement) Guardian travel £300 X; Engineering and Technology £300; trade mags (Reed-Elsivier) all rights £250; Imbibe (Monomax) £250; Automotive Cog (Ultima media) £250; NWL (Ultima media) £250; Regeneration £250; MEED £250; Construction News £240; Materials Recycling £230; Ifw £220; Cargo Systems £220; Insurance Day FBS £200; New Statesman £214; NME feature £180 X or £120 XX; Irish regional papers column £120; Guardian Weekly (note that agreed minimum for Guardian is £256 or more) £111 XXXX.

Words, other: Economist 650 words, all rights £400; Real Travel 2000 words + 10 pictures £300; Guardian theatre blog 500 words £65 XX; Evening Standard tip-off £35; Evening Standard news page lead £150 XX.

Carry on, up your rate!

USE THE NUJ’s online resources to negotiate a better rate with your clients. That was the subject of Freelance editor Mike Holderness’ demonstration at November’s London Freelance Branch meeting.

Mike explained the important difference between our Rate for the Job pages (www.londonfreelance.org/rates) and the Freelance Fees Guide (www.londonfreelance.org/feesguide) The latter suggests rates that the Union feels clients should be paying. These are backed by the evidence of Rftj – the “historical survey” of what members are actually getting paid.

Mike took us through the Rftj’s online Submit-A-Rate form, which allows freelances to send in their rates for the job electronically. We’d prefer you to submit rates in this way, rather than filling them in on the paper-based list circulated at LFB meetings. As people write less and less by hand, everybody’s handwriting gets more appalling; we have to discard about half the rates submitted at meetings.

Both Rftj and FFG are meant to serve as tools to help you negotiate with clients. FFG has a section on “what freelances need to charge and why”. The Freelance’s assistant editor managed to double a commissioning editor’s initial offer by emailing him a link to the Rftj pages to show him how comparatively rubbish his proposed rate was.

With the FFG and Rftj listings as his guide, Phil Sutcliffe, tutor on NUJ Training’s Pitch and Deal course, led a practical interactive session on how to use all this stuff. Was anybody in the audience thinking of working for a new client, he asked? One was considering a first-time pitch to UK Wired. We found no reported rates for this, but there are rates for US Wired, and for other titles from the same publishers, which suggest that £400 per thousand might be a rate to have in mind when you negotiate with them.

For tips on how to navigate the 6000-plus pages of information and advice for freelances on the LFB website, there’s a Frequently Asked Questions. All these web pages are linked from this article online.

Who got paid for a “rusty”? © Squiggle

P H O T O G R A P H E R S f r o m p 1
email sharong@nuj.org.uk before 26 January. The LPB inaugural meeting, which will elect a Branch Committee, will be at 6.30pm on Tuesday 26 January at NUJ Head Office, Headland House, 308 Gray’s Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP – nearest Tube King’s Cross St Pancras. Every photographer member of the union, staff and freelance, is welcome to attend, but only those full members of the union who have transferred to the new Branch in advance of the meeting will be able to vote or stand for office.

The offices that the Branch must elect are: Chair and Vice-Chair; Treasurer; Secretary; Equality Officer; Welfare Officer; and union learning representative.

This is an exciting development for NUJ photographers. Please support the new Branch and ensure the meeting is a success.

John Toner
Freelance Organiser, with National Executive members for London