



The Rt Hon Liam Byrne MP
Chair of the Business and Trade Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

27 January 2025

Dear Mr Byrne,

Thank you for your letter dated 20 December 2024, regarding Amazon's oral evidence on 17 December. John Boumphrey, Amazon UK Country Manager, has asked me to reply on his behalf. The information you requested is contained in the Appendix to this letter. We appreciate the information is of interest to the Committee but we would respectfully request that the data is not published as this information is confidential and commercially sensitive, being specific to Amazon's operations and not publicly available. I would also like to reiterate my invite to the Committee to a tour of any of our warehouses (we call them "Fulfilment Centres") to see first-hand the working environment we provide for our employees.

Health and safety

The Committee asked us to provide information regarding our Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR reportable incidents, work related injuries and ambulance call outs. As we said during oral evidence, the health and safety of our employees is our top priority. At Amazon, we have dedicated ourselves to developing and adhering to a robust Safety Management System based on best-in-class international standards. We continue to make year-on-year improvements to reduce incidents in our fulfilment centres. We keep records of RIDDOR incidents for three years, as required by law. For questions 1 and 2, you'll find data from our UK fulfilment centres for 2022, 2023, and 2024 in the Appendix. We're aware that the Committee asked HSE about Amazon's RIDDOR reporting, and HSE responded on 10 January 2025 with Amazon's total reported incidents from 2015 to 2023. We have also provided the number of ambulance call outs from 2022-2024. We called 1,833 ambulances of which 73 were for work related incidents (out of a total workforce of around 75,000. At Amazon, we will always call an ambulance whenever an individual requires urgent medical care while onsite.

The Committee asked us to investigate individual cases highlighted by the GMB during the first panel of the oral session. We take all reports of potential issues very seriously and are committed to thoroughly investigating any individual cases brought to our attention. We would be grateful if you could provide us with the names of the individuals to which they referred, the specific dates and locations of the relevant incidents and full details of the alleged injuries.

As we mentioned during the oral session, we are updating the 2022 safety blog using 2022-2024 RIDDOR reportable incident data and will publish in a matter of weeks. As far as we are aware, we are the only major fulfilment company to publish this analysis, demonstrating our commitment to transparent health and safety reporting for both our employees and the public.

Reason for industrial action

The Committee asked for the legal reason for the industrial action at BHX4. The industrial action ballot notices that Amazon received from GMB stated:

"This industrial action ballot relates to the failure of Amazon to enter meaningful negotiations with GMB Union regarding this pay claim for GMB members at Amazon BHX4:

- *Minimum rate of £15 an hour for all tier one Associates*
- *A comparable percentage increase for all other Associates."*

At Amazon, we are proud of our record on pay. We have always offered competitive wages and regularly review and increase these. Our minimum starting pay has increased by 50% since 2018 and 20% in the past two years. At present, the minimum starting pay is between £13.50 and £14.50 per hour (£28,080 and £30,160 per annum depending on location and based on a 40 hour, four day working week. Additionally, from day one, all employees are offered a comprehensive benefits package including private medical insurance, life assurance, income protection, and an employee discount. Together these benefits are worth more than £700 annually, and employees can also take advantage of our company pension plan. We also invest significantly in upskilling our employees and provide opportunities for people to build fulfilling, long-term careers with us. Through our Career Choice programme, we pay up to £8,000 over four years for frontline staff to gain new skills and qualifications, helping them advance their careers.

Our priority during any industrial action is to ensure the safety of employees and to continue to be able to operate for our customers. Our employees reported cases of intimidation and harassment during picket days. In response to this, in May 2023 we wrote to the GMB raising concerns about the unsafe and unlawful conduct during pickets/protests. These concerns were raised with us by our employees and ranged from GMB officials stopping their vehicles by standing in front of them in the road and then 'banging' on their car windows until they were opened, to individual cases of intimidation and harassment against workers turning up for their shifts. We have attached a copy of the letter we sent to GMB about our concerns.

With respect to pay during strike days, employees who chose to picket but came into work afterwards did not receive reduced pay. We would also like to draw attention to the fact that some employees told us that any GMB member who attended a picket line on strike day prior to, or after, their shift would receive £70 tax-free from GMB. This represented a significant increase on the minimum rule of £40. Employees who picketed, even for a short period of time, on all 37 strike days will have received £2,590 tax-free from GMB in addition to the normal pay they received from Amazon. Despite the call for strikes on multiple days by GMB, a vast majority of our employees chose to come in to work, as usual, and as a result there was no disruption to customer orders and deliveries.

Union recognition ballot

The Committee requested information on communication spend and headcount numbers for our BHX4 site in Coventry. We provide this in the Appendix. Our communication with employees during the ballot period aimed to ensure that employees were informed on the facts and about their rights and choices. As we said to the Committee, Amazon's preference has always been to have a direct relationship with our employees and we have been transparent about this. But we respect the right of employees to join a union, and if our staff vote to recognise a union, we will of course do that. To date, our UK staff have chosen not to recognise a trade union.

With regard to headcount numbers, the figure of 1,400 which GMB quoted for December 2022 was incorrect. The actual number was 2,846 and therefore the baseline on which they made their headcount increase assumption was wrong. I'd like to stress that we fully complied with the Central Arbitration Committee rules throughout the ballot process and provided them with the numbers of employees in the bargaining unit.

I would like to reiterate my invitation above that the members of the Committee visit an Amazon Fulfilment Centre to see for themselves the reality of life working at Amazon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MA' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Monica Ariño
Director of Public Policy, Amazon UK