



PRESS RELEASE

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UNION SLAMS BIG 6 POWER COMPANY

One of the big six energy companies has been taken to task with their announcement about changes to their operations leading to redundancies in the North East, closure of sites within the UK and the decision to export work abroad.

RWE Npower have today said that they will be cutting back operations in the UK leading to a loss of 1,400 jobs, with the closure of sites at Peterlee, Thornaby and Stoke. The 1,400 jobs will be placed offshore to India. In addition 570 jobs will be transferred out to another provider in 60 days.

Npower have come under sustained attack by politicians at Westminster along with the other 5 giant power companies for the way the market is operated and the recent decision to hike up prices well above inflation. Ed Miliband said that his Labour Party would freeze energy bills for over a year from 2015 should they become the Government after the next election.

The North East's biggest general trade union the GMB reacted to the news by calling for a Public Inquiry into RWE Npower.

GMB Northern Region Senior Organiser Colin Smith said:

“Our lay representatives and members have been working hard for years with Npower to make the North East sites return consistent profitability. It is an absolute scandal that a company like Npower can operate as a cartel player in a captive market, while jobs are placed offshore, we import energy and the Npower CEO cocks a snook at the regulators and taxpayer by taking his annual bonus. The GMB will vigorously campaign against the offshoring of jobs to India because it has absolutely nothing to do with customer service and everything to do with cost. At a time of a cost of living crisis with the Npower CEO's couldn't give a damn attitude about workers or customers it is time to say enough is enough.”

The GMB has called for law makers and regulators to act quickly to an unsustainable situation.

Mr Smith went on to say:

"This is about cost of living, bad management and naked greed. At this time of the year when the Christmas lights are being turned on for most people, Npower workers their families and communities have no yuletide greetings, only fear from a company only interested in their fat cat salaries and what they can get out of consumers who are paying ever higher energy prices so corporate bureaucrats can get fatter as their reward for failure".

Mr Smith said that only a co-ordinated response by law makers and regulators to look into power company practices, the operation of the market and the supply of energy, would save the day.

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