

Bargaining as a Micro-Unit:

The Truth About Strikes
and Replacement Workers

What the
IAM WON'T
Tell You

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The union says that the company can't bring in replacement workers if you go out on strike.

The U.S. Supreme Court says otherwise:

An employer has “the right to protect and continue his business by supplying places left vacant by strikers. And he is not bound to discharge those hired to fill the places of strikers, upon the election of the latter to resume their employment, in order to create places for them.” (Source: NLRB v. Mackay Radio & Tel. Co.)

You need to know the potential risks of bargaining as a micro-unit, including the possibility of being replaced if you go out on strike.



If the Flight Line strikes, Boeing could bring in replacement workers or outsource flight line and delivery operations. Other companies have done similar as a result of strikes by the IAM and other unions:

As a micro-unit you'll have very little leverage. The IAM will say that the threat of strikes is your leverage, and while the IAM does like to take workers out on strike it might not be the leverage you think it is.

If the company can't reliably deliver airplanes from Boeing South Carolina due to a strike it could decide to bring in replacement workers or outsource flight line and delivery operations. Other companies have done similar as a result of strikes by the IAM and other unions:

- **April 2012:** Caterpillar brings in replacement workers so that it can continue meeting production schedules as planned, after 800 IAM-represented workers go on strike in Illinois. (Source: Reuters, May 1, 2012)
- **September 2015:** Ingersoll-Rand brings in replacement workers after 250 IAM-represented workers go on strike in New York. (Source: WKBW Buffalo, Sept. 10, 2015)
- **May 2018:** J.J. Taylor Distributing brings in replacement workers after workers represented by the Teamsters go on strike in Minnesota. (Source: MPR News, May 4, 2018)

