

THE ACTIVIST



Published Regularly - ISSN 1178-7392 (Print & Online) 29 May 2009

KIWI RAIL FREIGHT – PASSENGER – HILLSIDE STAT DAY NOTICE

The Union had a productive meeting with KiwiRail on 28 May about a number of issues, including clause 12.3 of the Collective Agreement, and the payments our members should have received if a shift that covers any part of a public holiday is cancelled by KiwiRail. The company agreed at the meeting that it has not been paying staff correctly for some time, and that this will be remedied. Going forward, the staff identified as being affected will be paid for the full shift. We hope to be able to send out a more detailed joint update soon, but also want to keep you posted in the interim.

One of the other issues we are discussing with the company relates to shifts that have their start or finish times changed by KiwiRail so that work is not carried out on a calendar public holiday. An example is a shift normally rostered to start at 2300hrs on the public holiday, is delayed and started at 0030 the next day. The other way this can happen is a shift is terminated early at say 2355hrs and just before a public holiday is due to start at 0001. If this happened to any RMTU member over Queens birthday, or has happened at any other time in the past year or so, we need to know, so please send us the details.

We will keep you posted on these issues - holiday rights are important to all of our members and their families.

ENGLISH BUDGET

This Union has been very clear in its statements of condemnation of this Government's clear bias toward road transport and infrastructure. It was

therefore a pleasant surprise to note that the Minister of finance Bill English included the following items under the infrastructure heading within the budget;

- \$90 million operating subsidy for KiwiRail.

And a commitment to retain previously announced;

- \$258 million for metro rail and rolling stock in Wellington
- a loan facility for KiwiRail of \$140 million (including \$75 million for new locomotives).

It was clear during the debacle leading up to the Government repurchase of rail that the rail industry in NZ was not sustainable in its current configuration without Government subsidy. It was the repugnance of this subsidy being paid to a foreign multinational company which probably triggered the repurchase, in our view. It is also our view, that if this \$90m had not been included within the budget then it is unlikely that KiwiRail Group in its current configuration would have continued. This would have been a tragedy for NZ and the country's ability to meet reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions.

Another highlight of the budget is the Home Insulation Fund. It is notable that Coastal Shipping continues to receive no support from this Government and ports are absent from infrastructure investment by central Government.

BUDGET FAILS TO PROTECT KIWI JOBS

Hardworking New Zealanders will be disappointed by the failure of John Key's first Budget to set out a real plan to keep Kiwis in work, Labour Leader Phil Goff says.

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

"The Budget should have been a Budget for jobs; it's not," Phil Goff says. "The biggest challenge facing New Zealand's economy is spiralling unemployment. Last week more than 1250 Kiwis joined the dole queues.

"National's Budget will not stem the dramatic increase in job losses happening right now in New Zealand's cities and towns. "This Budget does not set out a coherent plan to keep Kiwis in work. It fails to take action for vulnerable New Zealanders on the brink of losing their jobs.

"It fails to adequately invest in skills training and investment to create new jobs, and fails to set out a clear path that will lift New Zealand out of the current economic downturn. Phil Goff says the lack of cohesion between the Prime Minister and his Finance Minister over the primary focus for this Budget has failed to meet the real needs of New Zealanders.

"John Key's focus should have been on jobs, not a credit rating downgrade which is a symptom of the problem. The need for economic growth, increasing exports and keeping people in productive work has not been addressed in this Budget," Phil Goff says.

"The Budget continues National's poor track record on the jobs front. It's 'rhetoric over results' approach has today continued and proves John Key's priorities are wrong.

"John Key's broken promise over tax cuts now means the most vulnerable New Zealanders will now get nothing from National's tax cuts.

"John Key gave his personal guarantee to deliver tax cuts and today he broke that promise. "John Key and Bill English, determined to buy the election, made the promise and didn't care whether or not they could honour it.

"This isn't a Budget for Kiwi battlers. It simply makes their struggle harder.

BORROW GREEN POLICIES NOT MONEY FOR MOTORWAYS

The current Government needs to borrow more Green Party ideas in addition to the housing insulation plan announced in the budget said Green Party Co-Leader Russel

Norman. "New Zealanders need some bold initiatives to tackle the twin environmental and economic crises – not a budget that leads to less gain and more pain later," said Dr Norman.

"This budget offers few practical solutions to combating the current economic woes and the wider ecological problems facing New Zealand – the deficit of ideas behind today's budget is bigger than the our current woeful current account deficit," said Dr Norman.

"Bill English budget is a vision for not much new and look out for big bad cuts next year." The budget does manage to find money for new roads while leaving nothing substantial for new housing stock.

The budget includes initiatives to retain doctors but this will be essential given the cuts to preventative medicine where earlier this week the Obesity Action Coalition lost its funding. "This attack on preventative health is as rotten as our Kiwi kids' teeth will be by next year's budget," said Dr Norman.

The Green Party acknowledged the limited amount of money available to spend on fiscal stimulus measures – but given the limits it is imperative to spend the Government's money on the right things. "There is no way the current economic crisis facing New Zealand will be solved by building more motorways. "For the sake of New Zealand and those facing losing their jobs the Government needs to borrow a lot more Green policies," said Dr Norman.

F&P SHOULD COMMIT TO KIWI JOBS

The Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union welcomes the announcement of investment in Fisher & Paykel Appliances but is calling for a commitment to maximise jobs in New Zealand.

The call follows the announcement that the company has taken Chinese manufacturer Haier as a 20% stakeholder as part of a strategy to raise a minimum of \$189m in investment capital.

Two months ago F&P Appliances signed up to a nine-day fortnight scheme involving a taxpayer subsidy and a concession on annual leave by staff.

EPMU acting national secretary Bill Newson says Fisher and Paykel and its new Chinese partner need to return the faith that has been shown in the business with a commitment to its New Zealand operations.

"While we're pleased to see Fisher & Paykel now has a platform for stability we think it's right to ask for a clear commitment to the workers and taxpayers who have helped it through its recent rough patch.

"Fisher & Paykel is an iconic New Zealand brand that has done well from Kiwi consumers and Kiwi workers and its Chinese partner will understand that keeping a good relationship with New Zealand means it must commit to keeping manufacturing in New Zealand.

"This deal represents a great opportunity for Fisher & Paykel to stabilise and grow but it is vital that this growth translates to a strong and secure Kiwi workforce."

The EPMU represents more than four hundred workers at Fisher & Paykel Appliances.

REDUNDANCIES SINCE 2008

ELECTION — SOURCE: OTAGO DAILY TIMES

November 13: Lane Walker Rudkin (LWR) confirms plans to lay off 60 staff at its textile manufacturing plant in Christchurch (company since placed in receivership)

November 17: Hewlett Packard says up to 250 jobs could be lost in restructuring following the company's acquisition of EDS.

November 18: Fletcher Building-owned Plyco Select says plant closure in Auckland planned with 81 jobs threatened. The announcement follows the loss of about 600 jobs at Fletcher Building over the past three months.

November 19: Air New Zealand says it will cut 200 jobs in an effort to save more than \$200 million a year.

November 21: Rakon Ltd (a quartz crystal and oscillator producer) says it will cut 45 jobs in its Auckland manufacturing operation.

November 27: Bluebird says its Timaru plant will be closed at the cost of 38 jobs.

December 7: ANZ National Bank says up to 200 jobs will be lost in restructuring. Announcement follows earlier statement saying a further 700 jobs would be outsourced to India.

December 16: Electrolux says 3000 jobs to go internationally -- 60 people employed in NZ under threat.

December 17: Griffins closes Lower Hutt factory -- 228 jobs lost.

December 19: Agresearch cuts nine scientific staff with a further three under threat.

December 28: Auckland's Hill Top School closes with nine teachers losing jobs.

January 14: Northland kitchen manufacturer Pat Gavin goes into liquidation -- 30 jobs at risk.

January 30: Building material manufacturer Stevenson Group says will close some branches with about 100 jobs threatened.

February 4: Telecom announces plans to move about 250 contact centre jobs to the Philippines.

February 11: REINZ says it will have to downsize. Does not give indication of numbers involved.

February 19: Hamilton-based Caravans International Munro loses 20 jobs as tourism industry dries up.

March 2: GE Money says it will cut 70 jobs from 17 branches and establish 30 new positions in Auckland and Christchurch.

March 5: Irwin International Tools says it will layoff 105 of 162 staff

March 10 - Agresearch and Lincoln University propose merger, saying it may result in job losses.

March 10: Clifton Wool Scour, Invercargill, announces closure plans with up to 40 jobs to be lost.

March 13: Otago Timbermill Blue Mountain Lumber loses 56 of 110 workers.

March 16: TVNZ announces 90 jobs to be cut to save \$25 million after lower than anticipated advertising revenue.

March 17: Christchurch-based water jet manufacturer CWF Hamilton announces 29 redundancies.



March 19: New Zealand Aluminium Smelters Tiwai Point, Southland, plant lays off 25 contractors

March 19 - Stabicraft Marine (also in Southland) lays off 13 staff.

March 25: Fisher and Paykel Appliances introduces 35-hour week in a bid to save 60 jobs.

March 26: Sealord confirms 130 jobs lost.

March 26: Nelson Pine confirms 58 workers to be made redundant.

March 26: Pacific Brands says its Christchurch and Palmerston North plants will be closed unless a buyer is found. The plants employed 38 and 51 jobs respectively.

April 1: Dairyworks says 23 workers at Temuka cheese factory facing redundancy or a move to Christchurch.

April 2: Tertiary Education Commission says it will cut 70 jobs.

April 2: NZ Post says job losses amongst staff will be unavoidable.

April 3: Summit Wool Spinners accepts 45 voluntary redundancy applications after saying 80 jobs were threatened. Proposes shorter shifts in efforts to save further losses.

April 17: ASB senior staff volunteer to take a pay cut while staff earning over \$50,000 have pay frozen in efforts to preserve jobs.

April 21: Fairfax Media proposes loss of 70 jobs and a move to a nine-day fortnight at some of its operations.

April 22: IRD asks for voluntary redundancies; it plans to lay off 250 staff.

April 23: Fisher and Paykel signs onto Government's nine-day fortnight scheme but says it must still lose nearly 30 people.

April 26: Justice Ministry proposes to cut 88 jobs and create 51 new positions.

April 28: Lane Walker Rudkin (LWR) placed in receivership. The company employs 470 people in New Zealand.

April 30: 300 bar workers' jobs threatened, mostly in South Island, as parent company CEA Trading placed in receivership. Receivers say they expect to preserve the majority of staff positions.

April 30: Ministry of Fisheries unveils restructuring plan which could see 29 positions axed.

May 5: Orcon says it plans to cut 23 jobs.

May 6: Caravans International Munro announces a further 64 jobs must be cut to stay afloat.

May 12: Ports of Auckland confirms 28 staff will be made redundant.

May 14: Yellow Group contractor TeleTech announces 144 call centre workers to be made jobless as operations shift to Philippines.

May 14: Up to 60 job cuts announced with the pending closure of Bright Wood New Zealand in Southland.

May 15: Lane Walker Rudkin Industries Ltd (in receivership) confirms factory closures and 186 redundancies.

KAWARAU RECEIVERSHIPS SHOW CONSTRUCTION JOBS NEED PROTECTING

Concerns about the future of Kawarau Falls Station show the need for increased union membership in the construction sector to ensure workers are not left to bear the brunt in the recession-hit industry, say the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union and the New Zealand Building Trades Union.

The call follows an announcement that two of the main companies behind the project are facing receivership – a situation that is causing concern for the 500 jobs the project is currently providing.

While neither unions have members on the site the announcement comes on the eve of a joint union project to organise the building industry in the Central Otago area.

NZBTU national secretary Dave O'Connell says that it is increasingly important for construction workers to get organised.

"When building companies go into receivership there is often very little fallback for their workers in terms of redundancy or consultation unless they are in a union and as we head further into the recession it will

be the workers that shoulder the brunt of the uncertainty that comes with it.

"One of the key moves any worker can make to increase the security and protection they have in their jobs at the moment is to get organised through their union and negotiate fair terms and conditions including a redundancy package so they can ensure they have some kind of fallback if the worst comes to the worst."

EPMU Central Otago organiser Mike Kirwood agrees.

"There's been a tendency toward a 'she'll be right' attitude in the building industry over the last boom but it's becoming increasingly clear that there needs to be more employment stability in the industry if it is to be sustainable in terms of jobs and skills.

"We'll be launching a joint project with the NZBTU in the near future that specifically targets the Central Otago building industry with the intention of increasing union membership and pushing for better terms and conditions such as decent regular pay increases and fair redundancy packages."

The EPMU will be opening an office in Alexandra in July to increase representation of both EPMU and NZBTU members as the two unions move toward a formal regional amalgamation.

FIRST PAYMENTS MADE TO LWR WORKERS; BUT FROM UNION FUNDS AND PUBLIC DONATIONS

"LWR workers receive their first payments since their redundancies today, but not from the receivers, the government or Westpac. The payments to LWR union members have come from union trust funds and public donations, including the cake stall protests outside Westpac Banks over the last week," says Robert Reid, President of the National Distribution Union (NDU).

Robert Reid is today meeting 41 union members in Greytown and Pahiatua who have been made redundant from LWR's Bouzaid and Ballaben company which is now in liquidation.

"The workers were made redundant on 14 and 15 May and so far have only received payment for the week that they had been working," Robert Reid says.

"For those having to go onto the unemployment benefit, payments do not start until next week. This is a horrendous week without any income at all for these people. That is why the union is making payments to workers from its own funds and public donations," he says.

"Most workers are owed holiday pay and redundancy pay around the cap of \$16,420. However none of that is guaranteed and the receiver is telling us that even an interim payment on this debt will not be made for another 2-3 weeks.

"Westpac are still refusing to meet the union. They seem to be more concerned at chasing the remainder of the \$10 million that they mistakenly gave to an account holder than guaranteeing the holiday and redundancy payments to workers from the companies they have put into receivership.

"The Government has now agreed to support worker run redundancy support programmes for LWR workers. A redundant workers' resource has already started in Christchurch and support networks will be organised at today's meetings in the Wairarapa," he says.

"Similar meetings to distribute donations to the 36 LWR Christchurch union members made redundant on 15 May will be held next Tuesday 2 June," Robert Reid says.

RMTU NATIONAL PRESIDENT ELECTION

Nominations were called in accordance with Rule 24 of the Rules & Standing Orders of the Rail & Maritime Transport Union nominations for the position of National President. At the close of nominations two (2) nominations had been received. Phil Bosworth and Jim Kelly have been duly and correctly nominated and so ballot is required. A postal ballot of all financial members will be conducted and papers despatched from the National Office during week ending 9 May 2009. The ballot will close 29 May 2009 and a result declared after the long weekend when the count will

occur. All members are urged to exercise their democratic right to cast a vote.

MAKE SURE YOU VOTE!

CTU WANTS ACTION ON REDUNDANCY REPORT

The CTU is calling for Government action on a major report recommending statutory redundancy compensation and provision of redundancy support. The Public Advisory Group on Restructuring and Redundancy finalised its report in June 2008. The Minister of Labour Kate Wilkinson has advised the CTU that the report is under consideration.

CTU Secretary Peter Conway said: "We want to know what the Government intends to do with the recommendations given the scale of redundancies now affecting workers in New Zealand."

The Advisory Group included representatives from Business NZ, the State Services Commission and the CTU, and was established in 2007 to examine the adequacy of redundancy laws and provisions in New Zealand workplaces.

The Group agreed that the government should consider the introduction of a statutory requirement for redundancy compensation and other entitlements incorporating a) notice of redundancy termination to the affected worker, b) compensation based on length of service c) a maximum level of statutory compensation, and d) provision of redundancy support and other active labour market mechanisms to affected workers and organisations.

The Report listed a number of options including a rebate for small firms to assist with the cost of redundancy compensation for workers laid off.

Conway said: "The CTU agrees that the main focus today should be on finding jobs and/or providing training support for workers made redundant, but the reality is that many workers are getting no redundancy pay and are receiving inadequate notice of dismissal. This report made some practical suggestions to address this issue and should not be shelved."

The full report can be viewed at <http://dol.govt.nz/PDFs/restructuring-and-redundancy.pdf>

AIR NZ WAGES WILL BE DECIDED BY NEGOTIATION, NOT DECREE

The Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union says an edict made by Air New Zealand that pay increases for staff on individual agreements will be frozen or capped at a low rate will not dictate the outcome of EPMU collective negotiations with the airline.

The instructions were delivered in a CEO message last week and come as the EPMU is in dispute with the airline over Zeal 320 negotiations and prepares to negotiate the Airports agreement - the largest collective agreement Air New Zealand is party to.

EPMU national secretary Andrew Little says pay rises for union members at Air New Zealand will be decided across the negotiating table.

"Under New Zealand law, wages and conditions are set by good faith bargaining, not by a decree of the CEO.

"With this in mind we'll be sitting down to negotiate with Air New Zealand in exactly the same way we always do and we will take into account our members' democratically chosen claims as well as matters of company profit, increases in the cost of living and other economic factors as we always do.

"We would hope that non-union members on individual employment agreements at Air New Zealand would also be dealt with through good faith negotiations as is their right in law."

The EPMU represents more than 4000 aviation workers most of whom are employed by Air New Zealand or its subsidiaries.

NOTICE TO WELLINGTON RAIL MEMBERS

The Institute of Professional Engineers (IPENZ) hold lunchtime seminars. There is no need to RSVP and attendance is open to



all. One seminar which may be of interest to our rail industry members is;

Speaker: Paul McGimpsey

Topic: Promoting sustainability in NZ's rail system

Date: Wednesday 8 July 2009

Time: 12 noon lunch for 12.30pm start

Venue: Council Chamber Foyer, 1st Floor, Wellington Town Hall.

Paul McGimpsey - Paul McGimpsey is a planner at Beca in Wellington. He has a particular interest in environmental sustainability in relation to transport systems. He recently completed a Masters at the University of Otago focusing on how environmental considerations could better be incorporated into transport planning and policy processes at the regional level.

The Presentation - This talk will outline the key findings from research undertaken last year investigating how sustainability could be promoted in New Zealand's rail system. The research involved a review of relevant literature and policy and interviews with ten key stakeholders. A wide range of issues were identified in the following themes: governance and funding; integration; social considerations; natural environment, and; infrastructure. The key opportunities and barriers for promoting sustainability will be discussed in relation to each of these themes.

The research was relatively high-level in nature and was intended, in part, to stimulate discussion about the role of rail in New Zealand's transport system into the future. At the conclusion of the talk there will be an opportunity for questions and comments.

The full research report can be found at <http://www.ltsa.govt.nz/research/reports/370.pdf>

ITF SURVEY ON WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE FOR WOMEN TRANSPORT WORKERS IN ROAD AND RAIL



The ITF Railway and Road

Transport Workers' Sections, with the support of the ITF Women's Department, are seeking to build awareness of the issues facing women workers in transport. In 2005, a meeting of road transport women requested a survey be conducted on health and safety issues that women confront at work. A survey was conducted and a booklet, 'Women on the road to a safe and healthy working environment' was produced.

In 2008, the first ITF Worldwide Women Railway Workers' Meeting was held. One of the issues that were discussed at the meeting was violence and sexual harassment in the workplace and the Section was requested to seek information from workers and their unions on this issue.

The "International Action Day" for railway workers was held on 28 April 2009. The main theme for this event focussed on violence in public transport. Unions who represent bus and taxi workers have also been invited to participate in this campaign, where relevant and appropriate.

The ITF needs more information on transport workers' experiences of workplace violence, as well as best practice cases in dealing with the issue, including for example, what are the exact dangers that workers face; what solutions have been developed; and how unions have established agreements with employers. This information will deepen our understanding of the problem and help to continue to build a strong campaign and strategy.

Women road transport and railway workers are encouraged to participate in the Sections' ongoing activities on work-related violence. Women transport workers are facing the same problems as their male colleagues in the workplace with regards violence at work but are also subject to additional risks. Unfortunately some of these risks come from within the workforce and need specific targeting by unions. Sexual harassment is a serious problem and can take many forms.

The survey is now available to download from the ITF webpage and also to respond to online.

<http://www.itfglobal.org/urban-transport/notoviolence-women.cfm>

WE request our women members to



29/05/09

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

please complete the survey to assist in this global work?

KIWI RAIL NETWORKS INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL ELECTION OF SIGNALS, COMMUNICATIONS, & TRACTION REPRESENTATIVE

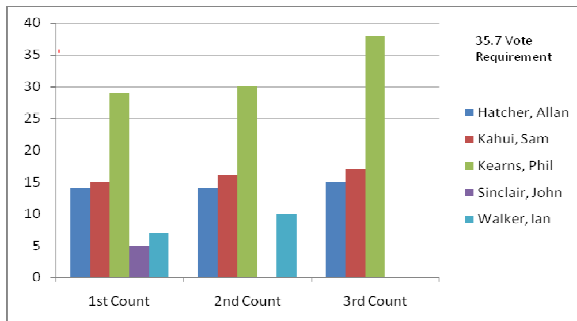
Ballot papers issued: 139

Invalid: 0

Returned: 70

51% of 70 votes = 35.7 votes

Total ballot return rate 50.36%



The result of the postal ballot for the KiwiRail Networks Industrial Council Signals, Communications and Traction Representative in accordance with the rules for Preferential Voting, the result is as follows:

- At the first count, no candidate received more than 51% of the total votes returned. As John Sinclair was the lowest polling candidate his voters SECOND CHOICE votes were distributed amongst the remaining candidates.
- At the second count, no received more than 51% of the total votes returned. As Ian Walker was the lowest polling candidate his voters THIRD CHOICE votes were distributed amongst the remaining candidates.
- At the third count, Phil Kearns received 54.29% of the total votes returned and is therefore declared elected.

PHIL KEARNS DECLARED ELECTED

The official result has been distributed to branch secretaries and has more detail. Our sincere thanks to all members who put themselves forward for candidacy as

without active participation we could not operate as a democratic rank and file based Union.

KIWI RAIL NETWORK INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL ELECTION OF MECHANICAL GROUPS REPRESENTATIVE

The postal ballot result for the KiwiRail Networks Industrial Council Mechanical Group Representative which was conducted in accordance with the Rule 42 of the Union rules and Standing Orders are as follows:

Ballot papers issued: 32

Returned: 21

Total ballot return rate 65.63%

Invalid: 0

Jerry Hohepa 18

Richard Wright 3

JERRY HOHEPA DECLARED ELECTED

CONFERENCE 2009 REMITS

A reminder that Remits for conference close on 31 July 2009 but late remits are frequently accepted and conference delegates also have an opportunity to table "notices of motion" at conference to be debated on the floor as well.

It is essential that early advice is given and received for remits which seek to achieve major change within the Union or the way it conducts itself as the delegates need to be able to obtain a mandate on how to vote at conference.

All remits to conference MUST have been passed by a majority vote at a duly constituted Union branch meeting.

SEALORD WORKERS REJECT COMPANY CLAIMS FOR \$1.8 MILLION ADDITIONAL PROFIT

Workers at Sealord in Nelson have overwhelmingly rejected demands from the company that they accept significant changes to their terms and conditions of employment which total 1.8 Million dollars.



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The Service and Food Workers Union Nga Ringa Tota surveyed the members over the changes demanded by the company following a presentation from the operations manager for NZ fish.

The survey results showed that on all points over 80% of members voted to reject the company claims says Neville Donaldson, SFWU Assistant National secretary.

Despite the continual threat by the company that a rejection could see a decision to close the Vickerman Street processing plant, the workers were adamant that they would not concede to the company's demands,

"Workers are saying if this is the cost of keeping my job then I don't want it", says Neville Donaldson.

"Sealord is bucking the norm. While most companies are hunkering down for tough time, they are threatening workers with dismissal if they don't give up significant terms of employment to allow Sealord to increase their profit by \$9.9 million dollars."

"We are still hopeful that the company will see sense and appreciate the several millions of dollars additional profit they have gained from restructure already in the last 3 months"

"The demands from Sealord to date make Ebenezer Scrooge look like a social worker in comparison" says Neville Donaldson.

BUDGET MISMATCH – UNEMPLOYMENT SET TO RISE BUT LIMITED INVESTMENT IN JOBS AND SKILLS – CTU

The CTU has criticised today's Budget for not doing enough to stimulate the jobs market and invest in skills.

Peter Conway, CTU Secretary, said: "This was always going to be tough Budget requiring difficult choices". But the Government could have done more in the short run to boost employment and has actually reduced planned funding on industry training."

Conway said that the CTU welcomes the home insulation programme which, providing stretched households can find money for their contribution, will create some jobs, assist with healthy housing, and reduce heating costs and energy consumption.

"But it could have been scaled up and combined with other job creation schemes to really assist the growing numbers of unemployed. Add in more investment in skills, allow for expanded tertiary education numbers, and scale up advice and support for those laid off and then we would have seen a budget about jobs and people."

The central forecast in today's Budget was for unemployment to rise to 8 percent or 179,000. That means many more households and communities will be impacted by unemployment as well as creating added cost to the Government. Very little was announced in today's Budget to directly address those already facing unemployment.

Conway continued that the 'road to recovery' appears to be a low road except for increased infrastructure spending. Very little was said today about research and development, boosting skills or promoting innovation.

Other major issues for unions include the very low allocation for new funding for Budget 2010 (\$1.1 billion) which implies cuts to health and education. The Government has signaled the likelihood of ongoing deferral in NZ Super Fund contributions potentially impacting on future entitlements.

NEW INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR MARITIME PROFESSIONALS LAUNCHED



More than 24,000 shipmasters, officers and ratings are among those who will benefit from a pioneering new "trans-boundary" union for maritime professionals, which was launched last Friday.

Nautilus International, based in the UK and the Netherlands, which represents those working in the shipping sector, at sea, on inland waterways and ashore, was officially created on 15 May. The launch follows many years of increasingly closer cooperation between Nautilus NL and Nautilus UK,

including joint industrial negotiations with companies employing British and Dutch members.

The first general secretary of Nautilus International, Mark Dickinson, said: "We embarked on the course of unity out of a sincere and shared desire to build a better future for our members and I am convinced that we will deliver that. For Nautilus UK and Nautilus NL, the move towards unity has been about maintaining our identity as unions representing maritime professionals rather than being swallowed at some point in the future by big general unions."

Assistant general secretary Marcel van den Broek added: "Our two countries have many common bonds, and the new union has been born from our shared experiences, and our belief that we can make a real difference by sharing our future."

The new union would have clear policy targets and strategic objectives, he said; top of the list would be rebuilding the seafarer skills base in both countries because training was the key to the future.

Brian Orrell, former general secretary of Nautilus UK and chair of the ITF seafarers' section, played an instrumental role in the creation of the new union.



JRU7 CAMPAIGN



The Japan Railway Union 7 (JRU7) are now conducting

a Japan wide campaign to call for their acquittal in JR Urawa Case, asking for further support from workers and citizens. The Tokyo High Court will deliver its judgment on 5 June.

Their campaign started with a rally held at JR Urawa Electric Train Depot, the worksite where the JRU7 used to work. They are going to 39 respective locations to attend rallies organized by union members and supporters. The campaign website is <http://www.jru7.net>

Reports and pictures are provided by East Japan Railway Workers' Union (JREU).

BITS & BOBS

- The NZ Railways Staff Welfare Trust Board at its recent meeting wrote off \$2132.26 in bad loans to members. All of the debts stemmed from members of the trust who had taken out loans and left their employment before repaying the loans. Some amounts owed by individuals were as low as \$5.00 whilst others were up to \$775.00.
- In addition the Board were informed of the successful completion of the purchase of an additional 3 bedroom apartment with parking in Wellington and a 3 bedroom house at Whitianga which is a new location for the Trust. Once refurbishment is complete the properties will be available for occupancy.
- A postal ratification ballot has been issued from RMTU National Office for affected members to vote of the CA variation for permanent Lines Handler and Marine Assistant roles at Port Nelson – all members are encouraged to vote.

LET'S BE SAFE OUT THERE & REMEMBER.....

"WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER"!