

Nuclear Industry

Last update: 17 Jan 2023

Latest Bulletins

Review Of NDA Pay Arrangements

Posted on: 17 January 2023

Dear member

GMB Union, along with the other joint union have made submissions to the Business, Energy, & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) review on whether NDA operating companies should be in or out of the civil service pay remit. GMB, Joint Unions and NDA are all of the view that NDA operating companies should be outside the civil service pay remit.

Putting NDA operating companies into the civil service pay remit will make recruiting and retaining employees even more difficult than at present. NDA is competing for skills in the private sector, and NDA pay needs to be comparable with the likes of EDF, BAE, Rolls Royce and Urenco, rather than public sector rates of pay.

The local pay bargaining machinery across the operating companies is well established and works well. It has the confidence and buy in from management and unions. It has brought about stable employment relations. Putting NDA operating companies into the civil service pay remit would severely jeopardise good industrial relations, make it much harder to reach pay settlements and increase the likelihood of industrial action. Civil Service pay increases have been lower than in the private sector and those negotiated by trade unions with NDA operating companies.

GMB Union believes the NDA operating companies should be able to negotiate pay with trade unions outside the civil service pay remit.



Recommendations from BEIS will go to Government in the next few weeks, and we should know more by the end of the financial year. The Joint Trade Unions have asked for a meeting with the energy minister. We will keep you up to date on developments.

Pensions

The changes to the final salary pension scheme agreed back in 2017, but not enacted, are now at the Committee stage in Parliament. They form part of the Energy Bill, which was put on hold by the previous Conservative Government, but is now proceeding under this Conservative administration.

The cost-of-living crisis is putting a strain on so many families and increasing pension contributions at a time when so many are struggling is not something the GMB supports. It increases the demand for a higher pay rise.

GARY CARTER

NATIONAL OFFICER

GMB COMMERCIAL SERVICES SECTION

Previous Bulletins

GMB FIGHTING FOR JOBS IN ENERGY



Posted on: 1 November 2021

An important milestone towards essential investment in the energy sector was passed this week when MPs voted for the Nuclear Financing Bill.

The UK needs a balanced energy supply – and that includes the steady baseload provided by low-carbon nuclear power.

61,000 people are employed in the nuclear sector. These are skilled jobs. But they are under threat as our existing reactors approach the end of their life.

Hunterston B closed last week, and more reactors will follow.



GMB will always fight for our members' jobs – and the union is leading the campaign to secure new investment.

The overwhelming vote in favour of the Nuclear Energy (Financing) Bill was an important step in the right direction.

GMB played a vital role in securing TUC support, and establishing the cross-party consensus upon which major projects depend.

Now we need to make sure that MPs and Ministers support all energy workers.

We need to get spades in the ground at Sizewell C, as well as restarting projects at Moorside, Bradwell, and Wylfa that have stalled and we need to learn from our record at Hinkley Point C by bringing through the next generation of energy workers and a more diverse workforce.

Nuclear energy might be a controversial topic. But GMB will never apologise for defending our members' jobs. From nuclear to gas and engineering construction – we are the union for energy workers and the energy supply chain.

We won't hesitate to deliver hard messages: there will be no net zero without new nuclear.

GMB have always lobbied for new nuclear projects to be funded via general taxation, to be publicly owned.

But that is not on the table and following this week's vote, a mechanism for funding new plants and Small Modular Reactors will soon be in place.

We want to go further, and secure binding commitments to improve workers' terms and conditions whenever public money is on the table.

There is a real opportunity here to build new plants, and a strong, exporting supply chain behind them.

As your union, GMB is committed to making that happen.

Noticeboard Bulletin – 27-10-2021



Posted on: 27 October 2021

Dear Member,



Yesterday the Government finally announced that it will bring forward the legislation needed to fund new nuclear.

This is two years after Ministers initially consulted. There has been delay after delay, but hopefully this will now mean we are one important step closer to ensuring Sizewell C goes ahead and there will be a new pipeline of other projects into the future such as other stalled projects, and investment in Small Modular Reactors.

The construction of Sizewell C will itself create up to 24,000 good, well-paid jobs directly, 1,500 apprenticeships, and thousands more jobs across the supply chain. This makes it even more urgent that we get this legislation passed.

We have said that the Government proposals need to be subject to scrutiny, but Sizewell C and other projects need to go ahead. Our economic future and net zero targets depend on it. We have already written to MPs on the proposals detailing our reasons and called for their support in Parliament.

As the legislation makes its way through Parliament we may need to write again and ask for you to lobby your MP to get them to vote this through. As members that work directly or indirectly in the industry you know the importance of the industry better than anyone.

GMB union, and you, have led the way in putting pressure on Government and MPs to deliver this legislation many of you wrote to your MPs over the summer and in getting cross-party support for new nuclear – [most recently winning crucial votes at Labour Conference and at TUC Congress](#).

Charlotte Childs
GMB National Officer (Construction)

Gary Carter
GMB National Officer (Energy)

[P.S if you are interested you can read our briefing on the announcement you can read it here](#)

GMB Energy Newsletter– 20th September 2021



Posted on: 20 September 2021

GMB are working hard to fight for members' jobs and the future of your industry. As you will have seen over the weekend, the issue of energy prices and supply is rapidly becoming a national emergency with genuine fears as to how the country are going to cope over the coming winter.



Energy Crisis

GMB are holding meetings with employers across the industry to ensure that our members are kept abreast of any changes and the steps being taken to protect the flow of power during this crucial time. We also need to know what actions are being taken and how they will impact on our members to ensure that we get the best deal for you. The energy crisis exposes the fragility of our energy supplies and underlines the need to ensure that there is a long-term plan in place, which will keep the lights on over the coming months.

The issues effecting the energy market are those we have long warned of with a fragmented system which is no longer fit for purpose. The failure of numerous energy companies has created massive problems for consumers and the fear is that this boom-and-bust approach will create issues for members' jobs if not resolved quickly. GMB have always been clear that energy is too important to be left to a market system that discourages long term strategies in favour of quick profits and the failures of these energy companies underlines this view. Members need certainty that the energy supply will continue uninterrupted, both to protect their jobs and to ensure that their domestic needs will be met, and we are working with both employers and politicians from all parties to ensure that your voice is heard throughout this debate.

Just Transition

GMB are committed to protecting the long-term future of our energy industries. We are working hard to secure investment in green hydrogen to protect the long-term future of the gas industry. Green hydrogen is a safe, clean fuel that can utilise the current gas network and protect our members' jobs in both gas transmission and heating. It is vital that we get the funding to ensure that this fuel is developed with a long-term goal of converting current boilers to the new fuel.

So far, the Government has introduced a number of initiatives to support the development of hydrogen heating. However, we need greater investment and a longer-term strategy if this is going to be done in a manner that supports the good quality jobs that our members and their communities rely on. As a result, GMB are continuing to lobby both parties and employers to ensure that we have a plan which will guaranty members skills and jobs moving forwards.

We also need significant investment in battery plants, to protect against the uncertainties in the supply renewable energy. As we have seen over the last few years, our renewable energy industries have been hampered by a lack of investment, with companies preferring to ship wind turbines from across the world as opposed to building them in the UK and letting plants like Bi-Fab go to the wall when they could be the cornerstone of our renewable industry.

GMB have always been clear on this, that if we are to keep emissions low, we need to ensure we focus on domestic manufacturing rather than simply shipping in products made in countries with low environmental standards before being transported halfway across the globe.



Labour Party and TUC Conference

GMB worked hard to get support from the union movement for the expansion of our nuclear industry. The fact that the current energy crisis has been exacerbated by the fire in Ashford, which

has reduced our ability to import energy from the continent, exposed the fragility of our energy supplies, and underlined the need for investment in new nuclear power stations to support both domestic and commercial energy. GMB believes that nuclear is a key part of the energy mix and provides a clean fuel that will be instrumental in helping us achieve net zero carbon emissions.

We are also working hard to get support for our energy policy from the Labour Party Conference. To get the long-term investment necessary to support the development and implementation of these initiatives, cross party support is key as it provides the necessary assurances to large investors to fund the changes. As such, we are working to ensure that Labour take a position that supports our members, and which will lead to an energy policy that both provides a pathway to net zero whilst supporting jobs and communities. This will mean taking a stand against the wilder calls from the green lobby which threaten members' jobs and skills, and which seem to have little regard for the necessity of the broad base support for changes needed in a democracy.

Whilst not arguing as to the need to reach net zero, we strongly believe that this can only happen if working people are at the heart of the plans, with the support of communities being seen as vital if we are to take the steps necessary to ensure the future of our planet. We are clear that this will need investment in all parts of our energy supply, protecting jobs in our key industries whilst moving towards net zero in a managed and sustainable way.

Next Steps

GMB will keep you updated of developments as they occur. If you require extra information or support on any issue, please contact your local GMB shop steward.

Yours sincerely

ANDY PRENDERGAST

NATIONAL SECRETARY FOR COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Noticeboard Bulletin – 09-08-2021



Posted on: 9 August 2021



Dear Member,

Recent reports suggest that the Government will block Chinese state involvement in nuclear power projects. GMB is clear that these projects must go ahead.

We are demanding clarity from government on how they intend to support projects like Sizewell C and Bradwell B if these reports are correct.

[Read our press release on the reports here](#)

The construction of Sizewell C will create up to 25,000 good, well-paid jobs in the UK, 1,500 apprenticeships, and thousands more jobs across the supply chain. This makes it all the more urgent that we get the clarity we need from government so the project can go ahead.

Nuclear supports more jobs than any other form of low-carbon energy.

This is in stark contrast to renewables, where jobs in the fabrication of wind turbines are being offshored to the rest of the world, stuck on diesel tankers and ferried across the ocean while British industry, steel and manufacturing suffers.

We know we need new nuclear in the energy mix if the Government stands any chance of meeting its target of net zero emissions by 2050. Investment in new nuclear is critical to ensuring we have a big, steady, and reliable supply of energy when renewables are unreliable.

The GMB and you, the membership of our union, were instrumental in securing government support for Hinkley Point C, a project that has already created 750+ apprenticeships and has a clear training route for the local community into highly-skilled unionised roles.

We now need to ensure that you and future GMB members are the skilled workforce that will make Sizewell C, Bradwell B and those that follow, success stories.

And that's why we urgently need you to help us call on the government to come clean on how the funding of these projects is going to work.

We have been waiting for clarity on this from Government since 2019 and without urgent clarity by the Autumn – when the Sizewell C project would be moving to its construction phase – the whole scheme is at risk of collapsing putting at risk thousands of good, well-paid jobs.

[Read our letter to Kwasi Kwarteng MP the Secretary of State responsible on the urgent need for clarity on nuclear funding.](#)

[Read here](#)



With urgency we need our local MPs putting all the pressure to bear on government to ensure they urgently announce a credible funding model for new nuclear so work is not delayed. Otherwise, our net zero ambitions and thousands of new, good jobs will be put at risk.

We are asking you to email your local MP and get them to speak up for the nuclear industry, your livelihoods and communities.

On the 7th September when the House of Commons returns there is an urgent debate on the future on nuclear. We need as many MPs speaking up and calling on government to act as we can get. You can find a template email on the button below:

Email your MP

If you have time however we'd encourage you to put the email in your own words and tell them personally why new nuclear matters to you, your families and your community.

We are also keen if you could forward any responses from MPs and their offices to the politics@gmb.org.uk inbox so that we can keep tabs on where are politicians are on the issue and can hold them to account.

Charlotte Childs
GMB National Officer (Construction)

Gary Carter
GMB National Officer (Energy)

