

THE ACTIVIST



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HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU AND YOURS!

This is the first issue for 2019.

2018 was a very successful year for the Union with many triumphs to celebrate and we know that this year promises to be a very busy and full on year for all of us.

Unity will judge our success!

RELIEF GEN SEC

Todd Valster will be relief GS from 27 Feb to 2 March owing to the General Secretary Wayne Butson attending an International Transport Workers Federation "Our Public Transport Bangkok Project meeting" in Bangkok. Wayne is attending and funded in his capacity as the ITF Asia Pacific Rail Section chair. Whilst in Bangkok Wayne will be visiting Trade Union and Yellow Shirt leader Somsak Kosaisook in jail where he is serving an 8 month sentence arising from his role in the Airport and Govt House occupations during the yellow and red shirt struggles in 2010 to 2014.

POSTAL BALLOT RESULT - NORTH ISLAND RAIL NMC REPRESENTATIVE 2017 - 2019

The postal ballot result for the North Island Rail National Management Committee governance role for the remainder of the 2017-2019 Term which was conducted in accordance with Rule 42 of the Union Rules and Standing Orders is as follows:

Ballot papers issued: 771, Returned: 176, Total ballot return rate 22.83%

As there were four nominees, a Preferential Voting System was used.

At the first count, no nominee received more than 50% plus 1 of the total votes returned. As Ms Brown had the least number of votes, in the first count, her SECOND CHOICE preferences were distributed to the remaining three candidates.

At the second count, no nominee received more than 50% plus 1 of the total votes returned (89 Required). As Mr McNae had the least number of votes, in the second count, his THIRD CHOICE preferences were distributed to the remaining candidates. Following the third count, Albert Barr received 54% of the total votes returned.

The increase in the number of invalids is due to the voter not completing votes for additional candidates beyond their first choice.

ALBERT BARR IS DECLARED ELECTED

The actual voting result table has been distributed to branches and rail delegates.

Howard Phillips
National Returning Officer

ANNUAL H&S SURVEY

Each year Safeguard run a "State of the Nation" survey to take the pulse of how things are going. They seek input from three groups: health & safety practitioners, health & safety representatives, and business owners/senior managers.

The Union requests all H&S reps and Union Delegates to complete the survey!!! The survey will be open until 20 March.



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

The survey takes less than two minutes to complete, and Safeguard is particularly looking for input from health & safety representatives.

You can do the survey [here](#). Be sure to have your say!

WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY 28 APRIL 2019

On Workers' Memorial Day, we "remember the dead: fight for the living". The RMTU commemorates the day by organising events to remember all those killed through work but at the same time pledge to continue the fight to ensure that such tragedies are not repeated. The international theme is "Dangerous substances, get them out of the workplace".



Worksafe NZ estimates that 30,000 people develop serious but non-fatal work-related ill-health each year.

Please show your solidarity and support for the workers and their families who've been cruelly affected by a workplace death, injury or ill-health.

Events will be occurring around the country on 28 April.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REP TRAINING-HOW TO REGISTER FOR A COURSE

Following the Union AGM's, new Health and Safety Reps who've recently been elected to Health and Safety Committees are required to register for H&S Rep training. H&S Reps attend 2-days paid training per year paid for by the employer.

To register on a course go to www.worksafereps.co.nz

NEW SECRETARY AT LYTTELTON PORT BRANCH

Brian Gilkison has taken up the position of Branch Secretary at the Lyttelton Port Branch after Heiner Benecke stood down last week. [Brian was a delegate in the container terminal who was targeted by LPC management and in our view unjustifiably dismissed. At a special membership meeting in December they voted that Brian become the new Secretary in the event of the axe falling].

Heiner was Branch Secretary for four tumultuous years, he took up the reins in the middle of the 2014-15 wage round and subsequently represented members and organised around a large number of individual and collective issues, culminating in last years bitter industrial dispute with LPC. Heiner made several important

contributions to the Branch's organisation, notably the introduction of a mass text system to enable real-time communication with the membership and the establishment of a secure Branch Facebook page. Both of these innovations have been taken up by other Branches. He will continue to work at LPC as a cargo handler and will remain a delegate. Heiner leaves a big pair of shoes for Brian to fill but we know he will do the job really well.

KIWRAIL AND RMTU JUST FAIR CULTURE TRAINING 20-21 MARCH

The first Just Fair Culture course for 2019 will be held in Tauranga on the 20-21 MARCH. The Just Fair Culture programme was jointly developed by the RMTU & KRG and remains co-facilitated between the Union and KRG. The training is designed for Managers, Union Delegates/H&S reps to identify how unsafe systems of work lead to unsafe behaviours. The training provides a process on how to identify and manage

unsafe systems and treat people in a fair and just way. More courses will be announced.

ARE WE THERE YET?

Yes. After 4 years in the committee stages, it has been a long time coming but finally the Standards Committee Ch-039 – Detection of Drugs in Oral Fluid work is complete. Standards have recently advised that the Australian/New Zealand Standard 4760:2019 “Procedure for specimen collection and the detection and quantification of drugs in oral fluid” has been approved for publication. Standards expect AS/NZS 4760:2019 to be available electronically by the middle of March, with hard copies following shortly after.

The lack of a NZ standard has been one of the reasons many employers were not agreeing to saliva testing.

CTU SKILLS OF ORGANISING COURSE IN CHRISTCHURCH

Four senior officials from the RMTU are attending this five day course over two separate sessions in March and April. Matt Dougherty from Port Otago, Luke James and Ron Nijssen from KiwiRail, and new Lyttelton Port Branch Secretary Brian Gilkison will work alongside new organisers from several CTU affiliated unions.

The RMTU is unusual in that we send delegates to these courses whereas most other unions only send paid, full time officials. This is in keeping with our philosophy of developing delegates who are ‘on the job’ and working alongside our rank and file members. This approach has yielded big dividends in the past and many of our key officials have done this and similar courses.

The quality of the RMTU’s delegates is second to none, and this is a reflection of the emphasis we put on the training and education of our active members.

KIWI RAIL AND RMTU JOINT TRAINING DAY

New and existing Health and Safety Action Team (HSAT) Chairs came together for a training day in Wellington as part of the joint KRG/RMTU commitment to support the HSATs. The theme of the training was workplace health including fatigue, EAP services, air monitoring and manual handling.

Talk to your H&S rep about the health risks that effect you and your workmates.

KIWI RAIL / RMTU (FREIGHT OPS) INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL (KIC) UPDATE

The KIC meeting (41) was held in Christchurch 12-13 February.

Day 1 was combined with KiwiRail Networks Industrial Council (KNIC) and Day 2 was separate industrial council meeting. KiwiRail are proposing to do combined KIC/KNIC days for every meeting and include the Mechanical Consultative Council as well, if they are agreeable.

KIC is going through a transition with mostly new managers and many new KIC Reps. At KIC 41, the previous minutes, charters, Asset Management KIC action items were reviewed and update. KiwiRail presented the Business update that included Health & Safety and other KPI’s.

At KIC 41 we stressed that there needed to be better co-ordination of the various projects the KIC reps are on. These projects include – HPHE Upper North Island Train Optimisation, Interest Based Problem Solving (IBPS) - Safer Shunting, HPHE Fatigue Risk Management Group, CRN SPAD reduction, People Plant Separation, DL issues, EF Upgrades, Tunnel Focus groups and People Development.

Outstanding work from the 2018 wage round includes ROM S9 review (terminals), CT



progression and Rail Operator rates review, especially Westfield.

SUCCESSFUL TRAINING DAY FOR PORT OTAGO BRANCH EXECUTIVE

The RMTU Port Otago Branch Executive enjoyed a successful training day with the RMTU National President, General Secretary and South Island Organiser in Dunedin last month. Whilst this was a refresher session covering our standard delegate training there was much discussion about the forthcoming bargaining round with Port Otago. The Executive were clear that the Branch will not countenance any reduction in members' terms and conditions and this was later put to a full membership meeting of the Branch where it was passed unanimously.

A NEW FUTURE FOR WORK SKILLS TRAINING IN NZ

Education Minister Chris Hipkins today released wide-ranging proposals for strengthening vocational education so that school leavers get high quality training opportunities, employers get the skills they need and New Zealanders are better equipped for the changing nature of work.

"The world around us is changing rapidly and our education system needs to keep up," Chris Hipkins said.

"At a time when we're facing critical skill shortages, too many of our polytechnics and institutes of technology are going broke.

"The strong labour market is encouraging young people to move directly into the workforce rather than continue in formal

education, when it needs to be smarter and accommodate both. And our system isn't geared up for the future economy, where re-training and up-skilling will be a regular feature of everyone's working life.

"Instead of our institutes of technology retrenching, cutting programmes, and closing campuses, we need them to expand their course delivery in more locations around the country.

"It's time to reset the whole system and fundamentally rethink the way we view vocational education and training, and how it's delivered.

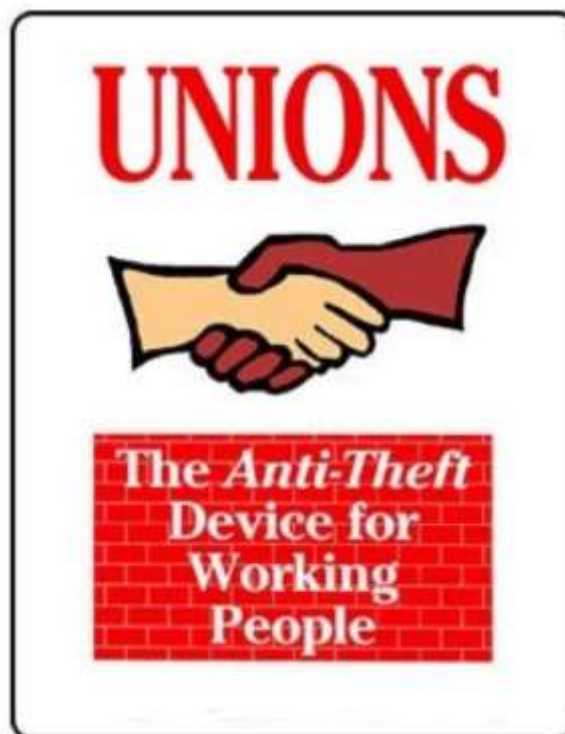
"The Coalition Government proposes to establish a unified, coordinated, national system of vocational education and training. The proposals are:

- Redefined roles for education providers and industry bodies (Industry Training Organisations (ITOs)) to extend the leadership role of industry and employers;
- Bringing together the 16 existing ITPs as a one entity with the working title of the New Zealand Institute of Skills &

Technology with a robust regional network of provision; and

- A unified vocational education funding system.

"We would also ensure there's strong regional influence in the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology through the proposed formation of Regional Leadership Groups which would identify the needs of the local economy and become a key link between local government, employers, iwi and communities.



"The development of courses and programmes would be consolidated, improving consistency and freeing up resources to expand front-line delivery. There will be more sharing of expertise and best-practice, and more use of online, distance, and blended learning.

"The Government envisages that the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology, and perhaps also wānanga, host Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs). These power houses of expertise could cover key sectors and industries, which could be broad (eg, agriculture) or specific (eg, viticulture).

"Our proposals aim to ensure that the system is easier to navigate and provides the skills that employers and employees need.

"What we are proposing is ambitious, but it needs to be. We cannot continue to tweak the system knowing that the model is fundamentally broken, and isn't delivering our workforce the skills that they need to thrive.

"Every New Zealander has a stake in vocational education. I encourage everyone to have their say and I look forward to hearing your feedback.

"The proposals released today may go ahead in this or another form, but the Government won't make any decisions until we have heard and carefully considered feedback from this consultation process," Chris Hipkins said. Public consultation is open until 27 March.

Note;

- The Cabinet paper can be found [here](#).
- The Fact sheets are [here](#)
- Here are the consultation documents and other decision making documents and advice can be found [here](#).

MEMBERSHIP DATABASE UPDATES

The RMTU membership database is an important tool in contacting Union Members

or ensuring members are kept up to date with the latest information. We are concerned at the number of "unknown" or "return to sender" envelopes returned to National Office as part of this year's officer elections. We remind members that if you 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 any change of designation or employer.

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 national Union elected positions are up for election this year and so there may be votes conducted by mail. If we have the incorrect address info you will not get a vote as you will never receive a voting paper. Update now!

KIWI RAIL NETWORKS INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL LATEST NEWS

This Council met on 12-14 February with the first day a joint meeting with the KIC or Operations Industrial Council.

We have a number of specific projects that arise out of the settlement of the MECA last year. These are a pay and progression review; a staffing review; and a review of the flexible workers provisions in the collective agreement.

Pay and progression was last reviewed in 2010-11 and resulted in significant pay increases for many members after data collected demonstrated that KiwiRail was not meeting its objective paying the market median for many roles – the 'going rate' in plain English. We're overdue a review and will commence that with a meeting in Wellington on 19th March. The process is likely to take months

rather than weeks and there is no guarantee of a similar outcome to the last pay and progression review – it will all depend on the information we get from the market data.



Jerry Hohepa and John Kerr will represent the RMTU at the outset although we anticipate pulling in other people to assist.

Staffing is a big issue that is deeply and widely felt amongst members. Since the so called cost reduction exercise of 2012 many gangs have been attempting to run with very low staffing for example. We're looking to kick off an HPHE project on 11th April. Ian Walker, John Kerr and Lou Watene will represent the RMTU.

The review of the flexible workers clause is a KiwiRail initiated item and the initial discussions will take place via video conference on 11th March.

In other news Clause 29 Contracting Out is once again becoming an issue – largely because management changes in the North Island mean that some people aren't aware of the employer's obligations. We need to know if members are concerned about this – if we don't know there isn't much we can do.

The Driving licence TORO form seems to be generating some concern in Network Services. Our advice is that current MECA staff do not have to complete the TORO form. This is an issue that doesn't only exist in Network Services and will need to be resolved by discussions between RMTU National Office and KiwiRail nationally with the appropriate input from members.



UNION FEE INCREASE

The RMTU Biennial Conference held in Wellington 24 to 26 October 2018 unanimously voted to increase the Union Membership Fee effective from 1 December 2018 to the following;

- \$8.90 per week for full-time members
- \$17.80 per fortnight for full-time members
- \$38.56 per month for full-time members
- \$1.35 per day for daily casuals

- \$4.45 per week or \$8.90 per fortnight for part-time employees working less than 20 hours per week
- \$4.45 per week or \$8.90 per fortnight for trainees-apprentices earning remuneration below a determined amount.
- \$30.00 per year for Honorary Membership (which is defined as having been a continuous member of the Union for no less than five (5) years which then entitles the Honorary Member to receive:-
 - The Transport Worker – mailed out quarterly; and
 - Group C Membership of the Railway Welfare Trust Fund (for which a separate application & fee of \$50.00 per year needs to be paid.)

All employers who do fee deductions from wages have been advised of the increase. **Note some branches have a local fee addition to the national union fee.**

RMTU REVIEWS MEMBERSHIP TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The RMTU has been conducting a review of the courses we have available to members and delegates. We have a range of options available, ranging from our flagship one day delegate training course to more advanced and specific courses on things like bargaining and media skills for example. We have developed a manual for the introductory delegates' course that should ensure consistency in the content and the way this is taught and the materials used. This project is continuing and members will be able to read more about it in future editions of the Activist and the world famous Transport Worker.

CREDIT UNION MERGER PROPOSAL

The Board of NZCU Baywide has been in discussions to join forces with four other New Zealand owned credit unions to merge



into one single credit union. The Board now recommends members support the unification via Transfers of Engagements of NZCU South, NZCU Central, NZCU Steelsands and Aotearoa Credit Union to NZCU Baywide. This proposed merger will create scale efficiencies allowing us to better serve you, our member-owners. As a result, your credit union will have approximately \$600m in assets, serving around 70,000 New Zealanders with close to 280 staff.

Our goal has always been to help everyday Kiwis achieve their financial goals. This united approach will position us as a more competitive banking alternative that is 100% customer and Kiwi owned. It allows your credit union to provide improved solutions to assist even more New Zealanders to achieve their goals. Credit unions have been an important part of the New Zealand financial sector for over 50 years. This merger is a commitment to preserving the co-operative principles at the core of the credit union movement.

As owners of NZCU Baywide, we encourage you to be involved in this process and carefully read the attached information. We urge you to make an informed decision as to whether you believe in and support our vision of creating New Zealand's largest credit union that will ensure a stronger, more sustainable organisation for the future.

All member-owners are invited to attend our upcoming Special Meeting in March, where we will discuss the detail of the proposed Transfers of Engagements followed by a member vote. This will allow you an opportunity to interact with your Board, management team and staff.

We truly value your business, ongoing support and loyalty as a member-owner of NZCU Baywide. Please feel free to contact us directly at any time if you have a question regarding any aspect of the proposed Transfers of Engagements, you're also welcome to send Gavin a private email to ceo@nzcubaywide.co.nz.

WORKSAFE AND MARITIME NZ TO PUT LYTTELTON PORT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Lyttelton Port has a lamentable health and safety record. By management's own admission the health and safety committee in the Container Terminal is 'dysfunctional'. The bosses are on the record as saying that the RMTU uses health and safety as a device to progress our industrial agenda. Specifically they said 'Claims by the RMTU of Health & Safety issues at LPC are completely unfounded and are part of their industrial agenda...' in a circular to customers during the dispute last year.

Well the truth is that there are health and safety issues at LPC. For example, last year there was a serious incident involving the berthing of a vessel, the APL Kota, during which a number of lines snapped while workers were in the snap-back zone, putting them at risk of serious injury and/or death. The RMTU commissioned Hazel Armstrong Law to do a report which was duly furnished to Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) and WorkSafe. MNZ have since re-opened their investigation into the incident and we discovered that LPC had not even

notified Worksafe about it! This by an employer that self-righteously tells members that health and safety is its priority in the avalanche of correspondence around so-called investigations that they have systematically been hauled into. The Branch Executive has met with representatives of MNZ and WorkSafe and we are pleased to report that these agencies have committed to undertaking a joint audit of Lyttelton Port under the Health & Safety at Work Act 2015.

HPHE – UNI TRAIN OPTIMISATION

The combined KiwiRail/RMTU team met again in Hamilton, 18 & 19 February. Unfortunately some key participants were



not able to attend but it was still a productive two days. A lot of time was used to prioritise the brain storming options (70+) from the September meeting. Mount Maunganui have been working on a terminal plan to map out all the arrivals, shunts, train examining and departures to clearly show the pressure points. This work was presented to this HPHE work group.

The adherence to the train plan trail (mainline) is to continue pending further feedback from terminals and train control.

Feedback so far is showing that this

workgroup need to engage more with the workforce on why adherence to the train plan is being trialed. Feedback sessions are being planned so discussion and debate can take place on the initiatives being trailed.

**Remember –
Lets be Safe at
all times!**

