

43rd day of British Gas strike action to coincide with mass sackings



The fact British Gas doesn't care for either customers or staff is shown by mass sacking of engineers it badly needs to service these customers

On Wednesday, (14 April 2021) British Gas will go ahead with a mass sacking of striking gas engineers who have refused to be bullied into "accepting" a 15% cut in pay rates and other imposed changes in terms and conditions.



This mass sacking will take place as gas engineers take part in their 43rd day of strike action on Wednesday, 14 April in this long-running and deadlocked dispute.

British Gas **announced in July last year** that staff in the Field staff bargaining group – who refused to accept imposed 15% cuts in pay rates and other detrimental changes – would be sacked. The letters confirming the sackings were sent out last week.

The date for the sackings with pay in lieu of notice was changed from Thursday, 1 April to Wednesday, 14 April with no explanation.

GMB members at British Gas have already taken 42 days of strike action against the imposition of the 15% cuts in pay rates and other changes via “fire and rehire” notices. In addition, an official national lockout dispute between British Gas and GMB **will become effective from 14 April** and will include further strike action and action short of a strike.

The strikes **have led to a backlog** to date of millions of customers waiting for planned service visits and hundreds of thousands having to wait for emergency repairs. British Gas has suspended sale of the standard boiler service insurance.

Justin Bowden, GMB regional secretary said:

“That British Gas doesn’t give a toss for either its customers or staff is evidenced by the mass sacking of the engineers that it badly needs to service these customers.

“Whilst there is sadly nothing to stop a company bullying its own staff to sign terms they don’t accept, and sacking those who won’t submit to bullying, GMB members will not accept the outcome of this 9 month campaign of British Gas bullying. That is why they are staging their 43rd day of strike action on Wednesday, 14 April.

“We have news for Mr O’Shea and Centrica: this dispute will continue and become an official national lockout dispute. There will be more strikes and action short of strikes.

“The British Gas leadership disaster reaches its low point on April 14th with mass sackings of British Gas Engineers – in the only consistently profitable part of the company – by a management team too stupid to see the true value of a uniquely skilled and loyal workforce.

“With hundreds of thousands waiting in the backlog for service, customers have been treated as collateral and so it seems too will staff – as Mr O’Shea prepares to go down in history as the first major FT listed CEO to carry out mass sackings of his highly skilled and qualified engineers whilst his customers are waiting for visits. The workforce are Mr O’Shea’s most valuable asset and he will be universally condemned by politicians and the public alike for doing so.



"The arrogant gamble has been lost. Any fool can start a war and, it seems, ruin a good business. History will not be kind to Mr O'Shea or the Centrica Board who failed to rein in him and his out of control leadership team."

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