

Strike action looms at British Gas after 95% vote over 'fire and rehire' threat



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Members at the largest union in British Gas have voted in favour of strike action in a consultative ballot after the company issued 'fire and hire' threats to its workforce.

In the consultative ballot of 10,000 GMB Union members at Centrica-owned British Gas and PH Jones, 95% voted in favour of industrial action on a turnout of 67.5%. The backlash from the workforce paves the way for a formal strike ballot in the Autumn.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcing the result of a consultative ballot, GMB said the company had burnt through the confidence of its loyal workforce by threatening to set fire to jobs, terms and conditions.

British Gas's beleaguered owners Centrica announced plans in June to make 5,000 further staff redundancies and drive through changes to pay and terms and conditions that will have a detrimental effect for most of the 20,000 workers.

Then last month, the company revealed its intention to fire and rehire the entire 20,000 workforce, if they didn't 'agree' to the changes, with a British Airways style threat.

Centrica described their fire and rehire plans to GMB as an 'insurance policy' and issued statutory HRI and s188 notices which say this process could begin as early as the end of November.

electricity

Justin Bowden, GMB National Secretary said:

"Centrica bosses are holding a box of matches and threatening to set fire to the terms and conditions of this loyal and dedicated workforce. It's a complete and utter betrayal of the British Gas and PH Jones brands.

"The company have already burnt through the confidence of its staff. Today's 19 to 1 vote demonstrates GMB members are not prepared to tolerate fire and rehire threats and are determined to have their own "insurance policy" too.

"It's time for the Centrica Board to wake up and smell the gas.

"British Gas was an historically proud British institution – but Centrica's beleaguered management are betraying a once great brand – and their entire workforce.

"Centrica's problems were not caused by the loyal engineers, call centre workers and back office staff who have done everything asked of them over years of boardroom mismanagement, but yet again it's their jobs that are in the firing line.



“GMB members have spoken loud and clear in delivering their verdict, now it’s time for the company to listen and get real.”

Press office

079859 1525698

press.office@gmb.org.uk

Member requiring help?

Click to contact your local GMB Region

info@gmb.org.uk

