Rail & Maritime Transport Union Vo

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UGL TOOLBOX ON HARASSMENT – DON'T SIGN!

National Office has received a copy of the Toolbox briefing document issued by United Group Rail on Workplace Harassment. The RMTU supports the principle of eliminating workplace bullying and harassment as it is unacceptable in the modern workplace but does not support the UGL briefing document. In our opinion the document is unlawful as it is riddled with statements of predetermination. Accordingly we advise all RMTU members within UGL NZ to **NOT** sign the acknowledgement sheet at the toolbox.

RMTU MEMBERSHIP DATABASE UPDATES

The RMTU database is an important tool in contacting Union Members or ensuring members are kept up to date with the latest information. National Office staff are concerned at the number of "unknown" or "return to sender" envelopes returned to National Office and reminds members that if they wish to exercise their rights and participate in the decision making aspects of the Union they should ensure they inform National Office of any change of address or contact details as soon as possible. This includes and any change of employer. designation or Branch Secretaries hold update of membership forms that you can post or fax in or alternatively for immediate action members are reminded to utilise the update of membership details link on our website www.rmtunion.org.nz.

For example - All rail industry employment agreements expire in 2008 and so there will be ratification votes conducted by mail. If we have the incorrect address, employer info you will not get a vote as you will never receive a voting paper.

Update now!

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ONTRACK MECA – TO BE OR NOT TO BE – THE QUESTION?

A MECA is a multi employer collective employment agreement and is a mechanism used by registered Unions to bring more than one employer into a single collective employment agreement. This enables workers working within separate entities to bind together to enhance their negotiating strength with the employers. It gives purpose to the universal phrase "unity is strength" and we all know this to be true. We are in the process of preparing ballot papers for issue to all RMTU members who would fall within the coverage of the proposed MECA. Under the Employment Relations Act (ERA) we must ballot separately the members of each company (Ontrack and ONTRACK Infrastructure) and the result is a simple majority of members who vote in the ballot. We stress it is a separate vote of each company. Both company's members must vote in favour. Please vote immediately when you receive your voting papers if you work for either of these two companies. We need a good turnout of voters in each ballot.

To get a ballot paper we MUST have your correct mailing address details on the Union database.

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.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE REPORT

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The RMTU was

represented at the Labour Party Conference 2-4 November in Auckland by Ian Wilkie Vice president, Wayne Butson Gen Sec, Aubrey Wilkinson NI Port NMC, Phil Bosworth NI General NMC and Auckland Branch delegate James Williams. All judged the conference a success and especially that the RMTU attending enabled the Union to project influence on behalf of its members that it would otherwise not be able to do if not affiliated. This acknowledgement was especially made by Ian Wilkie who was a detractor of affiliation with the party. We contributed to many key discussions especially the call for Air NZ's minority shareholders to be brought out so that it can be returned to 100% Government ownership. The RMTU supports this notion and would support the return of all of rail to full Government ownership so that it can be operated to the "public good" rather than to further the interests of Australian shareholders. We said that an illustration of the wisdom of full Government ownership of Air NZ by buying out the minority shareholders, if free enterprise capitalists are always correct, is the fact that Toll Holdings recently did this with the rail company. In addition the anti union activities of the Air NZ Board are entirely unacceptable.

Helen Clark and Michael Cullen's speeches to the Conference were inspiring for the

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delegates. All are very keen to participate again.

To maximise our influence within the Labour Party it is essential that all branch delegates get involved within the local electorate committee. This is especially important with candidate selection. Want to know more then contact National Office or your organiser.

STRANGER THAN FICTION – TOLL RAIL MISMANAGEMENT

Recently a Toll Rail Locomotive Engineer was not sure what the maximum line speed was with having a DSG shunt engine in the train, he contacted train Control and they agreed the maximum speed was

55kph so he run the train at that speed, the same LE tried out some fuel saving techniques on a another train which was not time sensitive and ran a little late. He was subsequently summonsed to his boss; the boss threatened to take his LE ticket off him and ended up giving him a written warning. Apparently others in the same depot have done the same with no consequences. Clearly the maximum permissible speeds are just that, there is no requirement to maintain maximum permissible speed or a breach of rules if the train goes slower. Also the company has obligations to be a FAIR and REASONABLE employer – not the case in this instance but this is just the tip of the iceberg!

3 MARITIME DOCUMENTS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Ministry of Transport has recently released three maritime documents for public consultation. These documents are:

- Sea Change a draft domestic sea freight strategy. You can download the document from the Ministry of Transport's website at: www.transport.govt.nz/seachange
- Port and Harbour and Safety Navigation Management. You can download the



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document from: <u>www.transport.govt.nz/portandharbour</u>

• Four International Maritime Environmental Conventions/Protocols. You can download the document from: <u>www.transport.govt.nz/4conventions</u>

Hard copies of the discussion documents are also available. If you would like to receive a paper copy of any of the documents please send an email to the below addresses and provide a full postal address. <u>seachange@transport.govt.nz</u>

portandharbour@transport.govt.nz

4conventions@transport.govt.nz

or phone (04) 439 9095

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closing date The for submissions on all of these documents is 19 December 2007.The Ministry has also arranged public workshops to brief interested stakeholders and answer questions on these documents. If you are interested in attending а workshop in one of the main centres contact us and we will send you further information. The workshop dates are:

Auckland – 14 November 2007

Christchurch – 15 November 2007

Wellington - 16 November 2007

UNLOADING FERTILISER IN HAWKES BAY

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For the last 12 months, LE's have been unloading fert at Matawhero on the Napier Gisborne line. This was agreed to in an effort to keep the line open and to save jobs. The operation at Matawhero is poorly arranged with the fert pit smaller than the wagons so a lot of manual shoveling is undertaken. Many issues have been raised in regards to unloading this fert which include sore backs, headaches, nose bleeds and skin irritation. One LE is awaiting blood test results to gauge exposure to the fert.

NOT AT WORK,

Toll Rail has agreed to review the operation in regards to the Health and Safety of the LE's.

All chemicals have 'material safety data sheets' which members must make themselves fully familiar with before undertaking any task with those chemicals. The MSD sheets clearly explain the chemicals, the risks involved and what to do if exposed e.g. eye and hand washing.

Equally important is to report any injuries and or symptoms (listed in the MSDS) to the company immediately.

COASTAL SHIPPING GETS SOME RECOGNITION, DESERVES MORE

The Green Party is delighted to see the Government has finally taken a stand in

support of coastal shipping, by establishing a Maritime Liaison Unit within the Transport Ministry, amid other measures.

"We are pleased the Government has finally woken up to the fact that nurturing and developing coastal shipping is a critical part of future proofing New Zealand against the joint impacts of peak oil and climate change," Greens' Spokesperson for Regional Development Sue Bradford says

Economic Development Sue Bradford says.

"It is high time coastal shipping had a voice, and a focus within the Ministry. Shipping companies and the maritime unions have spent the last eight years trying to get Labour to respond to that need, as has the Green Party.

"We are also pleased that this new Maritime Liaison Unit will be geared to helping the coastal maritime sector to access funds, and that the Government and the sector are going to work together to improve training development paths for skilled workers.

"However, we remain concerned about the lack of any firm promise or commitment to increase the investment in (and resourcing for) coastal shipping. We would hope to see major announcements along those lines in next year's Budget. Some commitment also has to be made to set aside coastal routes



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for local shipping operators prepared to offer New Zealand levels of wages and working conditions.

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"While the Government talks about 'perceived' barriers to funding, in fact it acknowledges that only barging has received alternatives-to-roading funding. Quite clearly, coastal shipping simply hasn't been in the picture so far - and the barriers to funding remain very real, not simply 'perceived.'

"We also await with interest the development of a Ports Strategy - an essential part of the equation which the Government has so far failed to address.

"Coastal shipping is a key part of the alternatives-to-roads strategy. The more freight we can get on to ships the better it helps mitigate climate change, and cuts costs in the face of ever rising oil prices," Ms Bradford says.

UNFAIR VERDICTS OF 5 YEARS PRISON FOR MANSOUR **OSANLOO AND 2** YEARS FOR EBRAHIM MADADI

Whereas always the

Supreme Leader and government's authorities encourage all people to engage in their own fate and defend their rights by being in present at any scene, whenever workers defended their legitimate rights they have been faced with the judiciary system and prison. Nowhere in the Constitution of Law, Labor Law, Civil Rights, and Islamic Sharia Laws has been written that the consequences of defending workers rights would be prison, repression and dismissal. Creating the atmosphere and preparing the environment by infusing the idea of arresting labor activists whenever they want to arrest a worker's activist, imprisonment of workers, secret courts, unofficially informing workers from the issued verdicts, and long term prison sentences are not the generous awards to the labor activists who devote their entire life to get the workers legitimate rights.

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Any enlightened conscience doesn't accept the way that workers have been treated with contempt.

Syndicate of Workers of the Tehran and Suburban Bus Company, Vahed, strongly condemns the unfair verdicts of five years prison for Mansour Osanloo, because of his trade and syndicalism's activities, and two year prison sentence for Ebrahim Madadi, only because he went to Mansour Osanloo's house to express his sympathy with his family, and requests all international labor organizations to react seriously to this unfair and anti-workers decision globally.

http://www.syndicavahed.org/engl31.htm

ITF GENDER EQUITY TESTING IN TRANSPORT

Between 1998-2002, the ITF surveyed its affiliates on gender equality provisions in transport companies.

The findings, published in the report 'Equality Testing in Transport', showed that

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many women workers recognised that they have rights in theory but not in practice.

ITF affiliates have called for a review of this survey in order to see if there have been

any improvements in provisions over the last 10 years. To this end I am asking all ITF affiliates to assist the ITF once again in collecting this valuable information.

RMTU encourages women members to fill in the questionnaire, which is available on http://www.itfglobal.org/women/egsurvey.cf m

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE ITF REPORT "EQUITY TESTING IN TRANSPORT" PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 2002

Given that so many of the replies came from countries where extensive equality legislation is in place, the results of the ITF survey give great cause for concern.



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Many women workers recognise that they have rights in theory but not in practice. In particular, many women transport workers perceive that:

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• An unacceptable level of discrimination exists at the level of job entry.

• Many companies fail to apply the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

• There is a disproportionate prevalence of casual staff, temporary contracts and parttime workers among the female workforce.

• A large minority of women are not given the same access to promotion as men.

• The use of 'attractive' female workers to sell transport services is harmful to the workers' status and effectiveness.

It is also clear from the survey responses that:

• The vast majority of workers do not know whether or not equal opportunities policies or anti-harassment policies are in place where they work.

• There are pay differences with men and comparatively fewer job opportunities.

• Many women are discriminated against if they are married or have children.

• A high proportion of women in the transport industry cannot exercise full maternity rights.

MNZ RELEASE FATIGUE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

Maritime NZ (MNZ) Human factors Analyst Wayne Perkins advises that the agency has completed its fatique management says "Most programme. study The accidents caused by fatigue follow a lack of sleep or poor-quality sleep". Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) has developed a range of resources to help seafarers, vessel owners and managers in the maritime industry better understand and manage fatigue, to prevent fatigue-related accidents.

They have now put everything up on their website at: http://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/Fatigue/fat ique management.asp

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Check it out!





PAKISTAN: TRADE UNIONISTS ARRESTED AS UNIONS CALL FOR RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY

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The International Trade Union Confederation has called for "the immediate restoration of the rule of law, the country's Constitution and the fundamental democratic rights of its people" in Pakistan following the imposition of a state of emergency earlier this week. But while media attention outside Pakistan has focussed on well-known opposition politicians such as Benazir Bhutto and cricketer Imran Khan, there has been little coverage in the mainstream media of the arrest of trade unionists, as reported by the IUF. LabourStart has full coverage of breaking news from Pakistan, updated daily.

NEW UNIONS LOCAL –

WANGANU

VANGANUI 16 people attended an initial meetina this

week to form the newest CTU Unions Local group, Unions Wanganui.

CTU secretary Carol Beaumont spoke with the group at their meeting on Wednesday, which elected Kaye Hearfield to act as covnenor and Dave Feickert as Secretary. The next meeting is on Friday 14 December, 4.30pm at the Unity Centre in Bell St.

Unions Local are the CTU Local Affiliates Councils in several regions in New Zealand, and come together to lead and co-ordinate local campaigns, education and media activity and provide a meeting point for union activists.

More information about CTU Unions Local is here http://union.org.nz/about/unions-local

BITS AND BOBS'

Unjustifiably Dismissed Auckland LE Gary Rowe received a favourable decision to that effect in the Auckland Employment Authority a few months ago and it was promptly appealed by Toll NZ to the Employment Court. The case set down

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for 4 days has been held this week (Mon to Thurs) in Auckland. We will await the judgement with great interest as I'm sure will Gary.

- Annual Conference was a great success if the comments of delegates were anything to go by. The presentations by the various employers was of great interest with some getting very robust questioning from delegates.
- A resolution calling for a national referendum on the Union's membership of the Labour Party was overwhelmingly voted down by Annual Conference delegates.
- We hope to get the Conference minutes out to members in a timely manner before Christmas. This will include most of the presentations to delegates by employers.
- A Toll/RMTU NIMT working party met in Taumarunui this week. Toll have been proposing to close the Taumarunui depot however the agreed outcome was to review couplings to improve running between Te Rapa and Palmerston North and for delegates to work on a coupling proposal (which must be cost neutral) but could see LE's located in both Taumarunui and Ohakune. The delegates have a month to present the couplings proposal. If the delegates can achieve this challenge and Toll agrees then many NIMT issues over busting hours and LE's constantly needing relief would be resolved.
- Toll NZ have won an award with their "fuel saver" project. Toll says they have saved considerable money by Loco Engineers using fuel saving driving techniques. We look forward to them tabling their gain share proposal in the wage round for 2008.

Let's be safe and look after one another!

PROUD to be RMTU!



