

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS – FOR NEW ZEALAND TRANSPORT WORKER

1. Increasing levels of casual work on the NZ waterfront means workers live at the end of a telephone undermining their work/life balance. Does your party have a policy to improve the lot of casuals?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

For the New Zealand economy is to grow sustainably and deliver the social and economic outcomes we desire, employers need skilled, dedicated, and flexible staff, whilst employees require job stability, safe working conditions and appropriate remuneration. New Zealand First is committed to promoting an industrial relations environment based on fairness, flexibility and neutrality between the parties.

New Zealand First will:

- raise the minimum wage to \$15 per hour ;
- Change laws that allow individuals to be employed on a permanent 'casual' basis.
- Train New Zealanders in areas of skill shortages, instead of actively recruiting offshore.
- Ensure that hiring New Zealanders is a priority
- Abolish the 'starting out wage' for young people
- Incentivise skilled New Zealanders to stay and work in New Zealand
- Ensure enough workers are being trained in the area of aged care to cope with New Zealand's ageing population.
- Review and amend employment laws to ensure that casualization employment practices are fair and just to all parties and work to achieve better job security for individuals now employed on a permanent "casual" basis. Disputes emerging over this practice would be referred to arbitration.

2. Increasing volumes of containers are coming through our ports. Does your party have a policy to raise investment in rail to accommodate these increased volumes?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

RAILWAYS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

- New Zealand First will ensure that none of New Zealand's railway lines and other strategic railways infrastructure will be privatised, and will remain under state control and ownership to ensure that public service rather than commercial objectives is the paramount consideration.
- New Zealand First's vision includes passenger train services along all rail routes between the main centres, with connecting coach services linking outlying areas or running services between centres which don't have a railway line. These services would provide a mixture of accommodation standards and fares to make rail services more affordable for New Zealanders to use e.g. half the carriages to be high standard premium fare similar to that provided on current KiwiRail tourist focussed trains such as the Northern Explorer and Tranz Alpine services, and the other half of the carriages being basic, affordable economy fare intercity market, e.g. railcars would have one premium carriage and one economy carriage. The Silver Fern railcars, former Overlander carriages and Silver Star carriages could be appropriately refurbished and upgraded locally in railway workshops to operate daytime regional Intercity services. Fast modern railcars and new carriages, New Zealand built where possible, could later be purchased for certain routes.
- As a state-owned enterprise, KiwiRail is currently heavily constrained because it is required to pay for the maintenance, renewal and upgrade of rail infrastructure through the revenue generated from its freight and other businesses.

- New Zealand's rail network is a national asset that must be developed to optimise its long term role in support of New Zealand's economy and of an efficient and cost effective multi-modal and well integrated transport system.
- New Zealand First will develop a programme of railways of national importance (RONI) to ensure that better use of our railway network and services are achieved, with improvements and extensions where there is opportunity to significantly reduce dependence on the roading network, especially for heavy freight and bulk freight services, but also where passenger services can be redeveloped to attract sufficient demand over time.
- To this end New Zealand First will not require the whole cost of development of new railway tracks and services, and of electric reticulation, to be met by revenue generated by railway service charges; and these will instead be met in whole or in part by a combination of Land Transport Fund funding and crown grants.
- The Land Transport Fund funding will be achieved by reallocating funding from the current RONS \$12 billion plus programme. An initial budget of \$300 million would be created by reprioritising Roads of National Significance (RONS) projects that have low or marginal benefits.
- The rail routes listed below would form the basis of the core transport network between the main centres with daily passenger and freight services, and with the tracks being upgraded or new lines built as required, together with new transport interchanges between trains and buses, and freight hubs in all the main centres:
Auckland-Whangarei-Opua
Auckland-Pokeno-Paeroa-Te Aroha-Tauranga-Whakatane
Auckland-Hamilton-Tokoroa-Rotorua-Taupo
Auckland-Wellington
Wellington-New Plymouth
Wellington-Gisborne (via the Wairarapa line)
Nelson-Blenheim
Christchurch-Greymouth
Picton-Christchurch-Dunedin-Invercargill.

- The following are the proposed RONI projects to be considered in the long – medium term, subject to detailed cost and benefit analysis to confirm their value:

1. North Auckland and Marsden Point Line.

Northland needs good rail connections to the rest of New Zealand if it is to grow. That means upgrading the Auckland to Whangarei line. Good rail links to Northland means developing a rail link from the main line to Marsden Point port, which has great advantages as a deepwater harbour that does not require dredging. There is also plenty of land for expansion. There is great scope for it to serve as a container port and take pressure off Auckland and Tauranga. The potential of the Port of Northland for the region, as well as for the country as a whole, is being strangled by lack of an effective rail link.

2. Rolling Electrification Programme.

New Zealand First proposes an on-going rail electrification programme to use the skills and expertise built up in the current Auckland suburban rail electrification project. The first project will be to extend electrification from Papakura to Pukekohe. Other potential projects to be investigated include electrification between Auckland and Hamilton, Hamilton and Tauranga, and extending electrification north from Waikanae and from Upper Hutt to Masterton. Many other projects for electrification would follow in later years:

Lyttelton-Christchurch-Greymouth.
Christchurch suburban area.

Picton-Christchurch-Dunedin-Invercargill.

3. Regional Opportunities.

Funds will be made available for smaller capital investment opportunities that KiwiRail is unable to fund given its current funding constraints

In particular, \$4m will be used to reinstate the Napier –Gisborne line as soon as possible.

4. Cook Strait Ferries.

The Cook Strait Ferry service and vessels will be funded for upgrades to ensure a high quality fast reliable and safe service for freight and passengers.

5. Auckland-Pokeno-Paeroa-Te Aroha-Tauranga-Whakatane.

A new line to be built along the rail formation between Pokeno-Paeroa-Te Aroha, a new line to be built between Te Aroha and the western portal of the Kaimai tunnel and a new line to be built between Awakeri and Whakatane, all combined creating a shorter and more direct rail route into the Bay of Plenty.

6. Auckland-Hamilton-Tokoroa-Rotorua-Taupo.

A new line to be built between Kinleith-Rotorua-Taupo primarily for forestry traffic, as well as for general freight and passengers.

7. Nelson-Blenheim.

A new line to be built between Blenheim and Nelson, completing this long proposed project for freight and passengers.

8. Auckland International Airport.

A new line to be built to link the Auckland International Airport with the rail system. The proposed new integrated terminal at Auckland (like that built at Christchurch International Airport) is already being designed to accommodate a rail terminal within the building.

9. Auckland City Rail Link

Build the Auckland City Rail Link tunnel project under central Auckland as soon as possible, jointly funded with the Auckland Council.

10. Northland.

New lines to be built to link the rail system with ports in Northland between Oakleigh and Northport at Marsden Point, and Otiria and Opua in the Bay of Islands.

11. New suburban services.

New suburban passenger train services will be investigated for Christchurch, Dunedin, Tauranga and between Hamilton and Auckland.

This includes an initial investigation into establishing suburban passenger train services in Christchurch, Dunedin, Tauranga and between Hamilton and Auckland using Auckland's surplus diesel rolling stock immediately following the introduction of electric services in Auckland.

12. Rail siding grant scheme.

New Zealand First will introduce a grant scheme to encourage greater use of rail transport by industry and by distribution centres, where the cost of installing or re-commissioning rail sidings will be met 50/50 by the businesses using the rail siding and the New Zealand Railways Corporation.

3. Will your party amend the Holidays Act to reflect entitlements for shift workers and if so how?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

No specific policy on this.

4. Will your party encourage the growth of strong unions and, if so, how?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

No specific policy on this.

5. Is your party committed to full employment?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

Lifting workers' productivity is identified as the key to improving New Zealand's international rankings.

The level of New Zealand's unemployed is masked by illusory criteria which say that even one hour's work per week means employment. This must be replaced by sound criteria measurements.

An ideal industrial relations environment is one based on fairness, flexibility, and neutrality between the parties.

New Zealand First will make it a priority to review all industrial relations law to ensure it is consistent with the preceding statement. Employment of New Zealanders wishing to work is our first priority.

It is a Government policy failure that New Zealand has a skills shortage in various occupations/professions and is currently offshore actively recruiting to fill these vacancies. New Zealand should be training its own people in these areas.

The upskilling of New Zealanders and improving both wages and productivity are major planning objectives. Our vision is of a nation made up of well educated, determined, healthy, and innovative people, with an expanding business programme geared around exports, regional development, job growth and harnessing the natural attributes of the country.

Addressing employment issues requires a collaborative effort between government, business and labour organisations. Essentially employment creation is dependent upon wealth creation and a system which efficiently distributes that wealth. New Zealand is primarily a nation of small and medium size businesses. Job and wealth creation are dependent upon these enterprises thriving.

Despite the Christchurch rebuild there is a massive waste of New Zealand talent and ability with around 150,000 unemployed. New Zealand First has a range of economic policies designed to build the economic base and create jobs. For example, export and employment objectives will be added to Reserve Bank targets.

Those policies are outlined in the Economic Policy section of this document.

New Zealand First will give priority for New Zealand jobs to New Zealand workers by a tight immigration policy. It is the reflection on policy failure that New Zealand is currently offshore actively recruiting trades people for the Christchurch rebuild. New Zealand should be training its own people as a priority.

6. Is your party committed to a universal basic wage?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

Please see answer to question 1.

7. Why should Rail and Maritime Transport Union members vote for your party?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

SHIPPING POLICY

- **As an island nation New Zealand is largely dependent upon exports to expand our economy. There is a need for our trade to be served by efficient shipping services. Currently we have a coastal fleet which is struggling to survive. All other shipping servicing our exports and imports is foreign owned.**

- New Zealand First is committed to the expansion of our Merchant Fleet. We will provide a favourable fiscal regime for coastal shipping provided the companies are New Zealand resident, register their vessels here, employ New Zealanders, and commit to officer training.
- The issue of safety and security in the shipping industry and preparation for maritime disasters has received a woeful degree of attention and resources, despite a levy on all shipping movements to fund these issues. The recent disaster surrounding the M.V. Rena illustrates the lack of preparation and assets to deal with a maritime emergency in New Zealand.
- New Zealand First will establish equally favourable fiscal regimes as appropriate for Australasian/Pacific shipping, provided that the company is resident in New Zealand, and that they similarly register their vessels here, employ New Zealanders, and commit to officer training.
- New Zealand First will also provide a favourable fiscal regime for those operating on other international routes so long as the company is resident in New Zealand, its vessels are also registered in New Zealand, a stipulated minimum number of New Zealand crew is employed, and where there is a commitment to officer training.

8. What will your party do about the Napier/Gisborne rail line?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

Absolutely committed to full restoration of the line immediately.

9. What will your party do to ensure that KiwiRail supports local procurement for future wagons and locomotives

NZ FIRST POLICY:

Committed to optimising NZ built rolling stock – would seek to re-establish the Hillside Works in Dunedin,.

Please also see answer to question 1.

10. What will your party do to reinvigorate long distance rail passenger trains?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

Please see answer to question 2.

11. Ports have heavily invested in infrastructure and amenities only to see shipping lines move to other ports. What can government do to bind the companies to specific ports?

NZ FIRST POLICY:

Would adopt a NZ Transport Strategy to ensure that New Zealand's need for an integrated transport system is met. This would require a rationalisation of the functions of NZ ports.

Please also see answer to question 7.