

“They don’t care about us. This shouldn’t have happened”

Stellantis Warren Truck workers call for answers in death of Dundee Engine worker Ronald Adams Sr.

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Workers continue to respond to the independent investigation by the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees (IWA-RFC) into the death of 63-year-old Stellantis skilled trades worker Ronald Adams Sr.

Adams, a 19-year Stellantis veteran, was crushed when an electronic gantry suddenly activated while he was working underneath it in a confined area. The machine was supposed to remain stationary during a dry run.

The IWA-RFC has launched an inquiry aimed at ending the whitewash of corporate murder, uncovering the truth and holding those responsible to account. Meanwhile, management, the United Auto Workers and state safety officials continue to stonewall on the circumstances of Adams’ death.

Several Dundee Engine workers have provided detailed testimony for the investigation. They reported that a subcontractor, PARI, brought in by Stellantis had changed the software logic of the system. Previously gantries were programmed to be off during dry runs. But changes apparently caused the gantry to operate unexpectedly in dry run mode.

On Thursday, supporters of the IWA-RFC distributed information on the case to the first shift at the Warren Truck Assembly Plant outside of Detroit. The plant recently completed retooling to produce both gasoline and electric versions of the Jeep Wagoneer, and many workers had been on temporary layoff or working irregular schedules.

When a member of the campaign team explained that the Adams family had waited over six weeks for any

explanation of what happened, one worker replied: “If it takes over a month, it is too long. It looks like they are hiding something; they need answers.”

A veteran Warren Truck worker said that workers were experiencing stress and anxiety over their jobs. “We don’t know if we are working one week or the next.”

Last October Stellantis laid off 1,100 Warren Truck workers, and in April the plant was down two weeks due to a shortage of engines produced at the Stellantis facility in Saltillo, Mexico. In the meantime, the UAW is engaged in an anti-Mexican campaign aimed at diverting anger over mass firings and layoffs, and UAW President Shawn Fain has lined up behind Trump’s reactionary tariff war.

The worker said, “Look what Trump is doing. Many thought he was the best choice, but 2nd shift shipping hasn’t worked for three months; we worked for two days two weeks ago and then they took us off Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Then we were on unemployment last week. Then they called us on Wednesday, last minute 10:30 in the morning, and they said come in Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.”

“You are just waiting for a call to see if you’re working. That is why a bunch of workers took the \$50,000 buyout. They were tired of waiting and not knowing what’s going on.”

She said she had heard about the death of Ronald Adams. “I have been trying to follow that. It’s sad, and it’s scary. They don’t care about us. This is the oldest plant now that they have, and it is unsafe. They don’t care until somebody does get hurt, then they act like it

was the worker's fault. 'He was in the wrong area,' they always say. But, It shouldn't have happened."

She explained an incident in the plant where there had been a problem on the production line. "A supervisor was told to investigate," she said. "He had his hand on the line underneath a pallet, and the line started and it ran right over his finger. They told him to write his own medical paperwork. He could have passed out. He could have lost his finger, it was bad.

"We had a guy who was unresponsive that they pulled out of here. We don't know if it was job-related or not or whether he died," she said, adding, "There are ambulances here all the time."

Adams' death "shouldn't have happened," she said. "It should be safe enough for us to work. We come in here tired. We come in here stressed out. They need to care more about us. We can't compete against the machine or the robot. It's going to win every time.

"They care more about quantity than quality. We should be able to build that Wagoneer without any defects. It's been five years. It is still breaking down on people."

Another worker with 23 years at the company said, "Remember what I tell you. You may not want to hear it, but no one dies in these plants. Even a guy who was dead on the floor, when the paramedics got here, they said 'he died on the way to the hospital.' It is amazing how that works.

"This whole system is killing people. It is all political. It is not meant for the benefit of the workers."

The WSWS urges workers to come forward with information and support this investigation. Fill out the form below to send us your comments. All submissions will be kept anonymous.



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