

Media Release: Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU)
Thursday September 8, 2011

Parliament can't ignore 14,000 people's views on local rail jobs

The Rail and Maritime Transport Union says Parliament cannot ignore the concerns of 14,000 people who want to keep rail manufacturing jobs in New Zealand.

The union has written to Transport and Industrial Relations Committee, which met yesterday, asking to give evidence before it in relation to [the petition signed by 14,000 people](#) calling on the government to commit to building rolling stock in New Zealand workshops.

KiwiRail is purchasing rolling stock and electric units overseas, rather than have them built in New Zealand. KiwiRail has made 44 Dunedin staff redundant as a result.

The petition was presented at Parliament in August by workers from the Dunedin and Lower Hutt workshops.

"We believe we should be able to present evidence before the committee, and ask the committee to give this urgent consideration," RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson said.

The public had given strong support to the union's campaign to keep rail jobs in New Zealand, he said.

"It seems no one other than KiwiRail CEO Jim Quinn and Transport Minister Steve Joyce agrees that we should be standing idle and letting go of our rail industry jobs, putting the wider engineering industries in Dunedin and Lower Hutt at risk."

Meanwhile, [earlier yesterday it was revealed](#) that KiwiRail's supplier in China had under-delivered on a major Australian order, forcing Downer EDI to spend significant amounts of time fixing problems with the trains.

Ends.

For further comment: RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson on (027) 496-2461