

THE ACTIVIST



Published Regularly

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Happy New Year to you and yours!
This is the first issue for 2007 and it promises to be a very busy and full on year. Bring It On!

FIRST ISSUE 08 - TRANSPORT WORKER

Please send in all contributions, branch notes, pictures, gossip or funny stories to wbutson@rmtunion.org.nz or fax to 04 4710896 or post to Box 1103 Wellington.

WE NEED THEM NOW AND DEFINITELY NO LATER THAN 8 FEBRUARY!

WEBSITE ACCESS TO LEGISLATION

The Government has announced a new website for legislation. This new website – www.legislation.govt.nz – provides free public access to Acts, Regulations, and Bills to anyone with access to the internet.

As the library of legislation on the website is built up over time, the website will show legislation at all its different stages—from a Bill as introduced, at each stage during its passage through Parliament, to an Act as originally passed, to an Act as it is amended over time, to a repealed Act. The new website also provides extensive information about the site and how to use it, in its "About this site" and "Glossary" sections.

The legislation on the new website will initially be an unofficial version of New Zealand legislation.

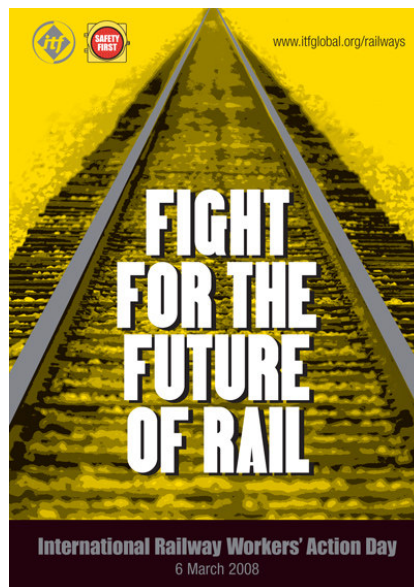
The process to make the website an official source of New Zealand legislation is expected to take around three years. Employers now want KiwiSaver to be compulsory

EMPLOYER GROUP CALLS FOR KIWISAVER TO BE COMPULSORY

The Northern Employers and Manufacturers Association say delivering tax cuts by way of compulsory savings is the best option to deal with several of the country's economic problems. Chief executive Alasdair Thompson says calling for anything to be compulsory is anathema for the association but the association has reluctantly come to the view it is the best way forward for savings.

"We need to increase personal savings: the country is too reliant on overseas borrowing and it pushes up our interest rates. As a country we may be saving enough but the government is doing that by over-taxation," he said.

"We've come round to the view that making it compulsory is okay, a la Australia and a few other places, but the way to do it painlessly for employees would be to give every taxpayer a cut and chuck it into a KiwiSaver account."



Please Post On Noticeboards

SLEEP-WAKE SHOW

Massey University and The Playground (NZ Ltd) present Sleep/Wake, an exciting collaboration between art and science that blends dance, design, performance art, internet, AV and theatre to create a unique, live-art experience – the story of an awakening and the mechanics of the sleeping brain and body.

Bringing together the knowledge and creativity of world-renowned sleep expert Professor Philippa Gander of the Massey University Sleep/Wake Research Centre and director/designer Sam Trubridge (The Restaurant of Many Orders – UK, NZ, Italy, Czech Republic), Sleep/Wake is a world first performance not to be missed.

Featuring international dancers Lizzie Barker and Ella Robson-Guilfoyle, plus local talent Maria Dabrowska (Heavenly Burlesque, Ink), Claire Middleton and James Conway-Law. Original sound design by Bevan Smith, original lighting design by Marcus McShane.

Through the languages of dance, design and science a unique journey begins: into the unknown territory of sleep, where we spend one third of our lives . . .

Sleep/Wake will be performed at **35 King Street, Newtown, Wellington from Thursday, January 31st to Sunday February 10th (Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights only) at 8pm.**

Cost: \$20 waged/\$18 unwaged/\$16 FRINGE addict. For bookings, contact Ticketek on 04 384 3840 or www.ticketek.co.nz.

NOTE: Sleep Apnoea is a major health issue for members of this Union especially shift workers. Early diagnosis of the condition is essential and where this has happened we have seen extraordinary changes in the wellbeing and life of members. We have published a number of articles on member experiences over the

years in our publications. Dr Gander has also done major work for the rail industry on shiftwork arrangements and hours of work.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Statistics NZ have released the latest CPI figures. The December 2007 quarter increase was 1.2 percent and the annual increase was 3.2 percent. The Food Price Index was also updated today and showed a 5.4 percent annual increase with food grocery items up by 7.8 percent and meat and fish by 6.0 percent.

In the quarterly CPI, transport costs were up 3.2 percent mainly due to price increases for petrol (up 5.4 percent) and international air transport (up 11.9 percent). Domestic air transport prices fell by 4.6 percent in the quarter. In the annual CPI of 3.2 percent, the main factors were transport and new housing and household utility costs. One major factor was the increase of petrol prices of 16.9 percent. Tradable annual inflation was 2.8 percent and non-tradable inflation was 3.5 percent.

The increases in the last four quarters were 0.5, 1.0, 0.5 and 1.2. The jump from 1.8 percent annual inflation to 3.2 percent is because the -0.2 percent from December quarter 2006 fell out of the annual figures and was replaced by 1.2 percent for the December 2007 quarter.



REMEMBER WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY 28 APRIL

This year's workers' Memorial Day theme is **"Good Occupational Health For All Workers"**.



The purpose behind Workers' Memorial Day has always been to **"remember the dead: fight for the living"** and unions are asked to focus on both areas, by considering memorials to all those killed through work but at the same time ensuring that such tragedies are not repeated.

This can best be done by building trade union organisation, and campaigning for stricter enforcement with higher penalties for breaches of health & safety laws.

RMTU members are asked to once again stop work (wherever you are) at midday on the 28 April to remember workers here and internationally who have been killed and seriously injured in work accidents.

The RMTU will be joining millions of workers around the world who are also commemorating this day.

Some RMTU Branches will be conducting commemorative meetings at the memorials unveiled in previous years. Please advise National Office if you are holding a ceremony in your area. If you wish to invite a National Office speaker then please do so now.

We must continue to remind ourselves that we lose real workmates and working men and women in these accidents and not let them become simply statistics!

OIL DEPENDENCE DRIVING MORTGAGE COSTS

The announcement that rising petrol prices have driven inflation above three percent must trigger the Government to rethink its love affair with motorways, says Green Party Co-leader Dr. Russel Norman.

"New Zealand's current oil-dependent economy is extremely vulnerable to world oil prices, and until the Government acts to insulate us from the ever-increasing price of oil, kiwi families will pay for this short-sightedness not only at the petrol pump, but also through their mortgages and rents," says Dr Norman, the Green Party's spokesperson on economics.

"With inflation pushing over the three percent ceiling that Reserve Bank Governor Alan Bollard is charged with maintaining, there is little hope that interest rates will come down, leaving many families

struggling to make mortgage and rent payments.

"This means that people with home mortgages will continue to pay a fortune in interest payments to overseas owned banks just to have a roof over their heads. This will also flow into higher rents making it harder for families to pay the bills.

"What we need is for the Government to drastically alter the balance between investments in motorways, and investments in less oil dependant modes of transport. We need more buses and trains, so that people

can get where they need to, on time, without taking the car. We need liveable cities, where cycling and walking is safe enough so that parents encourage their kids to get active on the way to school. If we increased investment in rail, we could get freight off our roads, further decreasing our oil dependence.

"The right choices are clear, and I am hopeful that this latest economic indicator will wake the Government up so that they act now to release

our economy from the stranglehold of imported oil."



RESEARCH SO POOR YOU COULD PIN A TAIL ON IT AND CALL IT A WEASEL

CTU President Helen Kelly is dismissing claims today made by the Employers and Manufacturers Association (Northern) that personal grievance claims are "out of control".

"Independent research by the Department of Labour, released late last year, shows that businesses experience only 1.5 employment relationship problems per 100 employees and even less than that in the public sector," she said. "The research also found that there was no evidence that the incidences of employment relationship problems were increasing and that they could in fact be decreasing. This research

also showed most cases were settled at low cost to employers." Kelly said.

"The EMA Northern is notorious for its negativity and eagerness to deny workers fairness at work," Helen Kelly said. "Self serving research and negative press releases seem to have become the norm from this organisation. The latest press release criticises everything from collective bargaining to ACC, without a single constructive proposal that will build the New Zealand economy and modernise the workforce." She said.

The DOL research recommended that good policies and procedures to employment and focussing on maintaining good faith relationships was the best method of avoiding employment relationship problems. The CTU runs courses for union delegates to develop these types of skills and are happy to keep working with employers to improve employment relationships.

"The CTU is also working constructively with Business New Zealand to improve productivity and increase skills training – these are the types of things the EMA Northern should be focussing on, rather than negative polling aimed at attacking workers rights." Helen Kelly said.

The Department of Labour's study can be found at <http://dol.govt.nz/publication-view.asp?ID=239>



ASCIANO ALL AT SEA

The Victoria Branch of the RTBU report: After a couple of months of uncertainty about the whether or not Pacific National (PN) would sell or close its domestic grain freight and Intermodal businesses PN's owner Asciano announced on 9 January that: *It is seeking to continue providing domestic grain freight and Intermodal container freight services in Victoria. It will continue to work with customers and government to improve the efficiency of existing services.*

The State Government has been informed by Asciano that it hopes to negotiate with

customer's arrangements that will also enable the long term economic viability of domestic grain and intermodal container freight. Asciano gave the Government assurances it had no intention of ceasing any services on February 5.

Asciano also gave an undertaking to Government that they have no immediate intention to transfer broad gauge rolling stock interstate.

PN Management then held meetings with RTBU members at Portland and Dimboola on the 10th January and announced both depots would be closed. On the 11th January Pacific National management also informed members at Maryborough that the number of drivers

in the depot would be reduced. Those remaining would be utilised to carry out the John Holland contract for the Mildura track upgrade with no indication about the future security of the depot beyond this point. Union officials were informed about this meeting and were present.

Management indicated that at this stage they intend to use voluntary redundancies and redeployments but are not ruling out forced redundancies in the future.



WESTINGHOUSE SIGNALLING ISSUE

The Victoria Branch of the RTBU report: Thursday 20th December 2007, Connex Trains Melbourne informed the RTBU that there was a possibility of adverse signalling aspects appearing on Tri Coloured, LED Westinghouse Signal units. Connex management also informed us that the State Government and the Safety Regulator had been fully briefed on this development. In order to address the issue, Connex was compelled to put in place a number of temporary Operational Safety Restrictions, affecting several lines within the suburban rail network.

NOTE: Wellington's metro system has a number of signals fitted with the same LED units. The fix being applied is to



replace all LED searchlight signal heads with LED multi aspect heads. To date ONTRACK has replaced the following signals which are back in normal operation:

- **10L north junction**
- **The intermediates at north junction**
- **Pukerua bay down main**
- **97 and 96 signals at Wellington**
- **The two down stop and stay signals at Waterloo**
- **The up intermediate at Woburn**

The remaining signals are waiting for further units to be delivered from overseas and should be replaced within about four weeks possibly quicker.

RED RIBBON EXPRESS

A special seven-coach express train designed to disseminate information about HIV and AIDS has set off on a year-long 27,000 kilometre journey across India. The Red Ribbon Express train is set to stop at 180 stations to spread the HIV-AIDS awareness message in over 50,000 villages and will attempt to reach out to over one million people.

Nishi Kapahi, ITF Delhi Office, commented: "This is a unique effort which has not been undertaken anywhere else in the world. This project can act as a model for other countries, highlighting how to use the available mechanisms in the industry to spread the HIV/AIDS prevention message. Indian Railways' effort is likely to be one of world's largest mass mobilisation drives to create HIV awareness."

WORKERS FEEL COST SQUEEZE

"Higher food and petrol prices alongside a lift in mortgage interest rates mean that workers are feeling the cost pressures as we start the year", said Peter Conway, CTU Economist.

The Consumer Price Index was updated today and showed a 1.2 percent rise in the December quarter, taking annual inflation to 3.2 percent.

Peter Conway said that workers and their families are in particular noticing the impact of higher grocery prices. The Food Price Index also released today showed a lift of 5.4 percent in food prices in 2007 with a 7.8 percent increase in grocery food prices, and meat and fish prices up by 6 percent. This is very tough on low income families.

Another major concern is the big lift in 2007 in petrol prices which rose by 16.9 percent over the year.

While incomes have been going up for some workers and there has been a lift in the minimum wage and income support through Working for Families, the higher cost of living will be a factor that unions take into consideration in wage bargaining this year.

ERNEST WILLIAM FILE SCHOLARSHIP

The Ernest William File Scholarship was established in 1978 by members of the Locomotive Engineers Association as a tribute to Ernest William File, the retiring General Secretary of the Association. The Scholarship was continued and expanded by the Combined Union of Railway Employees and the Rail and Maritime Transport Union has continued to support the scholarship on the same basis as in the past.

The scholarship is open to male or female applicants in two groups, those who are the children of a Locomotive Engineer and those who have a parent who is a member of the Rail & Maritime Transport Union at the time the application for the scholarship is made.

The scholarship is tenable for a maximum period of three years at any University/Tertiary Institution in New Zealand, by a scholar who is undertaking full time study for his or her first degree/qualification and the value of the scholarship is \$1500 a third of which shall be applied in each of the three years during which the scholarship is tenable.

Although applications closed as at 31st January of any year the Scholarship Committee will not meet until mid February. This allows a window of opportunity for any further applications. If you require a form or any advice regarding the required information please contact the Head Office

on (04) 499-2066 **before Friday 8th February 2008.**

FILL IN THAT ACCIDENT FORM!!!!!!

If you injure yourself at work, no matter how minor the injury may seem, it is extremely important you fill in your companies accident/injury form. This is important as

- * Your company has formal notification you injured yourself at work.
- * it means your company can then look at whether work practises need altering and whether hazards in your work area are under acceptable control

The RMTU is currently dealing with several cases where members didn't fill in injury forms at work. They meant to, but didn't! Subsequently their injuries got worse. Their employers refused to later accept they were work injuries as no injury forms were filled in.

TOLL RAIL - THAT'S THE BRAKES!

Four recent operating incidents involving lack of brakes have prompted Toll to issue additional instructions to avoid these serious incidents.

The brake failures are a mixed of brakes not being cut in after maintenance and brake equipment failures.

These incidents are not confined to a particular depot or motive power unit, two light locomotives (diesels), a Class 30 electric locomotive and an Electric Multiple Unit in various depots nationwide have featured.

One incident resulted in significant damage but fortunately there have not been any serious injuries.

Toll have introduced what is being termed a "half wheel test", all staff involved in locomotive running are to be "half wheel test" trained and that training will be documented on personal files and training records.

Basically the "half wheel test" is applying the brakes as soon as the motive power unit moves to make sure the brakes are working effectively before the brakes are needed.

This has been a practice for many years but had not been, up until now, formally made a rule or instruction.

Normally this test occurred before a loco was put in service e.g. in the loco depot.

Unfortunately the bulletin and special notice were issued without any consultation so there have had to be amendments since the initial issue and it may need more changes as and when issues are raised over the application of this instruction.

One example would be slowing down after moving off the platform on an EMU loaded with passengers, the Train Manager would instinctively think the doors needed to be re opened. The half wheel test in this instance should be before the EMU is in service.

Also new procedures when operating Remote Controlled Loco's have been introduced to avoid accidentally operating the loco when aligning buffers etc.

Members operating locomotives, either remote controlled or not, are strongly encouraged to fully familiarise themselves with these new instructions - SAFETY FIRST!!!

PORT OF NAPIER MEMBERS STAND STRONG!

December was a tough month for our members at Port of Napier. Bargaining for the RMTU General Collective Agreement had been continuing with slow progress since September and at the same time PON decided to re tender the stevedoring contract and award it to ISO.

MUNZ members in various companies had had the stevedoring contract for 18 or so years so there was major push back, locally, nationally and internationally once the decision to award the contract to ISO was confirmed.

Our RMTU members were involved on a number of fronts - PON were expecting our crane driver members to train the ISO staff which they were not prepared to do on H&S and contractual grounds being - mobile harbour cranes require skilled stevedores

and Hatchman working under them and training non PON staff isn't their part of their roles and our RMTU heavy forklift driver members were expected to work alongside the ISO staff without any understanding of whether they were trained/skilled or not.

Two clear conflicts arose out of what PON stated as to some of the reasons why they awarded the stevedoring contract to ISO - firstly PON awarded ISO the contract on the basis of training but the ISO still needed to be trained, the other being PON picked ISO on H&S grounds but the only H&S info on ISO was in theory.

The battle lines were drawn but prior to a picket being put in place, PON attempted to place injunctions to force RMTU members across the MUNZ picket line and to force the RMTU crane drivers to train ISO staff - both injunctions defeated by RMTU.

By this stage our RMTU PON members covered by the general Collective Agreement were frustrated by lack of progress on the CA negotiations and gave the negotiating team a clear mandate for strike action if no meaningful progress made.

In the week before Christmas, a MUNZ picket was put in place at the Port, our RMTU members refused to cross the picket, ships started bypassing Napier and the situation was dire.

Local, National and International Solidarity won the day and a victory for MUNZ was realised with shipping lines visiting Napier now being given the option of choosing which stevedoring company they wanted to use, not just ISO.

Also after over 15 days of negotiations (and a 6.8 Richter scale earthquake) a provisional CA settlement (pending ratification) was reached, details of which will be available after the terms of settlement are finalised and the members covered by this CA have had the chance to vote on it.

We must congratulate all those that stood strong in the face of very difficult times - a victory for MUNZ but really a victory for all. We would have to say an amalgamated union on the waterfront would have made these difficult times a lot simpler.

TOLL NEW ZEALAND V ROWE

On 19 December 2008 Gary Rowe received Justice from Employment Court Judge Shaw. Gary was successful in the Employment Authority but Toll immediately lodged an appeal to the Employment Court. Gary was an Auckland based Loco Engineer. All of the sums awarded to Gary in the Authority for lost wages and in compensation for humiliation etc were increased by the Court. A more fulsome report will be published in the March Issue of *The Transport Worker*.



ETF CALL FOR PORT SAFETY FOCUS

The ETF's European arm, the ETF, has called on the European Commission (EC) to put health and safety at the heart of the EU's port policy. Responding to reports of an accident that led to the deaths of two stevedores in Italy on 18 January, the ETF is urging the EC to provide an early European response to health and safety issues in ports. The accident is one in a series of fatalities triggering serious concerns over safety on the docks.



It is believed that the stevedores died while working on board a vessel in Porto Marghera in Venice. Port stoppages after the accident culminated in joint national strike action by Italian transport unions Filt-Cgil, Fit-Cisl and Uiltrasporti over the weekend. The action brought virtually all of Italy's ports to a standstill. The unions are demanding the extension of the framework law on safety - currently applied in the ports of Genoa, Ravenna and Naples - to all Italian ports. They are now considering what further steps to take. Meanwhile, the ETF has expressed solidarity with the Dockers' struggle.

"It is not acceptable that a sector vital for the EU economy, such as ports, which shows high growth rates, is not able to guarantee the safety of people who, through their work, contribute to such a growth. Productivity growth cannot be reached to the detriment of safety," said ETF Dockers Political Secretary, Philippe Alfonso.



MEET MANSOUR OSANLOO



He is leader of the Tehran Bus Workers' Union and the focus of an international campaign that aims to get him released from jail.

Why Is He Imprisoned?

In October 2007 Osanloo was sentenced to five years in prison on trumped up charges of endangering Iran's National security and criticising the regime. However, the real reason that he has been targeted is as a member of a free trade union not controlled by the government.

How Long Has He Been In Jail?

Since the union was formed in June 2005, he has been arrested three times and spent more time in the notorious Evin Prison than out.

What's Been Done To Help Him?

The ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) and the ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation), backed by their member unions, have campaigned ceaselessly on his behalf. They have carried their protests to the Iranian authorities and the International Labour Organization (ILO), and demonstrated at Iranian embassies worldwide.

What Can I Do?

These are some of the things you can do as an individual or member of an organisation.

- Watch the ITF film "Freedom Will Come" and download other [campaign materials](#).
- Sign the petitions set up by the ITF, Amnesty International and LabourStart. You can also write to the Iranian government.
- Wear a Free Osanloo badge. It is available from the RMTU.

- Lobby your local MP. Hold a branch or worksite meeting and pass a resolution of condemnation and write a letter to the Prime Minister. And of course, you can spread the word by talking about the case and by distributing leaflets

NEW CEO

The Board of Port Marlborough is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Ian McNabb to the position of Chief Executive Officer of Port Marlborough Ltd and its subsidiaries.

Ian will commence his duties in early April. Ian was employed with Marlborough Council as Manager Services and Rivers from 1995 to 1997. Since then he has been General Manager Property Development with Ngai Tahu Property Ltd in Christchurch. Ian is a valuer and was a Director of Port Marlborough following its incorporation. He is planning to visit and commence his introduction to the company and the troops prior to formal commencement in April.



WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD

Today the Prime Minister promoted her Government as being on the side of the angels when talking up environmental sustainability. But when it comes to taking the action required the Government still 'fears to tread', says Dr. Russel Norman Green Co-Leader, and sometimes it's not foolish to rush in, it's courageous.

"The Government is still living in fear of the roading lobby instead of showing the courage and leadership needed for sustainable transport.

"The Prime Minister hinted at a further \$1.15 billion new motorway project in her speech. More roads lead to more traffic and more greenhouse emissions. If we are to reduce our spiralling greenhouse emissions then we need more public transport, cycling and walking.

"The Government is still living of fear of Federated Farmers. Instead of having the courage to put a price on agricultural

greenhouse emissions, the Government is giving \$1 billion in taxes to the industrial dairy sector to subsidise its greenhouse emissions in the middle of a dairy boom.

"The Government is still living in fear of the free trade lobby, instead of empowering consumers with mandatory country of origin labelling of food. If the Prime Minister wants consumers to make ethical choices then make it easy for them with labelling.

"We need the Prime Minister to show the courage to upset these powerful lobby groups if we are to make real progress on sustainability.

"The announcement of two initiatives aimed at young people, the B4 school health checks and raising the education leaving age to 18, come from good intentions, but are meaningless if we don't address the root causes of the problems – poverty and lack of affordable and secure housing.

"While the Prime Minister did one better than John Key yesterday – she actually identified that today's young violent criminals were the children of the Mother of All Budgets – like John Key she failed to offer the real solutions – raising the minimum wage, lifting benefits to a decent level, and investing in affordable housing.

"While \$9 million maybe enough to identify problem kids, it's totally inadequate for providing a meaningful helping hand.

"It is unclear whether the Prime Minister means to make staying in education till 18 mandatory, if so the Greens oppose this as we believe that some young people gain more benefit from being in the workplace, than forcing them to be at school.

"If this Government is really going to be on the side of the angels then we need to see more action and less rhetoric."



LINE'S DEATH A TRAGEDY - EPMU

The RMTU joins with its comrade Union the EPMU in offering its condolences to the family of the Ashburton lines worker and union member who died yesterday after the transformer power pole he was working on collapsed. The accident happened in the nearby town of Hinds and involved two workers from Electricity Ashburton, the second of whom is in a stable condition in Christchurch Hospital.

EPMU national secretary Andrew Little says the union is confident there will be a thorough investigation. "We will fully cooperate in what we expect to be a comprehensive investigation and are pleased to see that Electricity Ashburton is doing what it can to provide support for workers affected by this tragedy.

"We'll make further comment on this situation once an accident report is produced but in the meantime we want to extend our full sympathies to those involved."

UGL PROPOSE TIME CLOCKS

UGL NZ managers and RMTU National Reps met today to commence consultation on an Australian parent company directive to implement an In/Out "time clock" system. The system is intended to remove timesheets from Hutt Shops and most other worksites except those which have only 1 or two staff. The proposal involves the use of a biometric finger scan to initiate the system. The proposal has a "go live" implementation date of May 2008. Consultation with the Union is proposed to be completed in February. The Union consultation will include worksite briefings. Copies of the actual presentation will be sent to RMTU branches and may be obtained from branch secretaries.

The RMTU reps stated their opposition to biometric scans and stated their support for swipe cards. A further meeting is proposed

for 11 February and so feedback should be provided to Phil Bosworth (Hutt), Rudi Brens (Westfield), Shane McNae (Mount) and Tim Spence (Dunedin) ASAP.

ONTRACK MECA

Our ONTRACK members will be wondering where their MECA information and ballot papers are? Well, there is a complication. The Infrastructure CA expires 31 March 08 and the Network on 30 June 2008. The Employment Relations Act has a very prescriptive timeline for when ballots are to be conducted and so the ballot papers cannot leave National Office until the beginning of January 08. Therefore the ballot papers will be posted on 7 January. **The ballot will close at 0900hrs 25 February 2008 and be counted on the 26th.**

If you have not received a ballot paper and you work for either ONTRACK Core or ONTRACK Infrastructure then please contact National Office immediately on 04 499 2066.

MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT – COMPLETE IT AND SEND IT IN AS SOON AS IT ARRIVES.

CLAIMS REMIT CALL FOR – ONTRACK CORE AND ONTRACK INFRASTRUCTURE

Branches and members are asked to commence discussion on remits for the forthcoming wage round with the above two companies. Both Collective agreements expire 31 March 2008. All remits MUST come through the local RMTU branch. Remits coming direct from members will be rejected and sent back to the local branch secretary. The remit must have a branch stamp on it and have been passed at a properly constituted branch meeting.

We urge members to give serious consideration on remit claims and only claims that members are willing to mount industrial action to achieve should come through.

Remits for ONTRACK Infrastructure will close on 25 February 2008.

RMTU INITIATES WITH UGL

The Union has served an initiation notice on UGL for the renewal of the collective. The first meeting is scheduled for 29 February where we will negotiate the Good Faith Bargaining Code and exchange claims for the round.

CLAIMS REMIT CALL FOR – UNITED GROUP RAIL

Branches and members are asked to commence discussion on remits for the forthcoming wage round with the above company. The Collective agreement expires 31 March 2008. All remits MUST come through your local RMTU branch. Remits coming direct from members will be rejected and sent back to the local branch secretary. The remit must have a branch stamp on it and have been passed at a properly constituted branch meeting.

We urge members to give serious consideration on remit claims and only claims that members are willing to mount industrial action to achieve should come through to the negotiation team.

The negotiation team shall comprise the elected members of the UGL National Consultative Council supported by an organiser.



RAIL INDUSTRIES NZ GOLF ASSOCIATION - NATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

This Tournament is to be held at Wainuiomata Golf Club, Lower Hutt on Monday and Tuesday 10th and 11th March 2008.

All past and present Rail Industry employees are welcome to attend. Entry forms or further information can be obtained from Adrian Douglas, National Secretary Email: adrian.douglas@ontrack.govt.nz or ext 42066 or 04 498 2066.

TOLL – VEOLIA MECA

Members are reminded that Under the Employment Relations Act there is no requirement to ballot members for the RENEWAL of an existing MECA. Accordingly we will be initiating for a MECA with these companies when the time triggers in the Act are met. We will be calling for remits from branches during March 2008 so get thinking. There are some which we are already holding which include but are not limited to;

- 5th weeks leave after 7 years service
- Correcting 12.5 Stat Day payment for staff off duty on a stat
- Train Attendant rates of pay for long distance passenger
- The indemnity clause - strengthen

EYE PROTECTION ISSUE – UGL

UGL advise that they have an issue with use of eye protection - 6 incidents involving objects in eyes in 2007 with 4 due to workers not wearing the correct protection - ie while grinding using only safety glasses.

There are also cases in the various locations that workers ignore or forget to use the eye protection. UG policy is to use safety glasses in the designated areas and to use Goggles or safety glasses plus a face shield for cases where grinding metal etc. They advise that where appropriate disciplinary action may be invoked if it is proven that the worker was not using the correct PPE equipment at the time the injury was sustained.

A safety alert has been issued by UGL – The RMTU says: "Wear eye protection at all times when necessary"!

BITS AND BOB'S

- We will initiate with Port of Tauranga for the renewal of the collective agreement on 1 February 2008. Given the company's upbeat annual report and financial statement we look forward to a "sharing" wage round.

LET'S BE SAFE AND LOOK AFTER ONE ANOTHER!

REMEMBER – UNITY WILL ENSURE SUCCESS!

IMPORTANT UNION DATES

Workers Memorial Day	28 April 2008
International Railway Workers Action Day	6 March 2008
Ports Forum	7 & 8 May 2008
Loco Engineer's Reunion	24 – 27 October 2008
Annual Delegates Conference	14-16 October 2008
Transport Worker Branch contributions deadlines for printing	Issue 1 11 February 2008
	Issue 2 12 May 2008
	Issue 3 11 August 2008
	Issue 4 10 November 2008
Branch AGM's (Election Officers & Conf Dels)	To be held in the month of August 2008 as per rules
National Management Committee Meetings	1st ¼ Meeting 11 March 2008
	2nd ¼ Meeting 17 June 2008
	3rd ¼ Meeting 9 September 2008
	4th ¼ Meeting 3 & 4 December 2008