



OPEN LETTER TO THE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP AT BUILD A ROCKET BOY

October 10, 2025 Blog, Campaigns

Employees and ex-employees at Build A Rocket Boy (BARB), together with the Game Workers Branch of the Independent Workers of Great Britain (IWGB), are writing to address the longstanding **disrespect and mistreatment of your staff**. For years, you have expected them to adapt to your every whim, with those in disagreement being shut down or cast aside. **We estimate a UK-majority of 250-300 workers across**

the company have now lost their livelihoods. These layoffs happened because you repeatedly refused to listen to your workforce's years of experience, resulting in one of the worst video game launches this decade.

Here are just a few of the many issues we have faced under your management:

Lack of transparency and communication. You have consistently failed to effectively communicate with the workers whose expertise the company relies on. Information has been sparse and vague, with you often making radical changes to the way we worked with little or no input from those affected.

Unbearable levels of overtime. In the 4 months leading up to the launch of MindsEye, you implemented a mandatory 8 hours of overtime per week for every single employee. Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) was given at a rate of 7 hours back for every 8 hours worked, but many have still not been able to take this time off due to your continued requests for extra "high-priority" work, even after launch.

Disastrous handling of redundancies. We believe you have consistently mishandled the redundancy process, causing confusion and distress for all staff. Employees have received misinformation, been handed dismissal notices with the wrong notice periods, and been put in the wrong teams so that their performances were scored by the wrong people. These and other errors have potentially resulted in the wrongful dismissal of dozens of staff members.

These and many other issues, some of which have been made public already, have caused pain and stress for your employees. Our experience at the company has been one of burnout, job insecurity, health issues,

and the failure of a game that many of us have put years of our lives into. **BARB needs to change.** CEOs need to take a backseat and allow the skilled people who remain at the company to forge the path ahead. We demand the following:

- 1. A public apology for this mistreatment of employees and proper compensation for laid-off employees;**
- 2. The option for remaining employees on redundancy notice to either work their notice period or take Payment in Lieu of Notice (PILON);**
- 3. A concerted, meaningful, and documented effort to improve conditions and processes within the company, including the acknowledgement of the IWGB as a trade union;**
- 4. A commitment to use official external partners to action any future redundancies and prevent unfair treatment.**

Mark Gerhard and Leslie Benzies, you often refer to your employees as “family”. But we ask you to consider; **is this really how you treat your own?**

In solidarity,

**93 BARB Employees and Ex-Employees | IWGB
Game Workers**

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