

UPS worker dies at Worldport air freight hub in Louisville, Kentucky

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A worker at UPS Worldport in Louisville, Kentucky was killed on Thursday after being struck by another vehicle at the hub. A 15-year veteran of UPS, Dallas E. Carroll II, 46, of Georgetown, Indiana, was pronounced dead at the scene.

Louisville Regional Airport Authority Police and Fire units were called to the scene at 4:30 PM yesterday afternoon after a report of an incident between a semi-truck and a pedestrian. The coroner has listed the worker's cause of death as "pending," and the Louisville Metro Police Department has taken over the investigation into the accident.

The Teamsters union have yet to issue a statement on the death.

Whatever the circumstances behind this tragic death prove to be, such tragedies are all too common in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, transportation and warehousing has one of the highest fatality rates of any industry with 1,053 work-related deaths reported in 2022. Workplace fatalities have risen steadily since 2013. There were a total of 5,486 fatal work injuries in the United States in 2022, up 5.7 percent from 2021.

A report released by the AFL-CIO found the increasing numbers of work-related injuries and deaths are due to the undermining of enforcement of health and safety regulations. According to the report, there are 1,871 inspectors, about half federal and half state, to inspect the 10.8 million workplaces in the Occupational Safety and Health Act's purview.

The penalties for violations do not deter companies from non-compliance, according to the report. The average penalty for a serious violation was \$4,354 for federal OSHA and only \$2,221 for OSHA state plans.

UPS workers on social media cite job cuts and overwork as the underlying reason for such accidents.

One worker wrote on Reddit, "Lay off a ton of feeders and overwork the rest, get ready for a lot more of this." Another worker responded, "It's only made worse when the company decides to cut corners by eliminating trainers and shunting practice windows, rushing through the recert[ification] classes, and cutting hours so tight that supervisors and auditors can't perform DOKs and PCMs like they should be doing."

The accident on Thursday occurred in the midst of massive job cuts at UPS. Hundreds of jobs have been eliminated at warehouses around the country as the company moves to consolidate its operations and replace whole sections of the workforce with robotics.

This is only a down payment, however. Last month, the company announced it would cut 12,000 managerial and administrative jobs across its global operations. UPS announced the layoffs as it announced that it made \$9.9 billion in profits off of \$91 billion in revenue last year, just under the record highs set in 2022.

The layoffs at UPS are part of an accelerating attack on jobs in the US and throughout the world, and are a component of the class strategy to suppress an increasingly restive working class. In the US, the Federal Reserve has raised interest rates to increase unemployment levels and suppress wages, while shoveling ever greater profits to the corporate oligarchs and Wall Street aristocracy. Another central component of the offense on jobs is the weaponization of automation and artificial intelligence to eliminate jobs.

For two months now, Teamsters officials have remained totally silent on the jobs bloodbath, which exposes the sellout contract which they pushed through last year, falsely claiming it to be among the richest in the company's history. In reality, the Teamsters apparatus were almost certainly aware of the impending

layoffs before the vote took place.

The union enticed tens of thousands of part-time workers, with promises of modest wage increases up to \$21 per hour to secure their votes for the contract. Now, these workers' jobs are at risk as the company eliminates entire sorting shifts and transitions towards automated facilities.

The Teamsters apparatus is working hand in glove with the "most pro-union president" Biden to contain the working class while the administration prepares to implement a harsh austerity agenda, cutting social services and other measures that will place the burden the costs of its ongoing global military expansion on behalf of US imperialism onto the shoulders of the working class.

To fight against job cuts and for safer working conditions, workers must take matters into their own hands. This is why the UPS Workers Rank-and-File Committee, initially formed by workers last year against the sellout contract, has called for a "counter-campaign" uniting UPS workers with workers in other industries facing layoffs, based upon taking control out of the hands of the corrupt union bureaucrats and on rejecting the "right" of UPS and other multinational corporations to profits.



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