

Union warns Royal Navy's Type 31 frigate could be 'significantly delayed'

The [Royal Navy](#) could see delivery of its Type 31 frigates significantly delayed, a union has warned, as workers at a [Scottish](#) yard are poised to down tools for weeks in their battle for higher pay.

Around 100 workers at the Rosyth yard employed by contractor Kaefer are set to strike after overwhelmingly supporting industrial action.

Bob MacGregor, Unite's regional industrial officer, warned workers were "prepared to take 12 weeks all-out strike action to get a decent wage rise".

The union claimed it would threaten progress on the £1.25 billion frigate contract at the Babcock-owned yard in Fife.

The imminent strike action will have a knock-on effect for the Type 31 contract, and it will undoubtedly lead to significant delays

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Some 98.4% of workers backed strike action, the union said on Friday.

After they announced their plans to strike, workers were offered a below inflation pay rise of 7.2%, which [Unite](#) said had been rejected by workers.

Mr MacGregor said "Kaefer just simply doesn't get it" and claimed that "the company first refused to make any offer for months, and then they panicked following the strike vote".

"Kaefer in turn are blaming [Babcock](#) who own the yard for this situation but it's a mess they have jointly created.

"It's a really shoddy way of managing industrial relations at Rosyth.

"The imminent strike action will have a knock-on effect for the Type 31 contract, and it will undoubtedly lead to significant delays."

The Royal Navy has ordered five Type 31 frigates, which are known as the Inspiration class.

HMS Venturer is the first set to be built, followed by Active, Formidable, Bulldog and Campbeltown.

When delivered, the 139m long vessels will carry 107 crew.

The workers set to strike include painters, cleaners, scaffolders and support service strike, and the union said they will down tools between April 17 and July 10.

Sharon Graham, Unite's general secretary, said the members were "determined to secure a fair pay deal".

"Kaefer dragged their feet and then made an unacceptable offer following our members' emphatic decision to vote for strike action," she said.

A Babcock spokesman said: "We are aware of the situation between Kaefer and their Unite members and will work with our sub-contractor to mitigate any impacts to our Rosyth operations."

Kaefer and the [Ministry of Defence](#) have been approached for comment.