

THE ACTIVIST



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Happy New Year to you and yours!

This is the first issue for 2011. This year promises to be a very busy and full on year for all of us.

We have a general election this year where we need to install a worker friendly Government and a rugby world cup to win.

We also have all nationally elected positions (President, General Secretary, National Management Committee and the Rail Industry Councils) within the Union up for election this year. This is risk for the Union if too much change occurs but then that's democracy.



Bring it on we say!

SOE OVERLOOKING LOCAL WORKERS FOR LOCO ENGINEERING JOBS

An Auckland railway worker says that KiwiRail should focus more on up-skilling local workers rather than recruiting overseas for their engineering jobs.

Bernie Henare, chairperson of the Auckland Rail Branch of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union, said KiwiRail was too focused on overseas recruitment

for upcoming locomotive engineering jobs in Auckland.

"Why is KiwiRail going overseas to recruit workers when we have plenty of willing Kiwi workers here to choose from," he said.

"There is no advantage to bringing a locomotive engineer in from overseas to drive Auckland commuter trains, as they will have to go through the same training and on the job training as a local would."

Bernie, who is Maori, said that as an SOE KiwiRail could do a lot more to train young Maori workers into the rail profession.

"With unemployment at 6.8 per cent we need to take a good look inwardly before we cast our eyes offshore," he said.

JOBS, JUSTICE, CLIMATE

RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson said that as attention focused on jobs and the economy in this year's election, the RMTU is calling for all parties to have strong policies about both local recruiting

and skills development, and local procurement for rail manufacturing work.

NO TRACK WARRANTS BY CELLPHONE

All Locomotive Engineers and other rail service vehicle operators are reminded that Track Warrants must not be taken or issued by cellphone communication. The primary method of issue is the train radio network and so if communications are such that the radio network is not fit for purpose then to ensure quick remediation of the radio network fault warrants must not be taken

This is for the information and guidance of RMTU members only!

by cellphone. This is national Union policy as approved by Conference.

KIWI RAIL MEDICAL STANDARDS

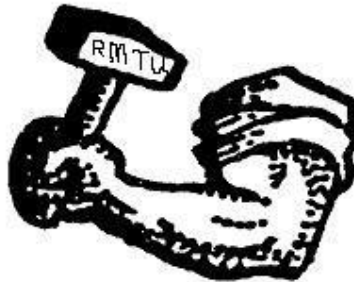
The industry has been discussing the imposition of a national standard since 1999 and the Ministerial Inquiry into The H&S of Tranz Rail Workers of that year. Presently the only occupations on land which have prescribed medical standards are Locomotive Engineers (Hx Medical) and Remote Control Operators (H4LT). The Rail regulator (currently called Land Transport NZ but other names in the past) has determined that the industry is taking too long so imposed a date for application of the standard. The standard being imposed and implemented is the Australian Railway Medical Standard which was created following the Waterfall train crash in NSW in 2004.

The major change is that the railway standard will now apply to all rail industry workers. You will be given a safety rating between 1 and 4 with + and - in the levels. Category 1 is anyone who is driving a rail service vehicle like an LE, RCO, HI Rail driver etc.

When the standards were rolled out in Australia some workers had to be moved out of high risk positions as they couldn't meet the medical criteria for their role whilst a small number were actually medically retired.

The RMTU has been bemused for a number of years at the numbers of KiwiRail Loco Engineers who have been medically retired here in NZ but then pop up driving trains in Oz. If both countries have the same standard how does that happen?

All rail workers will progressively receive letters stating their risk rating and when their medical is due (a urine test will in most cases be done at this medical time too). If you wish to question your risk assessment then you should talk to your manager in the first instance and then to your Union delegate.



LABOUR ANNOUNCEMENT ON EMPLOYMENT LAW

In a speech given by Trevor Mallard he notes that the Labour Party is currently looking into the advantages of implementing a rights based legal framework to address the inequalities in the labour market, to ensure workers can be on par with employers in the setting of pay and conditions, and that workers can be effectively represented. He notes that a move to a rights based framework would extend representation and collective bargaining to the widest possible group of workers, as a matter of right.

Trevor Mallard also reiterated Labour's commitments on:

- The requirement to give a reason for dismissal at all times including during a trial period, and the right to challenge unfair dismissals
 - The strengthening of certain legal minimums, including extending paid parental leave provisions
 - For reinstatement to be the primary remedy for successful personal grievance claims
 - For unions to have the right to enter workplaces with the pre-2010 conditions
- To guarantee four weeks holiday
- And for the minimum wage to move to \$15 at the first opportunity

FIRST ISSUE 2011 - 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 BY 18 FEBRUARY!

LOCOMOTIVE CAB RADIO'S

Strong issues of Loco Cab radio reliability are being raised from many depots

nationally. In some areas it is the introduction of Tait radio's and various firmware and software upgrades, for others it is infrastructure issues, repeaters etc. or a mix of both.

We need to make sure that we are not complacent over these radio issues, if issues are not being addressed, continue to escalate the issue both within KR and the RMTU. Within KR – report issues to your LE manager and/or Soren Low and for the RMTU, regional KIC LE reps being Bernie Snook Northern, Wally Wallbutton Central, Murray Dunlop Southern or Todd Valster RMTU National Office.

The loco cab radio is a safety critical tool that cannot be replaced with a mobile phone.

HEADS UP – PORTS FORUM

The RMTU Ports Forum is being held 17-18 May 2011 at the St John's Church Conference Venue in Wellington. Port Branch Secretaries are asked to finalise their representatives and return their registration forms to National Office as soon as possible.

Suggestions for agenda items are encouraged from branches and delegates and are due ASAP.



NEW ZEALAND MUST CONDEMN ANTI- DEMOCRACY VIOLENCE IN EGYPT AND TUNISIA

The CTU has written to Foreign Minister Murray McCully asking the New Zealand Government to condemn the violent attacks on trade unionists in Tunisia and on the pro-democracy protesters in Egypt. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has called a Day of Action for Democracy in Egypt for today, February 8.

The offices of ITUC affiliate the UGTT in six towns across Tunisia have been attacked

as trade unionists play a prominent role in the protests demanding democracy for the country. Trade unionists in Egypt have also been at the forefront of the peaceful demonstrations in Cairo which have been subjected to provocative violence by pro-Government forces.

CTU President Helen Kelly said: "We have asked the Foreign Minister to add New Zealand's voice to the condemnation of these attempts to stifle democracy and the illegal intimidation of trade unionists. The right to peaceful protest is an internationally recognised human right. Trade unions have played an important role in establishing this right throughout recent history and we wish to express our solidarity with the trade unionists in Tunisia and Egypt as they face unacceptable intimidation and violence."

The ITUC's Day of Action for Democracy in Egypt will see protest actions outside Egyptian embassies around the world. Since there is no embassy in New Zealand the CTU is calling on the Foreign Minister to make representations at the highest diplomatic level in Egypt itself.

FINAL REMINDER -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

MINIMUM WAGE ADJUSTMENT IS WOEFULLY INADEQUATE

The Government's decision to allow the minimum wage to decrease in real value by increasing it by only 25c to \$13 an hour when inflation is running at 4 percent will drive our lowest paid workers into further hardship, said the Council of Trade Unions.

CTU President Helen Kelly said: "We are talking about wages that are already insufficient to meet basic costs and about a group of workers worst affected by increases in food, rent, fuel and power. These families are already reporting extreme hardship and any government that genuinely understood this would have increased the rate by significantly more."

"The Government gave generous tax cuts to those on high incomes but gives a miserly increase to those on the minimum wage."

"Low income earners got the worst deal from the October tax changes, which left some of them worse off even on Treasury's reckoning, but for most of them, the gap between their incomes and high incomes grew steeply after tax. This is another unfair government decision on top of the tax changes. It particularly affects women, Māori, Pacific and part time workers."

"It is considerably behind Australia's system of minimum wages in its modern award system, the lowest of which is A\$15.00 - about 50 percent higher than the new New Zealand minimum wage

when the exchange rate is taken into account and over a third higher in purchasing power terms."

An increase in the minimum wage benefits many more people than those actually receiving it, said Kelly. It pushes up wages for tens of thousands of people near to the minimum.

There is no conclusive evidence it undermines employment. There have been numerous studies in New Zealand and internationally of the effect of the minimum wage on employment. The latest large-scale minimum wage study is one in the US by Doucouliagos and Stanley (2009). It re-analysed 64 US minimum-wage studies including 39 relating to teenagers and found not only bias in selection of published studies towards ones which show an adverse effect for employment, but once such effects were corrected for, positive effects between an increase in the minimum wage and employment.

A very recently published study in the USA by Dube, Lester and Reich looked at low-wage workers over a 16-year period in all US counties sharing a common border with a county in another state with different minimum wage increases. They found that increases in minimum wages had no negative effects on low-wage employment.

SOLUTIONS NEEDED FOR MĀORI WOOD PROCESSING WORKERS

The Council of Trade Unions Runanga is calling for more help from government for the problems facing the wood processing industry, following recent redundancies in the sector.

"The lack of government interest in supporting a failing economy is gross negligence and is having a devastating effect on regional communities, and particularly on Māori," said Syd Keepa, CTU Vice President Māori.

"We are seeing hundreds of jobs disappear in wood processing, an industry that needs an economic strategy to ensure it grows rather than shrinks."

"This government has defended itself against Hone Harawira's recent claims by

saying it has done a lot for Māori. But they haven't – a flag and the Takutai Moana bill does not put money in workers' pockets and food on the table."

"There are plenty of options open to government to help employment in regional New Zealand, and a classic one is housing which would boost demand for New Zealand timber, another is to increase support for research and development so that wood processing options diversify."

"There is a desperate need for decent housing in areas like the East Coast and up the Far North, where some families are living in houses little better than cow sheds. Increased house building would both help these families, and boost demand for New Zealand timber – it is these sorts of initiatives that a government should be considering in tough times like this."

As an example the project that Ngati Awa is driving, with support from KiwiBank, to build 40 houses is a good initiative that the Government should investigate and expand, Syd Keepa said.

JOHN KEY'S STATEMENT REGARDING THE AVERAGE WAGE

In John Key's Statement to Parliament yesterday he asserted that "While circumstances may vary for individual New Zealanders, on average wages under this Government have risen considerably faster than prices. According to the official statistics, the price of goods and services has gone up 6 percent since September 2008. Over this same period, however, the after-tax average wage has gone up 16 percent." The facts are as follows. I have included some other comparisons because the September 2008 one is not the natural one to make (December 2010 is the latest in these

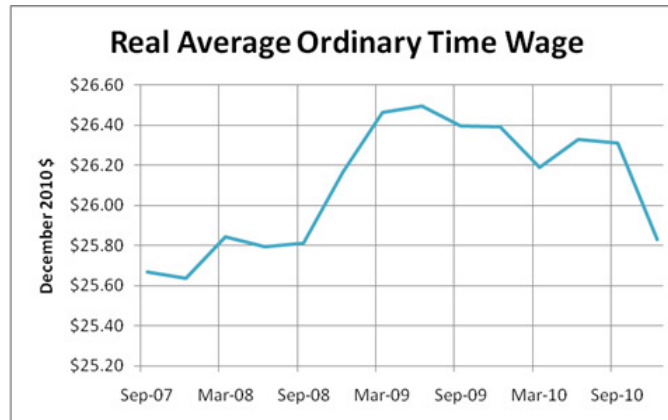
statistics so December 2008 is the natural comparison). You can guess why they used September 2008 when you see the difference.

Before Tax

- Prices (CPI) have gone up 5.6% since September 2008 – and 6.1% since December 2008. Almost half of the increase (2.6%) is due to government policies including GST according to the Reserve Bank.
- The ordinary time average hourly wage has gone up 5.6% since September 2008 – but only 4.7% since December 08.
- So before tax, the average wage has barely kept up with inflation since September 2008 but fallen behind by 1.3% since December 2008. In fact it is 2.5% behind its June 2009 value because the real average wage (the average wage after inflation is taken into account) peaked in June 2009 and fell with only one interruption until December 2010 as the graph shows.

After tax

The government states that the after-tax average wage has gone up by 16% since September 2008. My calculations* put that at only 13.0%, of which 3% occurred in the



quarter to December 2008 due largely to the 1 October 2008 tax cuts under the previous government.

Since December 2008, the after-tax average wage has risen 9.7%. However any real increase is

entirely due to tax cuts rather than increases in real wages. That is unsustainable: we cannot tax-cut our way to higher wages.

But over three-quarters of income earners earn less than the average wage. The lower their income, the less proportionate benefit

they got from the tax cuts (and the more the GST increase has reduced what they get for their spending). Most people got far less benefit from the tax reductions than the Prime Minister's figures suggest.

Finally, if we look at the real after-tax average wage, it has risen only 7% since September 2008 and only 3.4% since December 2008. Again, that increase will be even lower for those many people with lower incomes than the average wage.

* The calculations use the tax tables in 2008 prior to the 1 October 2008 tax cuts and ACC levy for 2008, the tax tables in 2008 after the 1 October 2008 tax cuts and ACC levy for 2008, and the tax tables in 2010 following the 1 October 2010 tax cuts and ACC levy for 2010.

CTU RUNANGA HUI

The NZCTU Runanga Hui is being held 14-16 March 2011 at Papa O Te Aroha Marae in Tokoroa. The delegates elected at Conference will attend for RMTU. Any other member may attend if they wish at their own cost.

ARATERE LENGTHENING

Soon the Aratere will be setting it's prow for distant shores and the word on the spindrift is that the Monte Stello will be sailing on an "as required roster" in her place. However our terminal members do not see an Ox-eye nor a scud in the sky when it comes to the ships bell. So we wait to see what is in the offing in regards to the rosters.

CPI DOWN FOR DECEMBER QUARTER

In the December 2010 quarter compared with the September 2010 quarter:

The consumers price index (CPI) rose 2.3 percent, influenced by a rise in goods and services tax (GST) from 12.5 percent to 15 percent on 1 October 2010. This is the largest quarterly increase since a 3.5 percent rise in the

September 1989 quarter, when GST rose from 10 percent to 12.5 percent on 1 July 1989. Transport prices rose 4.3 percent, reflecting higher prices for petrol and international air transport. Food prices rose 2.1 percent, with higher grocery food prices the key contributor. Housing and household utility prices rose 1.6 percent, with higher prices for the purchase of new housing and property maintenance services. Recreation and culture prices rose 2.9 percent, influenced by higher prices for package holidays.

IS IT A CT SITE – OR NOT

Further to the 5 month dry dock of the Aratere, a temporary CT site will be set up in Marlborough near the Ferry Terminal. This will run in tandem with the Spring creek CT operation and we have been assured that it will not negatively impact on this operation.

The CT site will be staffed by contract workers, be assured we will be watching this operation very closely.

OUT @ WORK

The NZCTU Out @ Work Kamp is being held 16-17 March 2011 and coincides with the 2nd Asia Pacific Outgames Human Rights Conference which is being held 12-19 March 2011 at the Wellington Town Hall Wakefield Street Wellington.

RMTU will be represented by nominated delegates at this Biennial conference and international event. A report will be published in the Union Journal issue 2.

PRIMEPORT TIMARU

Wage talks have concluded at the port and the employer has requested that their final offer be put to members for ratification or rejection at a paid meeting. The parties are finalising the details of the settlement offer and are hopeful that it will be presented to members within the next 2 weeks.

**SOCIAL POLICY
RECIPE FOR
FAILURE**

FAIRNESS
at WORK



unions we're about fairness

nce of RMTU members Only!



14/02/11

John Key's social policy is a tired recipe for failure and division, the Green Party said today.

"We already have hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders struggling to get by, and the Prime Minister plans to make it harder for them," said Green Party Co-leader Metiria Turei. "It makes no sense."

Responding to the Prime Minister's opening statement to Parliament, Mrs Turei restated the Greens' call for a significant boost to the minimum wage, state housing construction and more investment to help low-income families.

"Our minimum wage is so low that many Kiwis who work fulltime still need top ups from the Government just to cover the basics like food and shelter," Mrs Turei said. "The minimum wage must go up to \$15 per hour as soon as possible. The 25 cent adjustment announced yesterday is miserable."

Lifting the minimum wage to \$15 per hour would save more than \$1 billion from the Government's social assistance budget, Mrs Turei noted.

"While Mr Key plans to shuffle the existing state housing stock, we'd like to build 6000 new state homes in the next three years. A building program would help the 10,000 families on the waiting list for a home and it would help our struggling construction industry."

Last year John Key's Government cut the budget for state houses from \$120 million dollars to \$18 million dollars.

In her Address in Reply, the Green Party Co-leader also pointed out the folly of likely changes to welfare: "John Key talks of 220,000 children dependent on benefits, as if that is their fault.

"We can help them, by extending Working for Families support to their families, to help pay for food, rent, warm clothes, and electricity.

"Instead, we are staring down the barrel of changes to welfare that will widen the gap between those who have the most, and those who need the most."

CTU ENDORSES LABOUR TAX AND JOBS PROPOSALS

The Council of Trade unions has welcomed the Labour Party's proposals to focus on job creation and overhaul the tax system.

CTU President Helen Kelly said: "The Labour Party's proposals echo several elements of the Alternative Economic Strategy which we published in October 2010. In particular we called for a tax free band, and tax rates of 38 percent on income above \$100,000 and 45 percent on income above \$150,000, or three times the average wage."

"The Government's tax changes in the last budget gave by far the most to those who needed it least, and the tiny benefits to the lowest paid have disappeared in the GST hike and the rising cost of living. A tax free band and increased taxation on the highest incomes is fairer and will begin to reduce the extremes of inequality that have grown in New Zealand over recent years."

"We have also been calling on the Government to do more to create and protect jobs from the moment unemployment began to soar as a result of the global financial crisis. Despite an initial willingness to discuss initiatives the Government has not done nearly support employment. We welcome the Labour Party's commitment to invest in skills training, smarter working and higher value industry, especially the double wins which can be had from green technologies."

"The current Government has abandoned the unemployed and the low paid. New Zealand needs policies which will lift employment over the long term, redress inequalities and build a sustainable future for everyone."

STEPS TO PRIVATISATION WILL CAUSE MORE PROBLEMS THAN THEY SOLVE

The plans announced by the Prime Minister to consider partial privatisation of four major state owned enterprises will do little to address debt problems and cause more problems than they solve, says CTU economist Bill Rosenberg.



In addition, the announcement of a further cut in the already slashed government operating allowance – the allowance for new spending in the 2011 Budget – is small in terms of debt levels. A reduction from \$1.1 billion to \$800 million saves only a week of debt payments. But it will hurt in the additional pressure it will place on government services like health and education.

Partial privatisation of the electricity SOEs Meridian, Genesis and Mighty River will mean that the wider public interests in New Zealand's electricity system which need to balance security of supply, environmental impacts and low cost will be lost in pressure from private investors to raise company profits.

Bill Rosenberg said: "Inevitably we will see more of the bad behaviour of the private electricity companies and the commercially focused SOEs intensify, with more price rises, reluctance to invest in new generating capacity, and reluctance to invest in a secure supply. The electricity system must be regulated because of the size of the companies in it. Competition doesn't work in an industry with such large economies of scale. But effective regulation has proved almost impossible. The best choice would be to take back full government control of the sector and run it efficiently and with those balanced goals as objectives. That would produce a much better return to households and New Zealand's economy."

"If we want to provide investment opportunities to the public, Kiwi infrastructure bonds could be offered that the Government uses for development purposes. The SOEs could increase their bond offerings."

"The partial sale would hardly dent the Government's debt but at a significant cost to the effectiveness of New Zealand's infrastructure. Most of the shares will end up overseas owned, increasing New Zealand's overseas

liabilities. It just moves public debt to private debt and fails to answer the credit rating agencies, whose main concern is New Zealand's private international liabilities. New Zealand's government debt will still be low even at its peak by international standards."

In its submission to the Savings Working Group, the CTU puts forward several alternatives including making Kiwisaver compulsory with a compulsory employer contribution rising to 6 percent and a maximum compulsory contribution of 2 percent for workers at that point. The position of low income workers and beneficiaries also needs consideration. The submission also pointed out the effects of increasing income inequality and low incomes on saving, and the behaviour of the big four banks in reaching New Zealand's current state of indebtedness.

CTU WELCOMES GREENS' COMMITMENT TO UNIONS AND GOOD EMPLOYMENT LAW

CTU President Helen Kelly today welcomed the commitment by the Greens to recognising the importance of unions, a fair minimum wage, and good employment law. In his speech to the Greens conference today, co-leader Russel Norman acknowledged that "unions are central to economic success". He reiterated Green support for an increase in the minimum wage to at least \$15 an hour, which unions have been campaigning for.

"We also welcome the party's opposition to the Government's sell-out by weakening our labour laws."

"The Greens can obviously see the importance of good industrial law in reversing the huge increases in inequality that have grown

up in New Zealand since the 1980s and in creating a fair society with opportunities for all. A fair wage system and a supportive social welfare system are vital to that."



"There are many other parts of the Greens' programme that we support, including opposition to privatisation and increased foreign ownership, a capital gains tax exempting the primary home, and investment in clean technology," said Kelly. "We look forward to seeing the details of their election programme."

ECONOMY AND WORKERS LOOSE OUT UNDER LOW MINIMUM WAGE INCREASE

The government has lost an opportunity to add more stimulus to the economy and give better help to low income workers with today's minimum wage decision, the National Distribution Union said today.

"25 cents an hour does little to help workers battling rising costs from petrol, food and other items," NDU General Secretary Robert Reid said.

"A bigger boost to the minimum wage would also have added further stimulus to our economy, which is still at risk of a weak recovery. Businesses in retail and hospitality in particular would have benefited directly from a more substantial minimum wage increase."

Robert Reid said that he was also concerned that hundreds of workers in New Zealand were being paid under the minimum wage and the Department of Labour was doing little to police this.

"Just today I received a call from a migrant worker in the Auckland suburb of Northcote who stated that it was very difficult to find a job that was even paying the minimum wage."

"In addition some major NZ firms add shift and attendance bonuses to hourly rates below the minimum wage. They say that the Department of Labour has condoned this practice. The NDU believes the practice could be unlawful."

Robert Reid said that workers in unions would continue to negotiate pay rates above the minimum wage, but a higher minimum wage was needed as the wage floor for all workers.

LABOUR PROMISES

Labour is promising to extend paid parental leave and make Working for Families more generous for parents of under-2s under its new social welfare policy. Labour's social development spokeswoman Annette King has given further details about the party's new social policies, the full details of which will be made public within two months.

The plans include increasing paid parental leave from the current 14 weeks and allowing more parents to be eligible for it to make it more comparable to Australia's new scheme, which allows for 18 weeks on the minimum wage. Ms King said although Australia had introduced its first national paid parental scheme only this year, it was more generous than New Zealand's provisions.

"Australia took their lead from New Zealand's scheme but they have raced ahead of us. It is for 18 weeks and available to a wider group of people." She said Australia also had a "baby bonus" - worth around A\$5000 (\$6430) a year - for some who weren't eligible for leave provisions.

While Labour had not yet considered a similar step, she said the difference between the two countries showed New Zealand had to make some improvements. Ms King said Labour's policies had been costed and were developed in consultation with experts over the past 18 months. The focus was on children aged under six.

OTHER UPCOMING UNION CONFERENCE DATES

The RMTU will be participating in the following conferences. Whilst spaces and RMTU National finances are limited, if you are keen to be a participant then please advise your branch officers so they can authorise and negotiate your participation.

The conferences are;

- The NZCTU Women's Biennial Conference is being held 17-18 June 2011 in Wellington,
- The NZCTU Komiti Pacifica Fono is being held 14-15 July 2011 in Auckland.



- The NZCTU Biennial Conference is being held 18-19 August 2011 in Wellington.

KRN PARTNERSHIP

The Union has signed off support for KiwiRail Networks joining into the ACC Partnership Programme. Accreditation as an accredited employer enables the employer to take on the responsibilities of and self-insure (within certain parameters) for ACC. This usually means they save money and is (in our view) the motivator for the move. It also means that they will use a "third party administrator" or TPA to undertake the case management role. Our experience within rail has been mixed in terms of how our members have been "looked after" by the TPA's, however as always the RMTU will guard the interests of members.

South Island Organiser

We had an encouraging 53 applicants for the advertised vacancy within the RMTU team. The interview team of Jim Kelly, Aubrey Wilkinson and Wayne Butson will be meeting shortlisted candidates next week and so we are hopeful of having someone up and running very soon.

Thank you to our SI branch officers and delegates for shouldering the extra workload in the interim.

CENTREPORT CA UPDATE

The current multi union Collective Agreement expired on February 8th. There has been one meeting with CPL to discuss the Bargaining Process Agreement and a further meeting planned to commence bargaining on February 24th. Most of the term of the last CA was spent discussing productivity improvements within this port, this makes for an interesting context for this year's wage round.

VTAK CA

Veolia Transport members at a recent paid meeting held in the Ellerslie Racecourse voted overwhelmingly to set aside the

postal ratification ballot result and then to ratify the employers settlement offer.

In a related but separate issue the National Returning Officer Howard Phillips will be conducting interviews with members in relation to alleged voting irregularities associated with the postal ballot on 17 and 18 February 2011 in Auckland.

BLOCK OF LINE GOES WELL

The Xmas shutdown of the Auckland network resulted in a large amount of infrastructure work being completed. Networks members working shifts managed to complete most of the work that had been planned. Work on the electrification project has commenced, one of the few problems was the contractor installing the overhead (HILOR) attempted to impose its random drug and alcohol policy on KiwiRail staff.

The problem arose due to HILOR importing a policy that they operate overseas. Agreement has been reached that KiwiRail staff will operate under the jointly agreed KiwiRail drug and alcohol policy.

Let's Be Safe Out There & Remember.....

"WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER"!



Important Union Dates - 2011

International Women's Day 100 Years Celebration	8 March 2011
Workers Memorial Day	28 April 2011
RMTU Ports Forum	17-18 May 2011
Conference Remits Due	31 July 2011
Annual Delegates Conference	8, 9 & 10 November 2011
Suffrage Day	19 September 2011
Labour Day	24 October 2011
White Ribbon Day	25 November 2011
Transport Worker - Branch Contribution Deadlines for printing	Issue 1 - 7 February 2011 Issue 2 - 2 May 2011 Issue 3 - 8 August 2011 Issue 4 - 7 November 2011
BRANCH AGM's (Election of Officers & Conference Delegates)	To be held in the month of AUGUST 2011 as per rules & standing orders. (Please liaise with your Industrial Officer and other local branches to ensure Gen Sec attendance).
National Management Committee Board Meetings	1 st NMC Meeting 16 March 2011 2 nd NMC Meeting 8 June 2011 3 rd NMC Meeting 7 September 2011 4 th NMC Meeting 7-8 December 2011 (NMC 7 th & Staff 8 th)
NZCTU Meetings & Biennial Conferences	Biennial Hui: 14-16 March Tokoroa Komiti Pacifica Conference: 14-15 July Auckland Out@Work: 16-17 March Wellington Women's Conference: 17-18 June Wellington Youth Conference: TBA NZ CTU Conference: 18-19 August 2011 Wellington NAC's: 24/02, 26/05, 28/07, 24/11 Wellington Runanga's: 25/02, 27/05, 29/07, 25/11 Wellington Women's Council's: 11/02, 05/05, 30/09, 17/11 Wellington



