



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Our Ref: SO17016

27 April 2021

Dear Kwasi,

Re: Amazon delivery workers

I am writing to express my deep concern about a report recently published by Organise Network, a worker-driven network, which paints a highly worrying picture about the working conditions at Amazon (please find a copy of the report attached).

Drawing on statistics and personal accounts from over 700 Amazon drivers, the report has found that Amazon drivers are (a) forced to drive dangerously to reach their targets, (b) unable to take mandatory breaks and (c) even sacrificing bathroom stops to meet stringent delivery requirements.

The drastic shift towards online shopping during the Covid-19 pandemic, combined with Amazon's "just-in-time" logistics system have brought immense pressure on Amazon delivery workers.

While Amazon claims to "go further than most to ensure drivers are supported in their role", this survey paints a different picture. Rather than taking on enough staff to make the increased workload manageable, the survey suggests that Amazon has left people working more hours for less money, with minimal job security. This comes at a time when Amazon has seen its profits surge.

The report's harrowing findings include the fact that 82% of Amazon drivers resort to driving dangerously to reach their targets— speeding, parking illegally and driving while exhausted. Moreover, 92% report not having time for a break at work, with 86% not having time to wash or sanitise hands between deliveries.

These findings circle back to the alarming statistic that 91% of drivers are reporting "much higher" delivery targets than this time last year – in some cases even twice as many – without any extra time or pay to account for it.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the Government has spoken time and again about the need to implement safe working conditions for our NHS workers. But delivery drivers, like many other key workers, seem to have been left behind. As online sales keep rising, it is imperative that Amazon offers its workers decent working conditions, and keeps them safe. These people are essential workers, who do so much to support the way we live our lives.

In light of the above, I strongly urge you to demand from Amazon a formal response to the findings of this report, setting out how these unacceptable practices will be reformed. In addition, I call on you to launch an investigation into the impact of the pandemic on delivery workers that will consider:

- a) Setting a 20% higher minimum wage for people on zero-hour contracts, to compensate them for the uncertainty of fluctuating hours of work.
- b) Giving “zero-hours” and agency workers the right to request a fixed-hours contract after 12 months.
- c) New ways of strengthening the enforcement of supply chain workers’ rights.

I look forward to a swift response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Olney".

Sarah Olney
Member of Parliament for Richmond Park