



GMB calls for parliamentary inquiry into Amazon as conditions for workers worsen

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The fact is conditions are getting worse for Amazon workers, it's time for a Parliamentary inquiry says GMB Union

Amazon warehouse have been hit by more than 600 serious injuries or near misses in the past three years, a GMB investigation has found.

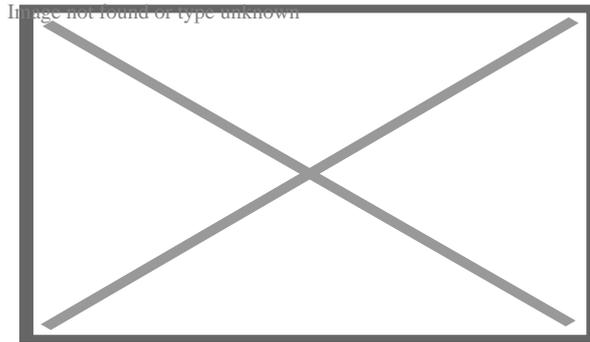
The figures – some of which were broadcast on the BBC's Panorama programme tonight [Monday February 17, 2020] – are the result of Freedom of Information Act requests submitted by GMB to local authorities across the UK

They show that between 2016/17 and 2018/19 a total of 622 reports have been made from Amazon warehouses to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) – with the number rising each year.

Examples of injuries reported to HSE from Amazon warehouse include:

- A worker at a London warehouse was knocked unconscious and stopped breathing following a head injury. The accident investigation report found that 'the main root cause of this incident was failing to provide a safe working environment.'
- In Manchester, an Amazon Worker fractured their hand after their fingers got caught in between the station sliding gate and the surrounding gate support
- At a London warehouse, a forklift driver collided with a column, causing a mezzanine floor to become unsafe in a serious 'near miss' incident.
- A worker in Manchester suffered head injuries after a number of boxes fell on them, they were later diagnosed with an inter vertebral disc prolapse.

- A worker at Bardon Hill, in Leicestershire, suffered internal bruising after being knocked down and wedged under a heavy goods vehicle.



For workplace injuries to be reported to the HSE, they must be severe enough to prevent someone from performing their usual work duties for at least seven days, or be from a specified list of injuries that includes fractures, amputation, crushing, scalping and burning.

Mick Rix, GMB National Officer, said:

“Amazon are spending millions on PR campaigns trying to persuade people its warehouses are great places to work.

“But the facts are there for all to see -things are getting worse.

“Hundreds of stricken Amazon workers are needing urgent medical attention. Conditions are hellish.

“We’ve tried over and over again to get Amazon to talk to us to try and improve safety for workers. But enough is enough – it’s now time for a full parliamentary inquiry.”

Jack Dromey, MP for Birmingham Erdington, said:

“In my 30 years in the world of work I cannot remember any company clock up so many injuries to its workers. I have been inside the giant Rugeley depot and heard first hand from frightened workers of the 77 serious incidents in Rugeley alone.

“Amazon purports to be a 21st century company. It behaves like a 19th century millowner. Amazon owner, the American billionaire, Jeff Bezos, should be called to account by Parliament for his actions.

“How can he or Amazon justify refusing to talk to their workers’ union, the GMB, on safety? Their behaviour is disgraceful.”