



FAQ ON STARTRACK INDUSTRIAL ACTION



On Thursday night delegates from StarTrack sites right across Australia took the unprecedented step of endorsing protected industrial action for 24 hours on Thursday 23 September.

Since then hundreds and hundreds of TWU members - truck drivers, forklift operators and freight handlers - have committed to be part of the historic strike. This is not a decision anyone takes lightly, but StarTrack's refusal to deal with crucial outstanding EA claims even after months of bargaining has led us here.

For many, this will be the first time you've ever gone on strike. Here is some information to help you prepare.

Q. Why have delegates endorsed action?

A. We wrote to StarTrack twice this week requesting an urgent meeting but it continued to delay. Our announcement of strike action has forced the company to agree to a bargaining meeting next Wed 22 Sept, **but the fight is still on**. Instructions from members to the negotiating committee have been clear:

- The **job security** of members needs to be protected into the future
- The growing use of **undercutting** by StarTrack will not stand
- The company has made **huge profits** over the last year resulting in huge workloads during a pandemic.

These issues are still unmet or outstanding:

- ✗ Over 14 claims around protecting **job security** in light of significant increases in outside hire
- ✗ **Start times**, meaning pre-shift overtime can be robbed from workers
- ✗ Any **2020 backpay** - instead the company is delivering a wage freeze
- ✗ Any commitment to **lift superannuation**
- ✗ Our proposal for a plan to support **women** and people suffering **mental health issues**
- ✗ Pandemic leave, family & domestic violence, volunteer leave, disaster leave and defence leave
- ✗ **EA expiry** of 30 June 2023
- ✗ One **national agreement**

This action isn't about fighting for the sake of it, and the decision has been made after hundreds of hours of discussions with members at sites across the country. Members are standing up because they are done with the games and delays. **This is about StarTrack coming to the table and settling the agreement.**

Q. What does protected action mean? Can I be sacked or disciplined for taking action?

A. TWU members who take action on Thursday are protected from any adverse action from the company, with legal notice provided on 17 September as is required by law. **As such, you cannot be terminated or disciplined in any way by the company for taking strike action.** If this is threatened the company is acting illegally - please advise your delegate. You will not be paid for the period of the strike, but for those workers in Victoria, this will not affect public holiday rates on Friday 24 September.

In response to industrial action, StarTrack may consider locking staff out. This would be a huge overreaction and it is difficult to see how StarTrack could continue with well over two thirds of its operation not working. It's a common threat used by management, but very rarely followed through on.

Q. When does the action start?

A. The action starts at 12:01am in your time zone across Australia. The strike is for 24 hours from midnight Wednesday to midnight Thursday.

Q. What if I am working on Wednesday or Thursday night?

A. If you are working on Wednesday night and participating in the strike, you will stop work at 12:01am. Likewise if you are rostered to work on Thursday night and are participating in the strike, you will only start work after midnight.

Q. What will striking members do on Thursday?

A. With covid impacting each state differently, each site will look a little bit different on Thursday. Delegates and organisers will talk through your site-specific activities over the next few days.

Wherever you are in Australia and regardless of whether your site has 400 hundred members or 4, you will all be in this fight together. We'll send details next week for a mass Zoom meeting for everyone to participate in on Thursday. It is set to be the biggest StarTrack mass meeting in history.

Q. How will the company respond?

A. We hope the company will come to the bargaining table and deal with these outstanding claims. Our announcement of strike action has forced the company to agree to a bargaining meeting next Wed.

As we get closer to the strike and the pressure builds on StarTrack we may see them lash out more with:

- Communications designed to confuse but never answer the real claims
- Allegations about the union's conduct
- Propaganda about union leadership
- Restricted or denied access to union officials and delegates
- 1:1 meetings with delegates and members, and group meetings outside of formal negotiations
- If members go ahead with action, Startrack will likely ask workers to complete forms on whether they will take action. **You do not have to complete any such form ahead of action and if you are asked to, contact your delegate and organiser right away.**
- Management may try and pit sites and states against one another saying one is wanting to settle or that they somehow disagree.

Just this week StarTrack called the police on union officials who were legally trying to access the site for WHS purposes. It was an embarrassing backdown for StarTrack when this backfired and the union was allowed onsite to do its job.

You have overcome these tactics all negotiations as seen by the amazing PAB results and will continue to. It is clear that StarTrack workers are strong and united and disciplined and most importantly clear that the end result is to settle on a fair agreement, not play games.

Q. What if I'm not a member but I want to strike?

A. It is not too late to join. Join before Thursday and you will be part of the protected fight and join the hundreds and hundreds of StarTrack members standing together.

TWU VIC/TAS John Berger **P:** 1300 727 614 **E:** info@twu.asn.au **W:** www.twu.asn.au

Authorised by Michael Kaine, National Secretary, Transport Workers' Union. Level 2, 388–390 Sussex Street, Sydney 2000 p (02) 8114 6500 e twu@twu.com.au

