

JOINT STATEMENT ON TATA ANNOUNCEMENT



The steel unions met with senior representatives of Tata Steel.

The company formally responded to reject the Multi-Union Plan that the unions presented to the company on the 17th of November.

This is of course extremely disappointing. In one area the company did accept the Multi-Union recommendation, which is to keep the Hot Strip Mill open to roll slab over a transition period, supporting hundreds of jobs there, but Tata have rejected our broader proposals to safeguard production capacity and protect jobs



Since Tata Steel and the UK Government announced their bad deal for steel on the 15th of September, the unions have been clear that proposals to install a 3mt Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) are completely unacceptable. As Community and the GMB, our experts and Tata Steel all understand, the installation of a 3mt EAF Port Talbot inevitably means the end of the blast furnaces, major production cuts and thousands of job losses before 2027.

It is extremely regretful that despite the incontrovertible evidence one union has refused to accept the facts, and continues to undermine the Multi-Union through their support for a 3mt EAF and unilaterally campaigning for discredited fantasy solutions. We urge them, once again, to get back on board and work with us to deliver the best possible outcomes for all of our members.

“ Port Talbot steel cannot be left to close.

UK Government needs to step up and protect this vital industry.

We must not be left dependent on steel imports that would create lower quality products and far more carbon. pic.twitter.com/ozA7rIJRpZ

— GMB Union (@GMB_union) January 19, 2024

The Multi-Union Plan was developed in line with the steel unions' red lines agreed three years ago, which are to secure the future of Port Talbot steelmaking, to protect production capacity and the future of all the downstream plants, and to avoid any compulsory redundancies. The Multi-Union Plan was previously endorsed by all the steel unions and, as the company has acknowledged, proposes a credible alternative strategy for the decarbonisation of Tata Steel UK.

More than 3,000 jobs and the future of British steelmaking is at stake. It is an absolute disgrace that Tata Steel, and the UK Government, appear intent on pursuing the cheapest instead of the best plan for our industry, our steelworkers and our country. It's unbelievable any Government would give a company £500m to throw 3,000 workers on the scrapheap, and our Government must reevaluate its miserly offer to support investment at Tata Steel.

The German, French and Spanish Governments are all committing billions to secure the future of their strategically important steel industries, and our Government must show similar ambition. It is encouraging that the Labour Party have reaffirmed their commitment to the £3bn Green Steel Fund, and using it to supporting a just transition at Tata Steel UK. Tata must think again, and work with the UK Government and Labour to unlock the investment our industry needs and deserves.



Community and GMB do not accept Tata Steel's rejection of the Multi-Union Plan and confirmation they intend to press forward with their original devastating proposals. We will now consult our members on next steps and all options to protect jobs are on the table, including industrial action.

Tata Steel and the UK Government must reconsider their positions in order to safeguard the future of British steelmaking, and head off a major industrial dispute. Since Tata acquired our business in 2007 they have been a responsible owner, and we recognise they have taken a long-term view where others might not have done. The coming weeks will put Tata's values to the test.

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