

**Newsletter for RMTU members working in ports in New Zealand  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March**



# **RMTU Ports COVID 19**

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an update as to the measures our ports & branches are taking around the country.

## **NorthPort**

Current Northport Coronavirus measures

1. 2 metre rule being applied
2. Cleaning sprays provided
3. Most office staff sent home
4. Provision of sanitisers and masks.
5. Rolling smokos breaks to minimise contact.
6. Staff working alternate days to minimise contact but maintain operations.
7. Overs 70s and people with health issues people being sent home

## **Port Marlborough**

All permanent staff have been sent home on full pay except Port Services frontline staff who operate 24/7. Staff advisories were issued to all staff along the lines from government. The Workshop has been divided into two watches, blue and green, who are on call for essential and emergency maintenance. All work areas closed including marinas. Ablution blocks have been closed so the cleaners are not exposed.

Pilots have special protocols for boarding ships and linesmen for handling lines. Additional PPE and sanitising products available to staff in their work areas who are called in to provide any essential service.

In term of the Port Services Centre, additional protocols for staff initially began with sanitising and cleaning radios, computer hardware, surfaces, including the van on each shift. Also, no visitors allowed into the office and crew shuttle service suspended until further notice. Physical distancing of port user queries that are now dealt with through intercoms at card readers.

Physical distancing for the two rostered staff in the small office achieved by using a workshop caravan gated off and hooked up to power across the road from the PSC for the roving patrol to base his or herself. Questions have been also raised about minimising the rolling rotation of Port Services staff on the roster - TBA.

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# Port Nelson

Teenage daughter of Branch Chair complained about him playing his music too loud yesterday during the lockdown.

Dialogue with upper management started and we have them to honour a promise from the CEO around the RMTU having a seat at the table, so Branch Official(s) and possibly area reps will be able to meet regularly.

For PNL everyone's wages and guarantees will be honoured for this first period of lock down (4 weeks),. Basically everyone will get at least their minimum guaranteed hours for PPT's and FT's will receive their full remuneration.

We have been assured that PNL is not wanting to shed staff as we will all be needed when things return to normal, they do want to support the casuals but there does not seem to be concrete plan for how this is done as yet, we will have to wait and see.

National Office has been negotiating with C3 on behalf of our members and C3 are currently trying to organise Government wage subsidy for all C3 workers. This is evidently a complicated process and may take some time. It does appear to be the government's intention that everyone be supported. The government did yesterday state that logs are not an essential service but ports can clear logs in their yards to create space.

# Lyttelton

An issue has arisen around a management proposal to introduce forty casual cargo handlers into the container terminal.

The RMTU has communicated our grave concerns around this. From our perspective, regardless of any safety implications, it will not meet the professed objective of securing enough labour to ensure the port remains operational. A casual worker has no obligation to accept work offered.

There is an easy solution: employ people on short fixed term agreements (we've suggested a month) and extend this if necessary at the conclusion of the current lock down period.

This also has the advantage of minimising the number of new staff introduced into the workplace as the security of knowing workers have an obligation to work under their employment agreement means it may well be possible to ensure adequate staffing with fewer than forty new people.

# Port Chalmers

Moving to two ten hour shifts in four separate teams to minimise risk of cross infection. The RMTU Executive has run this past members.

Adopting Lyttelton's idea of a break between shifts to allow cleaning of common areas etc.

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Management are working (whilst wearing gloves we hope...) on getting letters to carry and show to police or the armed forces should people get stopped coming to work.

Bulk frozen food is being provided by management as getting anything to eat in Port Chalmers is a problem with the shutdown.

## **Prime Port Timaru**

No further updates to report. Wash your hands and maintain 2 metres separation.

## **Quality Marshalling Timaru**

QM are providing some excellent information around hygiene and protecting your family if you are an essential worker. We are looking to post this on the RMTU website.

## **For Your Viewing Pleasure**

Heiner Benecke, one of our members at Lyttelton shows how to keep your straddle cab clean:

<https://vimeo.com/400408500/534287c1a3>

And driving with bare hands:

<https://vimeo.com/400765954/d89579bbcf>

And driving with Nitrile gloves:

<https://vimeo.com/400767550/10b17faeb3>

And a nurse and friend of the RMTU, Josie Butler, takes us through a police checkpoint as an essential worker

<https://www.facebook.com/josie.butler.988/videos/10163366082480385/>

# **Kia Kaha RMTU Port Members!**

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