

Last update: 1 Aug 2023

## Latest Update

### BODY WORN CAMERAS

Posted on: 1 August 2023

Dear Colleagues,

GMB have been in regular contact with the company and have had many conversations throughout the years over the use of Body Worn Cameras. GMB take the health, safety and wellbeing of our colleagues extremely seriously and we feel that this would support our members as long as it is used for the purpose it is intended for.

GMB will be an active part of a working group to discuss the future of Body Worn Camera deployment and we would therefore, ask all members if you have any issues of concern to feedback this back to your local reps **Matthew Godridge and Bev Parker** so we can address all issues during the working group. We will shortly be sending out a survey were we would like you our members to participate in with your responses so we can put these forward in the upcoming working groups.

Anyone not in **GMB NOW** is the time to join! GMB is the Largest Trade Union in British Gas and represents over 8000 colleagues throughout the staff and field collective. If you know of any colleagues who are not in the GMB but would like to be represented by us during these meetings, please ask them to join via the link below or contact your local **Reps Matthew Godridge and Bev Parker** for a membership form.

<https://www.gmb.org.uk/join-gmb>

In Solidarity,

**YOUR GMB TEAM**



**Posted on: 25 April 2023**

Further to recent updates, I am pleased to announce the results of the industrial action ballots over the change of employer caused by the decision of Centrica to outsource your functions to TVS.

The results are as follows;

## **Field Staff Ballot**

Votes in favour - 100%

Votes against - 0%

Turnout - 72.7%

## **Staff Side Ballot**

Votes in favour - 100%

Votes against - 0%

Turnout - 60%

As a result of this, GMB has served notice that we will be asking all members to undertake strike action between 00:01 on Tuesday 9th May until 11.59PM on Sunday 14th May. We will be liaising with you over this to agree times for members to attend picket lines over this period.

In the meantime, a further meeting with the company is due to take place tomorrow. Should there be any developments with regards to the dispute, we will inform members as soon as possible.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to cast their ballot paper. This has sent an extremely clear message to the company and has left them in no doubt as to how strongly you feel about this transfer.

Yours sincerely

**Andy Prendergast**



## Update On CDC/NDC Transfer



Posted on: 5 April 2023

Dear Colleague,

Further to recent updates, we have again met the business with regards to the transfer. During these meetings we have raised a number of concerns related to members terms and conditions and how these will be impacted post transfer. In terms of the concessions, these are as follows:

### **For members in the defined benefit (CERIS and Final salary) pension schemes**

As you know, TVS do not operate a defined benefit pension scheme. As a result, any members in one of the defined benefit pensions would move across into the special defined contribution scheme which we have agreed with TVS. This would see members contributions drop to 5% and for those colleagues with more than years' service TVS pay 10% moving forwards. Because this represents a drop in what members currently receive, we have managed to get the company to agree to pay in an additional 10% of annual salary at their cost into the TVS pension scheme through two options for defined benefit pension colleagues: either as a lump sum payment into pension on day one or paid as additional 5% monthly contributions over the first two years. For a warehouse operative, under the lump sum option this would equate to a one-off payment of around £2,500 into the pension at no cost to themselves. Should you leave after this date, that payment would remain in your pension pot and can be claimed on retirement.

### **For members in the defined contribution pension scheme**

As previously stated, we have managed to ensure that TVS match the current scheme which included double matched contributions up to a maximum of 10% (meaning that if members pay in 5%, the company will pay 10%). This is a significant improvement on the usual TVS scheme (where members would pay 5% and the employer 4%) and means that the current level of benefits would be preserved moving forwards.

### **Profit share**

As a Centrica employee, you are part of the profit share scheme which involves 2% of company profits been given out in shares. We have negotiated with TVS to replace this scheme with one which would involve all members being given 2% of the profits from the contract in cash on an annual basis subject to the performance of the contract (subject to reductions for service penalties). Although we still need to do some work on this and to ensure that the level of profitability on the contract can be externally



verified, this ensures that members can still share in any profits generated by the contract moving forwards.

### **For members under the QIP bonus scheme**

For those of you currently covered by the QIP bonus scheme, we have got agreement that this will be replaced by a TVS scheme where members can earn an additional 5% of salary (paid on a quarterly basis with payments of up to 1.25%). We will have to see exactly what metrics this will be based on but it should ensure that you have the ability to earn extra money once the transfer is completed.

### **For member under the APIP bonus scheme**

For those of you currently in receipt of the APIP bonus scheme, we have agreed that this will be replaced with a TVS scheme which will pay up to 12% of annual pay on the basis of performance related targets.

### **Energy allowance**

Although TVS are unable to continue the energy allowance on the basis that it is not open to non-Centrica employees, for those of you who currently receive the energy allowance, you will be given a one-off payment on transfer equal to one years' worth of energy allowance. This is £375 if you're a dual fuel customer and £187.50 if you're a single fuel customer. Furthermore, the amount paid through payroll will be a higher amount than the £375 (or £187.50) net per fuel to cover the tax and NI payable on the payment. The higher amount will be calculated to ensure that you receive the full net amount per fuel in your salary.

### **Issues relating to the proposed transfer to Lutterworth in 2024**

We have managed to get an agreement from TVS to look at this prior to staff moving over to the new site with an agreement that where it is jointly recognised that the individual is unable to make the move, a redundancy payment will be made. Because of the numerous factors involved in this, it is impossible at this stage to say exactly who would be covered as each case will need to be looked on based on its merits. However, the fact that we now have agreement that redundancy will be considered means that we have some confidence that those of you unable to make the change should be compensated for the loss of their job at the point of the transfer to Lutterworth. Whilst we always seek to save jobs, we recognise that for some a move of this distance will simply mean that some of you are unable to move and as a result, the recognition that redundancy will be considered is a step in the right direction. Needless to say, we will support any impacted members once we have a clear table on the change of site and will work hard to get the best result for you.

### **Next steps**

Following consultation with you, we are aware that there is significant unhappiness about this change. However, we have worked hard to get the best deal that we can, and the agreements above represent a significant improvement on the initial proposals put forward. We have managed to ensure that many of the bonus schemes are replicated and that there is compensation for many of the elements which are being removed. Furthermore, the agreement that redundancy will be considered is significant for those is





you unable to make the move although in practice we will not know exactly how this will work until we enter individual consultation once we know the dates at which any transfer is likely to take place. We have only been able to achieve these improvements because of your collective membership and the fact that we can use that to put pressure on the company.

We will, over the coming weeks, be consulting you on these improvements and whether they are sufficient. At the same time and because of the timescales, we are undertaking a formal ballot on the change of identity of your employer as we know that, for the majority of you, this is the key issue moving forwards. Ballot papers will be sent out next week and this will give you the chance to cast your vote for industrial action should you wish to take it.

GMB reps and officers will continue to be on site over the coming weeks to answer any further questions you have about the proce

**Andy Prendergast**  
**National Secretary**

## **SERIOUS CONCERNS AROUND BRITISH GAS FIELD SERVICES**



**Posted on: 23 March 2023**

Dear Colleague,

We are writing to you to highlight serious concerns about the manner in which the business is treating our members in the field services collective. Although as a Union we understand that it is imperative that the services side of the business returns to profit as soon as possible, we are unwilling to stay silent when changes are made which are detrimental to colleagues and lead to a culture which undermines health and safety and leads to cuts to terms and conditions for members within CDC and NDC. The fact that some of these are being proposed in the same week that the Company have awarded the CEO an annual package of around £4.5 million is simply unacceptable.

Specifically, we have raised a number of issues about the fact that the company are currently mandating engineers to attend safety briefings, whilst at the same time refusing to adjust output targets in order to facilitate their attendance at these sessions. Considering that the message is that engineers need to spend more time ensuring that work is undertaken safely, to then refuse to account for time spent at briefings means that they are effectively giving members less time to do the work. This cannot be right and highlights a situation whereby the business is effectively saying one thing whilst doing another.



This issue is further compounded by the failure of the business to protect colleagues in the NDC and CDC in relation to the proposed transfer to TVS. Whilst we understand the need to modernise the distribution system to help engineers and deliver for customers, the fact that the company's current proposals include members being denied future profit share, ending their energy allowances and forcing them out of the defined benefit pension scheme, it cannot be seen as anything other than a mercenary exercise in cost cutting made at the expenses of some of the lowest paid workers in the collective. Although the consultation process is yet to finish, at the time of writing the failure to make concessions on these issues should act as a warning to members across the services business. The simple fact is that if they can get away with it in the CDC and NDC, they can ultimately get away with it anywhere.

We wish to make it clear that we are always willing to work the business to improve efficiency and to ensure that members jobs are secure. However, we have not and will not give them a blank cheque to make savings at our members expense, especially when those at the top are banking record pay packets.

GMB continues to work to get the best for members, both through defending terms and conditions in the short term whilst working to secure your job and industry for future generations. We are pushing for the hydrogen future, for the extension of the SMART mandate, for a return to profit in a way that allows members to work productively and safely, and we will work with the company to achieve this. However, when we see their practices clearly contradicting their public statements, we will not be silent.

We will update members on further developments on these issues but at the time of writing it is only right that we keep you updated as to our concerns as to the current direction that the business is taking.

Yours sincerely

**Andy Prendergast**  
**National Secretary**

**CDC And NDC - PROPOSED TRANSFER TO TVS**

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**Posted on: 13 March 2023**

**To: All members at Centrica CDC and NDC**

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to you having attended the first consultation meeting with Centrica and TVS about the proposed transfer.



At the meeting we raised a number of issues on your behalf. In relation to these issues, we have received a number of responses in respect of many of them. These include:

### ■ Date of transfer

All parties are currently working to complete the transfer by 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023. As with any transfer, there is a possibility that this may need to be moved but at present it is expected to be completed on that date.

### ■ Salary, sick pay and pay date

TVS have confirmed that these will remain unchanged post transfer. In relation to pay, future increases would continue to be negotiated by your union on your behalf.

### ■ Holidays

Whilst holiday entitlements will remain unchanged, the TVS holiday year runs from January – December. Whilst there may be some issues around this change, this is not uncommon and we will ensure that members do not lose out as a result.

### ■ Bonus

Whilst TVS do not currently have a bonus, they are working on one which will match Centrica's in terms of the amount that members can earn. Once the proposals on this have been finalised, we will consult with members to ensure that the targets are achievable.

### ■ Pensions

We have received confirmation that TVS will be matching the Centrica defined contribution scheme rates (which currently involve doubling your contributions up to a maximum of 5% / 10% **after 2 years' service**).

### ■ Profit share

TVS have confirmed that they are not a public limited company and are therefore unable to replicate the Centrica agreement in this regard. This means that this would cease in future years. It will not however impact on the payment due in April, and will mean that any members can cash in their shares should



they wish to post the transfer which is expected on 15<sup>th</sup> May. This will mean that they can be cashed without having to wait the five years which would be the case if you stayed with British Gas.

### ■ Shifts and location

None of these would change immediately following the transfer. The location of the sites will be changing once the new facility is ready in around eighteen months' time. Whilst there is no intention to change shifts at this time, as with British Gas, there remains the possibility that this could be altered in line with your contract subject to consultation and notice.

### ■ Other policies and benefits

We are concerned that the current proposal in relation to a number non contractual benefits involves either cuts to these (such as paternity and maternity leave) or the complete removal of them (such as the energy allowance). We have requested that these be relooked at to ensure that members are not disadvantaged in respect of this transfer.

### GMB View

Whilst we are pleased that the company have given clear commitments in relation to pay and many of your terms and conditions, we still have a number of concerns in relation to areas which we have yet to get satisfactory answers to. As we have only had the first of the consultation meetings, this is to be expected and we hope to see further clarity and improvements over the coming weeks. Once we have these meetings, we will update you further. As your union we are working hard to achieve the best deal for you and want to see long terms commitments to provide you with the security and certainty you need. We will continue to keep you updated on developments on they arise.

In the meantime if you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to contact you union rep.

In solidarity

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL OFFICER**

**GMB Commercial Services Section**

**BRITISH GAS HSA – CHANGES TO THE COMMISSION SCHEME GMB MEMBERS' INDICATIVE  
BALLOT RESULTS**

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**Posted on: 6 March 2023**

Dear Colleagues

As you are aware, we have recently been holding an Indicative Ballot of GMB members in HSA over the discussions with the business about the changes to the commission scheme, which were announced on the 23 December 2022.

The Indicative Ballot on whether members wanted to be formally balloted for Industrial Action has now closed. I can confirm that the results are:

**PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERS VOTING YES - 91%**

**PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERS VOTING NO - 9%**

**TURNOUT OF MEMBERS - 83%**

There has been a resounding **YES** vote and we will now be contacting the Company with a view to seeing how the Company now wishes to proceed.

We will keep members updated with any further information.

If you have any further queries about this ballot or the discussions with the Company, please contact your GMB Reps.

In solidarity

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**  
**NATIONAL OFFICER**  
**GMB Commercial Services Section**

**CENTRICA - CDC & NDC - PROPOSED TRANSFER TO TVS**

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**Posted on: 3 March 2023**

**To: All members at Centrica CDC and NDC**

Dear Colleague,



I am writing to you with regards to yesterday's announcement that NDC and the CDC are to be transferred to TVS. This is obviously a significant disappointment to GMB having received a number of assurances that British Gas remained committed to a direct labour model, something that is undermined by the decision to transfer you out of the business. Although the transfer is being mooted as an attempt to bring 'modernisation' to the distribution part of the Centrica, we are concerned by the implications of this, seeing as that in many industries 'modernisation' has become a byword for cuts.

We are also concerned about the fact that prior to any transfer, a number of senior managers appear to have been transferred out to roles within Centrica that allow them to remain within the business whilst more junior staff will be moved to another company.

In terms of the proposed transfer, we are pleased that the company have confirmed that TUPE will apply. TUPE is the name for the legal protection that ensures that members terms and conditions are protected after the transfer and that you can continue to ensure that your terms are negotiated by the union in the future. However, for us there remain a number of significant issues which we are seeking urgent clarification over. Amongst these are the following:

### ■ Pensions

Whilst TVS operate a very similar defined contribution scheme which operates on a broadly similar level to Centrica's. For those of you in the defined benefit scheme (either final salary or CERIS) there is no equivalent scheme within the new company. As pensions are not covered by TUPE, this creates a significant potential problem and one we are urgently seeking to address.

### ■ Profit Share Scheme

As you should be aware, we have negotiated a scheme whereby members receive a number of deferred shares each year. This year, the value of those shares is around £1,900. As a result of the transfer, we need to ensure that all agreed payments are maintained and need answers to what proposals there are to ensure that this is important benefit is not lost through the transfer.

### ■ Location

Whilst we are pleased that the company have made it clear that there will be no redundancies as a result of the transfer and the future proposed move to Lutterworth, we are extremely concerned as to how this will impact members who will struggle to get to the new site at the point at which it opens. Whilst for many of you, this will not cause significant difficulties, for others with either travel issues or caring responsibilities we know that this will cause significant issues. As a result, we hope to get some clarification on the long-term proposals in this regard as soon as possible.



Overall, we know that this will be a difficult time for members but please rest assured that GMB is doing everything we can to ensure that you get the support you need and that your concerns and worries are addressed as soon as possible. We will be on site over the coming weeks and will be seeking to ensure that your voice is heard in the consultation meetings and that we get the best possible deal for you.

We will let you know as soon as possible when we are going to be on site and will ensure that reps are available to support you. Please rest assured we will take all steps necessary to protect your future and would advise you speak to any colleagues who aren't members with a view to getting them to join. As always, our best chance of getting the best deal depends on having the highest level of membership possible.

In solidarity

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**  
**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## INDICATIVE BALLOT OVER CHANGES TO THE COMMISSION SCHEME



Posted on: 21 February 2023

**TO: ALL GMB BRITISH GAS HSA MEMBERS**

Dear Colleague

As you are aware, we have recently been in discussions with the business about the changes to the commission scheme which were announced on the 23 December 2022. These changes involve what has been described by reps as a significant cut to the level of commission HSAs can earn, an increase in targets and the introduction of a quarterly bonus scheme of which HSAs have little control over. When we have raised these issues with management, they have argued that the previous scheme was unsustainable and cannot be continued. Because these changes are significant and because the business are refusing to discuss changes which would be more positive for HSAs, we now have no option but to undertake an indicative ballot, in order to understand what steps members are willing to take over these changes.

An indicative ballot allows us to understand the strength of feeling amongst the membership. If we get significant support for undertaking action, and if the business continues to refuse to negotiate on this issue, we would then look to move to a formal ballot.

**For the avoidance of doubt, no action can be undertaken before a full formal ballot is held.**



HSA members entitled to vote have been sent a link to our online ballot paper via personal email addresses or sms. The ballot will close on 12 Noon, Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2023. If you have any questions about this please contact your Union rep.

If you are aware of a colleague who has not received an email or sms and should have received one, please ask them to speak to their Union Rep or contact their Regional Office to update their membership details.

Yours in solidarity

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## **PH JONES 2023 PAY BALLOT RESULTS**



**Posted on: 19 December 2022**

Dear Colleague,

The ballot of GMB PH Jones Members has now concluded with the final vote being:

**TO ACCEPT THE OFFER - 88%**

**TO REJECT THE OFFER - 12%**

All members will be a net payment of £650 on 23rd December 2022. We will provide further details as to when the other payments will be received shortly.

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## **GMB BALLOT RESULTS ON BRITISH GAS FIELD SERVICES 2023 PAY OFFER**



**Posted on: 19 December 2022**





The ballot of GMB British Gas Field Services Members has now concluded with the final vote being:

**TO ACCEPT THE OFFER – 82%**

**TO REJECT THE OFFER – 18%**

As a result of the deal being accepted, all members should expect to receive a net payment of £650 on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022. All new rates will be calculated from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 (accepting that these may not be processed immediately) and the minimum £800 profit share will be paid in April 2023.

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## **GMB BALLOT ON BRITISH GAS FIELD SERVICES PAY OFFER**



**Posted on: 6 December 2022**

Dear Colleague,

You should now have been briefed by the business on the Field Services pay offer. This has been presented to GMB as a full and final offer and, as a result, we are now undertaking a ballot to get your views as to whether this is accepted or not. As a democratic union, GMB will only take a position on the offer based on votes of our members.

As you will have heard from the business, whilst Centrica as a group is currently highly profitable as a result of high energy prices (posting profits of over £1.3 billion for the first half of the year alone), Field Services has had a difficult year and is currently losing both customers and money. In relation to the profits, due to the Government's windfall tax on energy, over £450 million will need to be paid to the Treasury in January. The offer, detailed below, is estimated to cost over £50 million to the business, However, of that money, only around half of the total represents improvements to consolidated pay.

### **Who is covered by the offer?**

The offer covers all Level 7's and 8's employed by the Field Services collective. This includes all engineers in Service and Repair, SMART, Electrical Services, Heating Installations, NTS, NDC, CDC, SAE, CDM's amongst others

### **The offer is as follows:**



## Increases to consolidated pay

- **For staff on the current pay spine for the role, an increase of 5% consolidated pay will be paid.** Where staff have taken last year's pay increase as a monthly allowance, this payment will effectively replace that as from 1<sup>st</sup> April (unless you are in one of the groups who receive an increase of more than 5% as detailed below).
- **For staff below the pay spine, increases of more than 5% will be paid.** There are two main groups that this will affect. The first are SMART Engineers who, due to the increases in market pay, will see an increase in the 'rate for the job' of 18.8% which will take them to £35,337. The second are Technical Repair Engineers where the 'rate for the job' will increase by 8.43% to £41,650 (For Technical Repair Engineers paid the legacy rate of £39,667, the increase to £41,650 represents exactly a 5% increase).
- **All increases will be brought forward from April to 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023.** This means that for members receiving the 5% consolidated increase will see an additional payment worth 1.25% paid between January and March to cover this period.
- **For members paid more than 5% above the rate for the job, they will receive an unconsolidated increase of 5% in April** (which is not subjected to any claw back should they leave the company after this date). They will also receive the 1.25% payment in respect of the period between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. **For avoidance of doubt, this is likely to include virtually all members in receipt of the London allowance in London and the South-East.**
- **For members paid above the pay spine but within 5%, they will receive the difference between their rate and the new rate with the remainder of the 5% being paid as a one-off lump sum.** This rate will come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> January meaning that members would expect to see a further payment covering this period.

## Unconsolidated (one off) payments

This offer also includes two one-off lump sums. These are as follows:

- **£1,000 (subject to tax and National Insurance) paid to all employed members on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022** (with a notional payment of £650 paid to all with any reconciliation of tax and NI taking place in January's pay). Members will have the option to pay this into



the DC pension in order to take advantage of tax relief on pensions should they wish to do so.

- **The addition of the Spirit and Nuclear energy in money into the profit share for one year only, paid cash as a guaranteed minimum of £800 in April.**
- **None of these payments are subject to 'claw back' if you leave the business after these have been paid.**

#### Other matters

- **As part of the proposal, the rates for CTAP will continue to be calculated on the 2022 rates.**

#### **GMB's Position**

Following detailed discussions with GMB reps across the business, GMB have taken a factual stance on the offer in order to give our members the final decision on whether we as a Union accept it. As a result, please ensure that you fully understand the offer based on both the company briefings and the information above prior to casting your ballot.

#### **Positive parts of the offer**

- We have secured over £50 million for members from a part of the business that is losing both customers and money.
- We have managed to effectively break the pay freeze for most service and repair engineers within 18 months of agreeing a three-year pay freeze.
- We have secured significant increases for members in SMART.
- All members would benefit from at least two one off lump sums with the first being paid before Christmas.

#### **Negative parts of the offer**



- This is a take it or leave it offer which has not been secured via the usual route of negotiations.
- For the majority of members who received an unconsolidated amount of money last year, the consolidated element will do no more than replace those payments when they come to an end in March 2023. Furthermore, the fact that the agreed pensions deal from 2018 is finally being implemented means that many members will have an effective real terms pay cut. This is particularly the case for many engineers in receipt of the London Allowance.
- The offer, whilst far higher than many in recent years, is significantly below inflation which is currently running in double digits.

### Next steps

You are being asked to ballot on this offer using the online link. Once the ballots have been counted, we will either accept or reject the offer.

### What happens if the offer is accepted?

The business will be informed, and the £1,000 payment (£650 after tax and NI) will be paid on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022. All rates subject to consolidated increases will see these calculated from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023, accepting that this may take some time. We have been assured that all such payments will be paid prior to April if delayed. All unconsolidated amounts related to salary will be paid as one lump sum in April.

### What happens if the offer is rejected?

The business will be informed, and talks will be scheduled to see if we can achieve any improvements. The business has made it clear that, if rejected, the two unconsolidated payments (£1,000 before Christmas and £800 in April) will be off the table and that they will revert to an offer of 2.5% as per the July 2021 Field Services agreement. As a result of this, we will have no option but to serve notice on the company that we will be balloting for industrial action. **For the avoidance of doubt, we do not believe that a better offer will be made without members voting for industrial action.**

**Please use your vote to ensure that your voice is heard.**

Other matters outside of the pay offer provided for information only



- **The increase in pension contributions for those of you in the Defined Benefits pension schemes (either CERIS or Final Salary) will come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, as agreed as part of the 2018 pensions deal.** This will involve an increase in contributions of around 1.9% although this will be slightly lower due to tax relief on pensions.
- **The profit share/share save scheme will continue and it is estimated that each member will receive around £1,200 in shares at this point** (this is subject to some variation depending on the group profits at this point).
- **All parts of the 2022 pay offer (either the one-off lump sum paid in January or the monthly payments) will continue until March as per the previous agreement. After March these will no longer be paid.**

## HOW TO CAST YOUR VOTE

All ballots will be sent out via SMS or email, depending on what information we hold. If you do not receive a ballot paper by close of play of Thursday, 8th December 2022, please contact either your local Rep or your local GMB Office.

**Andy Prendergast**

**National Secretary**

**Noticeboard Bulletin - 26-04-2022**



Posted on: 26 April 2022

To: All members employed by British Gas Services

Dear Colleague,

### Pay Offer

Further to recent updates, we are pleased to inform you that we have secured a pay offer from the company. We are now working on a programme of briefings with the company that will take place beginning next week and running until the 18th May. At these briefings, the company will provide details



of the offer and what it means to you. All members will be invited to stay at the end to vote on the deal, which, if accepted, will be backdated to 1st April 2022.

Although the pay offer is not everything we wanted, to have brought the business back to the table to talk about the cost of living within a year of members agreeing to a three year freeze represents a significant step forward and without your support this simply would not have been possible. We strongly encourage all members to get along to the briefings to ensure that you have your say.

If you are unable to make your briefing and are not allocated another, please contact your GMB officer or rep who will arrange for a postal ballot to be sent out to ensure that you still get to cast your vote.

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## **CLOSURE OF BRITISH GAS BUSINESS SERVICES**



**Posted on: 25 March 2022**

### **UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

Dear Colleague,

Following a meeting yesterday, the business has come back with us in regard to some of the outstanding issues on the closure of BGB.

In relation to the issue of members who have tickets due to expire before 31st December 2023, the company have agreed to ensure that these tickets are maintained. However, for members within that category, anyone wishing to maintain their tickets will forgo the £4,000 payments which are due to staff moving over to Service and Repair. Those wishing to maintain their tickets, as opposed to taking the money, will also have to agree to a bond, whereby they repay the money if they leave within a certain period of time after their completion. We are still working those through with the business in terms of the cost and the duration which will apply to any clawback. We have made the point that any clawback should only be for money over the £4,000 and are awaiting a response to this point.

In terms of those members going over to the domestic side of the business, they will have a choice to either go onto the technical engineer role (paid at £32,209 PA) or the technical engineer role (paid at the legacy salary of £39,667 PA). If members are on a higher rate than that, they will have their salaries protected at the current amount. We are currently in pay talks with the company and members will be



eligible for any increases that these pay talks deliver. There would also be a full induction, which would ensure that members were supplied with the correct tools, van, uniforms etc. prior to undertaking any domestic work.

One area we have not made progress on relates to whether members could choose to leave on redundancy as opposed as taking up the new position. Whilst as a union we are here to protect jobs, we are aware that many of you would prefer to have the option of redundancy on account of BGB closing. The business position on this is that they are making offers of suitable alternative employment and therefore redundancy does not apply. In terms of the legal position, as the offer now includes maintenance of tickets, along with salary increases and less travel time, this is likely to fulfil the requirements of suitable alternative employment under the law.

For lead technicians there is a further argument about the suitability of the role based on the amount of time spent doing supervisory and managerial work, which would not be part of the new role. The business is arguing that, as the amount of time spent on these is low, the role is suitable. However, we have pointed out that the reduction of time spent on this work has been a result of the lead technicians taking on more servicing work as a result of the change to the business, and the loss of engineers over the last year, for which they should not be unduly penalised. As a result of this we would support any member who wishes to pursue this via the grievance route and will get legal advice prior to any change coming into effect.

We will be meeting the business again to pursue these points and will update you as to developments as soon as we can.

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## **British Gas - Inducement Claim Update**



**Posted on: 18 March 2022**

Dear GMB Member

GMB lawyers will be attending a case review related to the inducement claim on 12<sup>th</sup> April. This is a prehearing, but one which will give us an idea of the timescales on the claim in full being held, as well as offering a chance to assess the case in light of up-to-date legal developments. We will inform members of the outcome of that process shortly after the case review.



We have also contacted the company's lawyers over the possibility of settling the claims. Such talks are usual in any litigation of this size. Should they result in a way forward, we will let members know at the earliest possible opportunity.

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## **CLOSURE OF BRITISH GAS BUSINESS SERVICES – UPDATE**



**Posted on: 18 March 2022**

Dear Colleague,

Further to previous updates, we have now met the business with regards to the ongoing issues which have arisen from the decision to close the BGB section. As you know, it is the intention of the business to move staff from BGB into Service and Repair (S&R), which would involve undertaking domestic work. We have raised questions as to whether this can be considered as suitable alternative employment. This is a legal term which covers offers of suitable jobs which have to be considered by an employer as an alternative to compulsory redundancy. The usual definition of 'suitable alternative employment' relates to a number of factors including pay, location and skills.

In terms of the move to S&R, it is clear that the first two issues (pay and work location) are not a factor, seeing as S&R pay more than the going rate for the technician role and that the work location is likely to be closer to home than the work being currently undertaken for BGB work. For Lead Techs the same applies, although the current rate for S&R is slightly behind that of the Lead Tech role. However, as this is only a difference of a few hundred pounds it is unlikely to trigger a claim for redundancy, on the basis that any change in wages would usually be expected to be over 15% to be able to make a case that it is unsuitable. Furthermore, the fact that the current level of wages would be protected means that there would be no loss of earnings as a result of the move. We are still examining the job descriptions to see if there are further arguments that can be made in this regard. Once we have a legal view on these, we will let you know immediately.

Where an issue does remain relates to the issue of deskilling that would arise if the extra commercial tickets, currently undertaken by engineers, were not renewed by the business post any move. Having gone through the extra tickets required in BGB, we estimate that the costs of renewing these can be as high as £10,000 and failing to do this would mean that members are being deskilled by the company if they refused to maintain these for a set period post transfer. This has been raised with the business, along with the demand that these be maintained moving forwards. This would ensure that any members





who agreed to stay did not lose out as a result if they decided not to remain with British Gas. We are waiting a response on this point and will let members know as soon as we have answer. If there is agreement to maintain the tickets, this is likely to mean that there is little argument on the suitability of the role from a legal perspective

If no agreement is forthcoming, then we will support any members who wished to pursue this via the grievance route, prior to exploring the possibility of taking a constructive dismissal claim. We should point out that constructive dismissal claims are extremely difficult to win and, in cases like this, where there is no impact on pay, any compensation would be capped at the basic award (currently £16,230 and which would be dependent on having over twenty years' service and being over the age of 61). We will provide more information on this once we have an answer to the request to maintain your tickets.

We have also raised the issue about contractors being kept in place once members have transferred. In response to this, Matt Isherwood has made it clear that this will not happen and that the contractors will be let go on each patch prior to engineers being moved across to S&R. In practice this means that the direct labour force will be the last ones undertaking BGB jobs for the company.

One issue that has been raised is whether staff impacted will have a claim or constructive dismissal. These claims are always difficult to win although we are not ruling them out at this stage. We would advise members to await until we have a formal response from the company before these are considered as anyone pursuing them now may be doing so prematurely considering that we have yet to get responses to our questions. That said, if you would like to explore the possibility of a constructive dismissal claim, we strongly advise you to seek legal advice in advance. This should be obtained by contacting your local regional officer who details can be sought via your local regional office.

We will communicate more shortly once we have further responses to the outstanding issues.

**ANDY PRENDERGAST**

**NATIONAL SECRETARY**

## **STAFF ENERGY OFFER & FIELD SERVICES PAY TALKS UPDATE**



**Posted on: 18 March 2022**

Dear GMB Member,

**Staff Energy Offer**



We are pleased to announce that after pressing the company for action on the cost of living, they have agreed to treble the discount available to all staff who buy their energy from the company from £50 to £150 (which equals £300 off dual fuel bills). This move will help members struggling with high bills as the energy price cap is increased on 1st April. This means in practice that for members who buy both gas and electricity from the business, they will see a £25 per month reduction in their bill.

For members who already buy their energy via the company, this deduction will happen automatically. If you do not currently buy your energy from the company, they are setting up an easy process for you to transfer should you wish to do so. Members will be informed of this process via the company shortly.

### **Pay Talks Update**

We are continuing to press the company for further action on the costs of living crisis and have began pay talks with the company for field services staff. Once we have a way forward for field staff, we will be looking at what extra action can be taken for staff elsewhere in the business. The fact that we have entered pay talks in field services is a direct result of the deal that ended last year's dispute, with GMB having got the company to agree to reopen pay talks in the case of exceptional circumstances which have now clearly arisen in the form of a cost of living crisis and continued problems in recruiting and retaining skilled engineers. However, we know that whilst getting the company to restart talks is a success, what matters is ultimately the offer that results from these discussions.

Talks will be continuing over the next month, and we hope to be able to share and offer with members prior to undertaking a ballot. Only union members will be able to vote in this ballot and, in order to ensure that we get the best deal possible, it is vital that we have as many members as possible engaged in the process.

We cannot deny that this will be a difficult year moving forwards, with both members and the company experiencing higher costs as a result of the increase in National Insurance contributions due on 1st April. We are also awaiting on the results of the tri-annual pension valuation, which is likely to have an effect on members' pensions contributions as per the pensions agreement which was reached in 2018. Needless to say, we will keep members up to date with developments as soon as we have more news.

If you need any assistance in the meantime, please don't hesitate to contact your union rep.

**Andy Prendergast**

**National Secretary**

**British Gas Staff Reward – Joint Trade Union Bulletin**

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**Posted on: 24 January 2022**

Dear Trade Union Member

We are informing you that a joint union letter has gone to British Gas asking them to begin talks with us on ways to increase reward for staff working in British Gas.

Since the new reward framework was agreed with the business in Dec 2020, the cost of living has increased significantly (well beyond expectations) and is set to continue to do so for some time. Alongside the many challenges this present to our members, we are also seeing recruitment and retention problems in many of the working roles members carry out, with employers elsewhere using increased reward to attract workers and retain them.

Under the current agreement only those staff who are on or below the 2020 revised job rates receive an inflationary pay increase which itself is capped at 2.5% when CPI is running at 5.1% It is the joint staff trade unions view that if the business does not intervene to increase the overall reward to staff, that this will not only significantly reduce the real earnings of members but present the business with many challenges, not least:

- How it retains its staff in a competitive job market
- How it recruits new staff to satisfy the customer growth that has been seen in 2021
- How it retains the goodwill and morale of the workforce at a time of considerable pressure.

A failure to respond to our request will not help the business address its own challenges or its ability to service customers. Poor workforce morale and recruitment and retention issues carries a high business cost and not having enough staff to give the best levels of customer service, means we will not retain them.

We will keep you updated on any progress made.

## **Noticeboard Bulletin - 05-01-2022**



**Posted on: 5 January 2022**

Dear Colleague,



**Happy New Year from all at GMB!**

## **FIELD SERVICES PAY CLAIM**

Although members who signed up to the new terms and conditions under threat of dismissal agreed to a three year pay freeze, when GMB negotiated the deal which ended the dispute, we ensured that there was a clause that allowed us to submit a pay claim in the event of exceptional circumstances. Those circumstances, as laid down in the talks, were as follows:

- **A significant increase in inflation.**
- **Recruitment and retention difficulties.**
- **An improvement in the company performance.**

Due to the developments over the second half of last year, it is clear that all three of these circumstances have arisen. Inflation has risen significantly with RPI now standing at 7.1% and CPI at 5.1%. There are also clear difficulties across the country in terms of recruiting skilled engineers with the British Gas package evidently not as attractive as the company had hoped. Finally, although we have yet to see the company's financial results, there are significant signs that performance is improving. The share price has risen by over 50% and the company's target of increasing energy consumers by over 350,000 has already been exceeded, albeit in part as a result of the supplier of last resort process designed to capture customers from the numerous energy companies that have gone under in the latter part of 2021. Furthermore, according to the company's own figures, productivity has increased with both service and repair and SMART showing increases of over ten per cent.

As a result of these circumstances, we have submitted a pay claim to the company and have requested pay talks to take place at the earliest opportunity.

**In the pay claim we have asked for the following financial elements:**

- An inflation plus increase in basic rates and allowances.
- A review of rates by skill type to ensure that these are comparable with the market and British Gas's stated intention to remain as an upper quartile payer in terms of wages.
- A review of the CTAP bonus scheme.
- An engineer recruitment/retention payment to replace the 37-40 hours payment following the conclusion of that agreement.



- Increase of Bank Holiday rates to 200%.

**We have requested the following to improve members work life balance:**

- An extension of the five-day working week arrangement, which is currently in place, so that it can be adopted permanently by those who wish to work it.
- Permanent agreement on protection of the four-day week over the 16-week summer period.
- Permanent or reduced roster caps on unsociable hours beyond the end of March 2024 (weekends / late shifts / standby / EA shifts) and a clear plan as how the agreed caps on EA are to be adhered to in the interim period.

**Finally, we have also asked for a number of items designed to support members as they progress through their careers:**

- An agreement concerning the number of SMART engineers to be retrained for other work, with a clear timescale on when cross trained engineers can expect to receive the higher rate and go onto the CERIS pensions scheme.
- A no compulsory redundancy agreement.
- A review of the engineer of the future programme, to ensure that members' skills are being kept updated to ensure that the company has the manpower necessary for the expected demand for hydrogen boilers and heat pumps.

We expect a response from the company on this shortly and will keep you abreast of developments as they occur over the coming months.

**Carer's Policy**

GMB has recently been approached by members of the British Gas Carers Network about the benefits of the carer's policy. This policy affords members with caring responsibilities to take up to ten days paid leave in every rolling twelve-month period to take time off to look after those they care for, with an extra ten days if matched by annual leave (giving a potential of thirty days in total). If you have caring responsibilities and are not aware of this entitlement, please find the policy on the intranet site or speak to your GMB shop steward about your potential eligibility for support under the scheme.



If you have any questions about this bulletin, or need any help and support, please contact your GMB shop steward who will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely

**Andy Prendergast**

**National Secretary**

## Noticeboard Bulletin – 14-12-2021



**Posted on: 14 December 2021**

### **CTAP and the S.L.T.**

The business stated that CTAP training would be available for all who needed it. Sadly, GMB can find no evidence of our members having been booked in for or given this training. Once again, we feel this company have made false promises and reneged on agreements with GMB, and now we have the “can’t do it at this time of year” excuse, with the lame promise of “we can do it next year.” This is not good enough, our members need the training now, not when they are possibly being taken through “performance management” on the back of it.

GMB sent out the below on the **25th November**. However, following emails between GMB and management last week, it is blatantly obvious that it is not the lower levels of management (CDMs) that have the problem with delivering this training as we had been told by their bosses, it is the senior management that had informed us that £1,000,000 had been set aside for CTAP training. But, as we all know, you can set aside a **Billion pounds** if you have no intention of using it, and GMB can find no positive intent from the business regarding CTAP training for our members.

### **CTAP Training**

GMB were given assurances on the 4th November that anyone who uses the CTAP App, who was struggling to either make it work or to input the data, would be given training in the first instance. Unfortunately, this training hasn’t materialised, or where it has, it has been far less than what was agreed. If engineers were to ignore a clear instruction from management, then we all know what the consequences would be, something that was made very clear on the management videos that were circulated a few weeks ago. The question now must be asked as to what consequences managers are facing for ignoring similar instructions to ensure that their staff are trained?



Yet again it paints a picture of British Gas fast becoming the “say one thing and do another” company. Instead of engaging your reps from the start of the process to work together to build something that delivered for staff, customers, and the business, they have instead kept GMB at arm’s length, and have now been left with a bonus scheme that our members are clearly saying they have little faith in.

To try to resolve the situation, and to assist in trying to make this scheme work, we have made the following demands on the business:

- That full, meaningful training is given to all staff who want it, to ensure that they understand the App and their own role in inputting data. (Not given) • That the training is undertaken sooner rather than later. **(Not done)**
- That GMB is supplied with a meaningful breakdown of the results of the App, both by skill type and area, to get a detailed understanding as to where it appears to be working and where it isn’t. This will allow us to identify the problems as we seek to resolve them. **(Seen data but not what we requested)**
- That the business gives clear assurances that the data that the App produces is robust, and that engineers who have engaged with the App are able to draw down their reward without fear that it will be clawed back. Without giving guarantees as to the validity of positive balances, we cannot see how they have faith in negative balances. **(Business have stated they will never give these assurances)**

With this information and engineer training, we believed we would be able to provide engineers the necessary assurances, whilst continuing to work with the company, as they sorted the problems in the system. GMB feel we can still help, but can we trust this management team who continually fail to deliver on their promises to their workforce.

**It is important to remember that any bonus scheme the business put in place is not only non-contractual, but is a business initiative, and the only influence GMB has is to try to shape the content of the scheme. Please remember that this is a business scheme, not GMB’s.**

### CTAP Survey Results

Below are the results from the recent CTAP survey GMB sent to all members

1. Do you personally have confidence in your CTAP figures?

Yes: 5%



No: 95%

2. Do you have confidence that CTAP can work?

Yes: 14%

No: 86%

3. Has CTAP made you more likely to stay with the company?

Yes: 7%

No: 93%

**In Solidarity – GMB National Reps**

## **CTAP & CHRISTMAS UPDATE**



**Posted on: 1 January 1970**

Colleagues

If CTAP didn't have the potential to be so serious it would be laughable. Numerous attempts have been made to correct the data and give engineers certainty, and yet with each update the situation seems to become even less clear.

Currently we have feedback from engineers from all skill types, and in all areas, that show that balances are varying widely with each update, giving no one any certainty as to how they are perceived as performing or any confidence that the rewards they believe are theirs will not disappear with the next update. Whilst some variation with each update should be expected based on ongoing performance, we have examples where engineers are moving from high positive balances to high negative balances without any rational explanation.

Considering the purpose of the scheme is to reward engineers for their productivity, this is counterproductive and risks achieving the situation where engineers simply lose confidence in both the data and the business's ability to judge their output.

This has left us having to ask as to how managers in the business would be judged if placed on a similar scheme considering the large numbers of recalls of data that have taken place over the last few





months?

GMB now believe that the CTAP snowman could melt before the summer leaving the business's carrot in a puddle.

Feedback from many engineers now suggest that CTAP is fast becoming the **'in out, in out, hokey cokey bonus scheme'**, promising to get your figures right in the end, but only willing to guarantee bottom end figures without guaranteeing that amounts being drawn out will not be clawed back by the company. GMB are clear on this, that unless the company can guarantee that the alleged double-checked positive balances can be drawn down without fear of being clawed back, then they cannot have confidence that in the negative balances which will be the cause of performance conversations and potential capability procedures.

As you know, CTAP data was updated again yesterday with the CTAP App simply stating, 'awaiting approval.' We have been advised that it will update again tomorrow, but as engineers wait on the outcome of yet another update, GMB must ask the business how long will we have to wait until this process delivers the happy ending promised? As the weeks go by and more and more problems arise, we are forced to ask the questions as to whether it ever will do.

We will continue to raise issues and work to try to resolve the problems in the hope that we can get to a place whereby the CTAP App can measure output in a consistent and measured fashion that gives engineers the reward and certainty that is allegedly the driver for this process. If this can be done then we will have no issue in endorsing the process, if it can't then we will have no option but to ask that the business scrap the scheme and return to the drawing board.

## CTAP Training

GMB were given assurances that anyone who uses the CTAP App, who was struggling to either make it work or to input the data would be given training in the first instance. Unfortunately, this training hasn't materialised, or where it has, has been far less than what was agreed. If engineers were to ignore clear instructions from management then we all know what the consequences would be, something that was made very clear by the management videos that were circulated a few weeks ago. The question now has to be asked as to what consequences managers are facing for ignoring similar instructions to ensure that their staff are trained?

Yet again it paints a picture of British Gas becoming the same 'say one thing and do another' company many of us fear it has become. Instead of engaging your reps from the start of the process to work together to build something that delivered for staff, customers, and the business, they have instead kept GMB at arm's length and have been left with a bonus scheme that our members are clearly saying they have little faith in.



To try to resolve the situation and to make this scheme work, we have made the following demands on the business:

- That full, meaningful training is given to all staff who want it, to ensure that they understand the App and their role in inputting data.
- That we are supplied with a meaningful breakdown of the results of the App, both by skill type and area to get a detailed understanding as to where it appears to be working and where it isn't, in order to allow us to identify the problems as we seek to resolve them.
- That the business gives clear assurances that the data that the App produces is robust and that engineers who have engaged with the App are able to draw down their reward without fear that it will be clawed back. Without giving guarantees as to the validity of positive balances, we cannot see how they have faith in negative ones.

With this information, we believe we will be able to provide engineers the necessary assurances whilst working to deal with the problems in the system. If these are problems we can resolve, we will work tirelessly to do so in order to drive productivity and put money in engineer's pockets without members having to jump through numerous hoops to demonstrate their competence.

**It is important to remember that any bonus scheme the business put in place is not only non-contractual, but is a business initiative, and the only influence GMB has is to try to shape the content of the scheme. Please remember that this is a business scheme, not GMB's.**

## **BAH HUMBUG**

### **Christmas and New Year's Holidays (CORRECTION FROM YESTERDAYS BULLETIN)**

- All field workforce that works Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day, will be working an 8-hour day paid at double-time (200%). These days do not attract TOIL.
- The £25 payments are not applicable for any in day working over the festive period (only applicable for working EA / Standby / Callout out of hours).
- It's more lucrative working the Monday and Tuesday Bank Holidays because these days will be paid at time and half plus a day in lieu.
- Volunteers will be needed in most areas, if volunteers are not obtained it should revert to rosters (if you have one). No one should be forced into working and the pulling of



names out of a hat is unacceptable and should be refused.

## In Solidarity – GMB National Reps

### CTAP Bulletin And Survey



Posted on: 3 September 2021

We met with the business for our “field service council meeting” on August 10th, we asked prior to the meeting for figures to be shared regarding how CTAP is working, we went into the meeting with expectations of getting this information so we could see just how effectively CTAP has landed. Unfortunately, the business couldn’t give us that information, we are not saying this is anything to be concerned about or anything has been hidden for any reason, but we remain frustrated we are not able to see how CTAP is performing.

We told the company CTAP was not ready, but the company felt it knew better. You may have seen that the “test and learn” period has been extended once again. We want CTAP to work, but felt the trial, which involved less than 100 engineers, had far too many issues that needed resolving before it was rolled out nationally.

We will continue to offer to work with the business to help make CTAP a success for both members and the business. We hope the company have learned that things like this work better when both parties are involved and listened to and that they live up to their commitments to work collaboratively.

Please remember, if your CTAP balance is incorrect you need to start by raising the issue with your CDM.

For CTAP to work, we need to work through the issues that matter to you. Based on that premise we want your feedback, so have put together a survey we would like you to complete (link below):

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r...>

In solidarity,

**Andy Prendergast**

**Acting National Secretary**

**Commercial Services Section**



2021

## New Deal For British Gas Field Services Staff



Posted on: 21 July 2021

Following the acceptance of the offer by the membership by a margin of over three to one, please see the details of the new offer below which will come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

Whilst this deal does not restore members terms and conditions to those they enjoyed prior to the dispute, it does provide a way forward and represents an improvement to the terms members signed up to when they agreed individual contracts as an alternative to dismissal earlier this year. This deal was put to the membership as an alternative to further strike action and was endorsed by over 75% in an externally run ballot. GMB will continue to push for more improvements over the coming years with the long term goal of at least restoring members terms and conditions to those enjoyed prior to dispute.

The main points of the deal are:

### EA/Call Out

The rate at which EA/Call out is paid has increased to time and a half. This is in addition to the £25 payment per EA shift and the £10 disturbance payment per customer. We have also secured a cap on the number of EA/Call Out shifts that can be rostered to two per month and have agreed for the previous S&R sleep time agreement to be reinstated. Further agreement to avoid rostering EA/Call Out on rest days (including the periods going into and out of rest days) has been reached. Over time the company expects the requirement to undertake EA/Call Out to reduce in line with recruitment. To assist this process, they are proposing a £3,000 sign on bonus to attract new recruits in areas where they are struggling to fill vacancies.

### Overtime

All overtime to be paid at the 150% rate (time and a half) unless it is more beneficial for the engineer to put the overtime through CTAP in order to obtain a higher premium.

### Voluntary move to a 4-day week in the summer period



Centrica have confirmed that it will support engineers moving to a four-day week in the 16-week summer period.

### **Bank Holidays**

The Company have agreed that all hours worked on Bank Holidays will be paid at 150% apart from at Christmas, Boxing Day and New Year's Day which will continue to be paid at 200%. Where those days fall on Saturdays and Sundays, the subsequent Bank Holidays for those days will continue to be paid at 150%.

### **Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) for working rest days**

The Company have confirmed that hours worked on rest days or outside of normal hours will be able to be taken as TOIL via the CTAP system once it comes into effect by the end of August.

### **End of Day working in SMART**

Agreement has been reached to set up a working party to look at the end of day issue for SMART engineers. This will look at the issue of members having to work long after their finishing time and will report back over the coming months.

### **Direct Labour**

Centrica have recommitted to the direct labour model to ensure that they continue to directly employ staff moving forwards. Although caps on the numbers of contractors were discussed, we have agreed some flexibility with this as a result of the need to maintaining the caps to unsocial hours working and EA/call out. Despite this, levels of contractors will be discussed every three months at the Centrica Field services council to ensure that the company are complying with their commitments.

### **Engineer of the Future**

As part of the proposed agreement, Centrica have recommitted to working with GMB over the Engineer of the Future programme. This will allow for joint lobbying to secure the investment necessary for conversion to hydrogen-based fuel which will have the potential to secure the industry for decades to come and to protect members skills.

### **Caps on Unsocial Hours Working**

The Company have agreed to extend the caps on unsocial hours working (covering evenings and weekends) by one year. As a result, these caps will now be in force until the end of March 2024.

### **ACAS Talks Agreement**



The company have agreed to implement all the elements of the ACAS agreement which were not implemented as a result of the previous deal being rejected by the workforce. This covers amongst other things:

- The pay rate for SMART engineers will increase to £29,550 with effect from 1/4/22 and to £30,100 from 1/4/23
- CPI increases (capped at 2.5%) for those paid below the market medium paid in April 2021, 2022, and 2023.
- Agreement to honour holidays booked more than six weeks in advance.
- Whilst this agreement does include the three year pay freeze covering 2021, 2022 and 2023 (as agreed by individual engineers when they signed their contracts), we have agreement that this can be revisited in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances are either a significant increase in inflation, difficulties in recruitment and retention, or a return to profit for the business.
- No further use of fire and rehire within the business.

## Upskilling

The company commits to upskill 600 SMART engineers to undertake service and repair work.

## Pensions

The company have accepted that the decision to close the CERIS pension scheme to new starters in service and repair was a mistake and they have agreed to reverse that decision. As a result, any new starter who has joined the business unit since 1/6/21 will now be given the opportunity to join the scheme should they wish to do so. We should stress that the pension remains in significant deficit and that there may be further discussions on this in the future.

## CTAP

Agreement has been reached to amend the rules of CTAP to ensure that should any part of an engineer's balance be removed because of misconduct, this will now only affect the part of the bonus related to the misconduct, not the entire amount as previously agreed. The company have also agreed to extend the transition period from four weeks to eight weeks and have given assurances that CTAP directly feeds into managers bonuses. We have also got agreement to ensure that the period of CTAP monitoring prior to any capability action being taken will be at least three months.



## Members dismissed from the business over fire and rehire

The company have agreed that the 460 engineers dismissed from the business on 14<sup>th</sup> April are free to reapply for roles should they wish to do so.

Yours sincerely

**Andy Prendergast**  
**Acting National Secretary**

### Noticeboard Bulletin - 23-06-2021



**Posted on: 23 June 2021**

Dear Colleague,

#### Update on talks with the Company

Thank you for those of you who attended the members' webinar last week. In terms of the situation with the company, we are continuing to work to resolve the numerous issues that are still outstanding following the company's decision to dismiss 460 engineers in April. This was not only an unforgivable and frankly unnecessary act, but one that has had significant consequences for those still in the business with numerous reports of unacceptable levels of work and EA/On call being required as a result of the shortages that have arisen.

In order to keep you apprised as to where we are, the Union remains in dispute with the company on account of the failure to resolve the issues that affect you on the ground. This is something that we are seeking to make progress on, and have a number of days talks scheduled for early July to see if we can put together a deal which will provide improvements and protections for members as the business seeks to rebuild, to ensure that we can be confident about the long-term future of both the Company and the industry.

As a result of this, we are looking to get agreements on the issues that you have identified as part of the member surveys that have been conducted over the last few months. Amongst the changes you and your reps have identified, we are looking at getting extra protections to ensure that you can see a way forward, with more restrictions on out of hours work, improvements on the rates for overtime and bank holiday working, the implementation of the various agreements reached via ACAS that were not implemented, and changes to ensure that your voice will be listened too moving forwards. We are also demanding that the recent decision to close the CERIS pension scheme to new starters in the old service



and repair part of the business is reversed to provide greater security for those already in the scheme over the long term.

It should be stressed that the talks between GMB and British Gas are being conducted without preconditions on either side. As such, whilst they provide for the possibility of a deal which moves us forward, this is by no means guaranteed at this point. However, you should be aware that nothing will be agreed without it first being accepted by a ballot of all members. Should we be unable to achieve something that meets your expectations, then we will ultimately be looking for a further mandate for more industrial action. This is not a step that we will take lightly, but unless we are able to agree a way forward that improves the current situation, we will not have any alternative.

We will keep you up to date of developments over the coming weeks. If you require more information in the meantime, or require any assistance or support, please contact your local union rep.

Yours sincerely

**Andy Prendergast**  
**Acting National Secretary**

