

Media release: Rail and Maritime Transport Union
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KiwiRail turnaround plan intellectually bankrupt

The KiwiRail turnaround plan is intellectually bankrupt and a tragic case of history repeating itself, the rail workers' union said today.

KiwiRail have today formally released their Infrastructure and Engineering business plan 2013-2015, after earlier trying to prevent its release.

"The jobs of 181 skilled track workers are at risk, in the name of nothing more than an accounting exercise to save \$200 million and meet head count targets," said Wayne Butson, General Secretary of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union.

"We have been here before with the privatisation in the 1990s and the running down of the national rail network, only for it to need significant catch-up investment later on."

"After four years on sustained investment and gains on track improvement why cut back on investment now, and then be left with the bow wave catch up?"

"The New Zealand government appears alone internationally in its inability to see the long term benefits of a good quality rail infrastructure."

"This turnaround plan just won't work. How can a national rail system which is required to be self-sustainable, compete with a road transport industry heavily subsidised by taxpayers."

"It's like telling shipping lines to provide their own ports before coming to New Zealand, or airlines to provide their own airports."

"No wonder KiwiRail tried to prevent this plan coming out. It is a damning document and a blueprint for the systematic destruction of KiwiRail."

"The New Zealand public deserve an explanation from KiwiRail management and their shareholding Minister as to why their rail asset is being run in the ground," Wayne Butson said.

Ends.

For further comment:

Wayne Butson, RMTU General Secretary, on (027) 496 2461