

Media Release: Rail and Maritime Transport Union  
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## **East Coast and Hawkes Bay let down by KiwiRail's mothballing announcement**

East Coast and Hawkes Bay communities are the latest to be let down by a defeatist attitude to rail by the government and KiwiRail management, the Rail & Maritime Transport Union said today.

KiwiRail has today announced the decision to mothball the Napier-Gisborne rail line.

"We are witnessing the line by line destruction of the national rail network," said Phil Spanswick, RMTU organiser.

"If this is what the KiwiRail Turnaround Plan represents, then regional communities will be angry that KiwiRail is systematically mothballing lines to manage the network into extinction, rather than having a long term plan that recognises the critical role rail will play into the future."

Once a rail line is mothballed, it becomes difficult to bring it back into operation, Phil Spanswick said, and it represents an immediate safety risk for rail staff to operate if it is needed at short notice, such as in natural disasters.

"A quality, national rail network should be a cornerstone of our national transport logistics supply chain."

"But instead, today's decision, alongside the loss of 158 jobs in Infrastructure & Engineering and reluctance to use a local skilled workforce carry out rail construction, demonstrates the Turnaround plan is taking us backwards," Phil Spanswick said.

Ends.

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