

THE ACTIVIST



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KIWI RAIL INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL SUMMIT

KR and the RMTU have agreed to convene a meeting of all of the KR Industrial Councils (Freight, Mechanical, Passenger, I&E and Interislander) on 21 August commencing 0900hrs. The meeting is to bring all parties together to discuss and consider a proposed set of lifesaving rules to be implemented into Rail together with the roll out of a "Just Culture" of HR model. This is a very important event and buy in is essential if the initiative is to continue the goal of improved safety and compliance.

During the day a discussion will also occur on the Book On/Book Off issue reported elsewhere in this issue.

PART TIME CARETAKER AT ROTORUA

The New Zealand Railways Staff Welfare Trust is looking to appoint a part time Caretaker at its complex at 25 Robinson Avenue, Holden's Bay, Rotorua. The Trust is moving from having a Resident caretaker to a part time position and to facilitate this will have many of the tasks that were done by the previous Caretaker done by third parties.

The keys to the units will be held by a Dairy or Service station, the grounds will be maintained by a contractor (or by the part time custodian, for an appropriate fee, if the successful applicant desires), the annual spring cleaning of bedding will be done by a contractor. The occupancy rate of the units means that a resident

caretaker can no longer be financially justified.

Duties and Responsibilities of Custodian

1. The Custodian is the Trust's representative in Rotorua and is responsible for the management and maintenance of the Trust's property.
2. Ensure that the property is appropriately maintained and discuss with the Manager any repairs or improvements required.
3. Check periodically that tenants leave the Property in a satisfactory condition.
4. Arrange tradesmen to undertake urgent repairs and organise replacement of chattels as required.
5. Ensure that the lawns and grounds have been maintained in a tidy condition.
6. Ensure that tenants comply with the terms of their occupancy including leaving the units clean and tidy, not exceeding the allowed number of occupants, not having pets at the property.
7. Investigate and report to the Manager any complaints from tenants regarding the cleanliness or damage to the property.
8. Arrange, under the instruction of the Manager the annual cleaning of the Property.
9. The Custodian will be responsible for such other matters as may be required from time to time.

For the purpose of clause 4 above, repairs or replacements costing less than \$100.00 may be purchased without reference to the Trust Manager. In all other cases prior approval



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

must be sought unless the property would suffer damage if action were not taken immediately.

If you or someone you know, preferably with some Railways or RMTU connection, are interested in this position please contact Chris Ball on 0800806444 or mail an application and CV to P O Box 2409 Wellington. Applications close 23 August 2013.

PRESIDENT TO VISIT LYTTTELTON

On Monday 12 August Helen Kelly, pictured left, President of the NZCTU will be visiting members at Lyttelton Port and the Inland Port.

We have arranged with LPC for a one hour stop work meeting on site in the Container Terminal and are just working out the final details for the time of the meeting.

Some of the topics Helen will be speaking with members about will be:

- the proposed changes to Employment Relations legislation and how this will affect you
- the changes to H&S legislation following the Independent Taskforce report arising from the Pike River tragedy
- Lack of safety standards in the NZ Forestry Industry

This is an opportunity to have someone absolutely on the side of the worker and with huge knowledge and experience about Employment Relations to meet and talk directly with members in their workplace.

We're expecting a high turnout for this meeting.

2ND PERSON (LOCO) TRAINING

Rumors abound within KiwiRail Freight that FRONZ members are to be trained in 2nd person duties on trains. The Union has approached KiwiRail Freight and the Training Manager Colin Vickery has emphatically denied that any training of FRONZ members is occurring. Vickery's exact words were "I have not been approached about FRONZ people". HR



Manager Chris Hancock also stated in an email "We are not training FRONZ people".

However the rumors continue and it appears that I&E have been the Division to undertake the training. It is reported to us that 6 FRONZ members were trained by an ex Wgtn LE I&E trainer and that they did a road based familiarization run from Plimmerton to Fielding. There is a smell in the air about all of this and it is rotten.

A meeting is being arranged for next month which will see the three parties in the same room. It will be interesting. **Meanwhile it is time for all RMTU member Loco operating staff to pull together and to standby for a call for unity and solidarity around this issue.**

No road knowledge trips for these 6 or any others are to occur in any location within NZ until further notice!

Operating trains on the KiwiRail network is our work and no others!

NMC - NORTHERN CORE RAIL REP - BALLOT RESULT

As members will be aware this contested election was re-run following a dead heat tie in the first ballot. The re-run ballot was conducted under the provisions of Rule 42 of the Union's Rules and Standing Orders. The result of the second ballot is as follows;

Ballot papers issued: 891

Returned: 251 (Total ballot paper return rate 28.17%)

Invalid Votes: 1

BELL, HOPA 118 (or 47.01%)

SIMPKINS, BARRY 132 (or 52.59%)

I declare Barry Simpkins duly elected as the NMC northern core rail representative.

Signed Howard Phillips, National returning officer

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS KIWI RAIL FREIGHT INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL (KIC)

Nominations are called for positions on the Kiwirail Industrial Council. Current Representatives are:

C T Site – Len Miller

Locomotive Northern - Barry Simpkins (NMC)

Locomotive Central - Wally Wallbutton

Locomotive Southern – Michael Williams (NMC)

Terminals Northern - Dean Ngatai

Terminals Central – Michael Vowels (Temp secondment)

Terminals Southern - Doug Blakie

Union Organiser - Todd Valster

Union policy as determined by Conference requires that any member of the Union's National Management Committee (NMC) who is eligible for nomination to a position on an Industrial council shall be deemed to have been elected to that position for the duration of their term. As a result Barry Simpkins will fill the Locomotive Northern and Mike Williams the Locomotive Southern position(s) on the council and so no nominations are being called for these positions.

We call for nominations for the remaining positions from members who fall within the categories of representation;

C T Site

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd at a designated CT Site anywhere within NZ then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Locomotive Central

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd as a Locomotive Engineer in the Central Freight Region then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Terminals Southern

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd at a Terminals Site in the Southern Freight Region then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

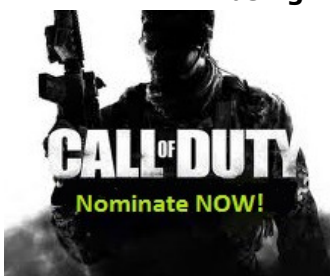
Terminals Central

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd at a Terminals Site in the Central Freight Region then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Terminals Northern

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd at a Terminals Site in the Northern Freight Region then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Nominations must be moved and seconded by current financial Union members who are employed within the same area for which the nominee is being nominated for and an acceptance of nomination signed by the nominee. Forms are available from the National Office – jharrison@rmtunion.org.nz or from the Union website www.rmtunion.org.nz



Correctly completed Nominations must be received in the Unions National Office

by 1700hrs Friday 23 August 2013. In the event of more than 1 nomination being received for any one position then a postal ballot will be conducted.

CENTREPORT (MULTI UNION) COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT UPDATE, LABOUR HISTORY PROJECT

Last week the proposed outcome from negotiations was reported to the combined RMTU/MUNZ membership and a ratification vote was taken. Members overwhelmingly rejected the proposed terms of settlement so it was back to the table this week and again next week.

Also at the report back meeting, Hazel Armstrong spoke to members about the work of the Labour History Project on remembering the 'Great Strike of 1913'. 2013 marks the centenary of the 1913 general strike. The strike, which began at the Wellington wharves, was a significant event in the labour history of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The struggle was at its most fierce in Wellington with many sites remaining significant today. The Bond Store building, then home of the Wellington Harbour Board,

the battle of Featherston Street, the Police Barracks in Buckle Street, to name a few. A series of informative public programmes will acknowledge the centenary. Wellington Port Branch agreed to sponsor \$2500 for this project.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REP TRAINING FOR HSAT MEMBERS

KiwiRail Health and Safety Reps who are part of the Health and Safety Action Teams (HSATs) are currently being re-registered to attend the CTU approved H&S Rep training course. The RMTU is registering Reps to attend the 2-day paid courses in their local area after recent feedback from the HSAT groups showed many H&S reps are overdue to attend either stage 1,2, or 3 H&S Rep training. KiwiRail is currently reviewing and updating the terms of reference for the HSATs in consultation with the RMTU.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS KIWI RAIL NETWORKS INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL!

Nominations are called for positions on the

Current Representatives are:

Infrastructure Mechanical -
Jerry Hohepa

Infrastructure Sigs, Comms,
Traction - Phil Kearns

Infrastructure Track
Supervisors - Hopa Bell

Infrastructure Track Worker - Lou
Watene

Operations Scale 1 - Kevin Jones

Operations Train Control Geoff Young

Trackworker - Eddie Dargaville

Union Organiser John Kerr

There are no NMC members who qualify for any KNIC positions. We now call for nominations for the following positions from members who fall within the categories of representation;

Infrastructure – Mechanical Group

If you are employed within the track machine groups and mobile mechanised gangs, plant fitter specialised area of KiwiRail Networks then you are eligible for nomination to this position.

Infrastructure – Signals, Comms, Traction

If you are employed within the Signals, Communications, Traction specialised areas of KiwiRail Networks then you are eligible for nomination to this position.

Infrastructure Track Supervisor (incl Ganger)

If you hold a position of Leading Hand, ganger or foreperson in any area of KiwiRail Networks operation then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Operations – Scale 1

If you are paid under payscale 1 of the MECA and employed within the clerical, administration, codes and standards and technical areas of KiwiRail Networks then you are eligible for nomination to this position.

Operations – Train Controller

If you are employed within the Train Control specialised area of KiwiRail Networks then you are eligible for nomination to this position.

Infrastructure – Bridges and Structures

If you are employed within the Bridge gangs or structures specialised area of KiwiRail Networks then you are eligible for nomination to this position.

Infrastructure Track Worker position

If you are employed by KiwiRail Network (ONTRACK) as a track worker/maintainer (other than leading) anywhere within NZ then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Nominations must be moved and seconded by current financial Union members who are employed within the same area for which the nominee is being nominated for and an acceptance of nomination signed by the nominee.



Forms are available from the National Office – jharrison@rmtunion.org.nz or the Union website www.rmtunion.org.nz

Correctly completed Nominations must be received in the Unions National Office by **1700hrs Friday 23 August 2013**. In the event of more than 1 nomination being received for any one position then a postal ballot will be conducted.

ARE YOU A TRAINED H&S REP?

The RMTU is currently updating its membership database to identify trained H&S delegates. We are able to identify all members who have been trained through the NZCTU training programme however we are not able to identify any member who has been trained by another training provider. For example EMA employer sponsored training courses.

We request that any member who has been trained as a workplace H&S rep please email your Name, Date of training, Training provider, training type ie. Stage1 or stage 2 etc, employer and workplace. Send your email to kfletcher@rmtunion.org.nz

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS KIWIRAIL PASSENGER INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL!

Nominations are called for positions on the KiwiRail Passenger Industrial Council.

Current Representatives are:

Scale 1 - Vacant

Loco Engineers – Mike Nicholson

Train Manager (Long Distance) - Brian Armstrong

On Board (Urban) - Harvey Paterson and Gary Innes

Yard Operations – Glen Hughes

Union Organiser - Wayne Butson

Union policy as determined by Conference requires that any member of the Union's National Management Committee (NMC) who is eligible for nomination to a position on an Industrial council shall be deemed to have been elected to that position.

One NMC Representative is eligible at the call for nominations. A new addition to the PIC is a Mechanical Rep representing the EMU depot. **National Vice President Howard Phillips is a Mechanical Engineer based within the EMU Depot and so he will fill the Mechanical Position in accordance with current Union policy.**

We now call for the following positions from members who fall within the categories of representation;

Loco Engineer

If you are a Locomotive Engineer employed by KiwiRail Ltd in Passenger Group then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

On Board Services (Long Distance)

If you are employed in an on-board services capacity (Long Distance) by KiwiRail Ltd in Passenger Group then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

On Board Services (Urban)

If you are employed in an on-board services capacity by KiwiRail Ltd in Passenger Group then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Yard Operations

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd in a Terminal Operations capacity in Passenger Group then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Scale 1

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd in a capacity which is paid under payscale 1 in Passenger Group then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Nominations must be moved and seconded by current financial Union members who are employed within the same area for which the nominee is being nominated for and an acceptance of nomination signed by the nominee. Forms are available from the National Office – jharrison@rmtunion.org.nz

Correctly completed Nominations must be received in the Unions National Office by 1700hrs 9 August 2013. In the event of more than 1 nomination being



received for any one position then a postal ballot will be conducted.

ASBESTOS UPDATE AT THE WGTN EMU DEPOT

A joint RMTU KiwiRail working group has agreed to install a wall/sealing membrane at the Wellington KiwiRail EMU depot after the asbestos fibre (chrysotile) was found at the southern end of the depot. The asbestos barrier is aimed at isolating the hazard and reduce contamination of asbestos into the work area of the Shunters and TXO's. Further air monitoring will occur to ensure the safety of workers.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS INTERISLANDER INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL!

Nominations are called for positions on the Interislander Industrial Council.

Current Representatives are:

Ferry Operations (Outside) North
- John Finch

Ferry Operations (Outside) South
- Newton Popplewell

Scale 1 (inside) North - Chris Hanna

Scale 1 (Inside) South - Tania Haraki

Union Organiser - Todd Valster

There are no NMC Representatives eligible and so we now call for nominations for all Council positions from members who fall within the categories of representation;

Ferry Operations North

If you are employed by Interislander in Ferry Operations (Outside) in the North Island then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Ferry Operations (outside) South

If you are employed by Interislander in Ferry Operations (outside) in the South Island then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Scale 1 (Inside) North

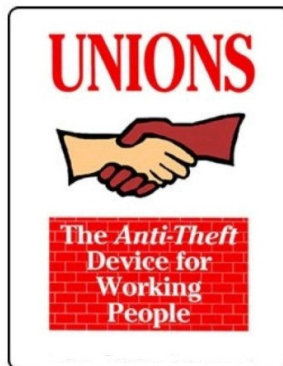
If you are employed by Interislander in an occupation which works predominantly inside within the North Island then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Scale 1 (Inside) South

If you are employed by Interislander in an occupation which works predominantly inside within the South Island then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Nominations must be moved and seconded by current financial Union members who are employed within the same area for which the nominee is being nominated for and an acceptance of nomination signed by the nominee. Forms are available from the National Office - jharrison@rmtunion.org.nz

Correctly completed Nominations must be received in the Unions National Office by 1700hrs 9 August 2013. In the event of more than 1 nomination being received for any one position then a postal ballot will be conducted.



KNIC PRODUCTIVITY AND SAFETY WORKING PARTY

This was set down for 5 August but has been postponed at the request of KiwiRail. Management tell us that they are working away at the initiatives that we last discussed in June with members in Christchurch, Greymouth, Hamilton and Tauranga, but insufficient

progress has been made to justify meeting at present.

We await developments and will update members as soon as we are aware of any further progress.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS KIWIRAIL MECHANICAL INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL!

Nominations are called for positions on the KiwiRail Mechanical Industrial Council.

Current Representatives are:

Auckland Maintenance - Rudi Brens

North Island Depots x 2 - Steve Brown and Shane McNae

Hutt Workshops – Kasia Kurene

EMU Depot – Howard Phillips

South Island Depots – Guy Miller

Union Organiser – Stu Johnstone

The EMU Depot is now in Passenger Group.

We now call for nominations for the following positions from members who fall within the categories of representation;

Auckland Maintenance

If you are a Mechanical Engineer or other trade employed by KiwiRail Ltd in the AMM business in Auckland then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Hutt Workshops

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd within Hutt Workshops then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

North Island Depots (2 positions)

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd in a North Island Loco or wagon mechanical depot then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

South Island Depots

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd in a South Island Loco, wagon or Waltham Passenger depot then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Nominations must be moved and seconded by current financial Union members who are employed within the same area for which the nominee is being nominated for and an acceptance of nomination signed by the nominee. Forms are available from the National Office – jharrison@rmtunion.org.nz

Correctly completed Nominations must be received in the Unions National Office by 1700hrs 9 August 2013. In the event of more than 1 nomination being received for any one position then a postal ballot will be conducted.



TRANSPORT WORKER ISSUE 3

The deadline for contributions to Issue 3 is 12 August 2013. Get your letters to the editor, stories and branch notes to Wayne Butson by this date.

UNION H&S ORGANISER TO PORT

Karen Fletcher the RMTU's H&S Organiser visiting the Port and Inland Port on Thursday the 8th August.

Karen, *pictured left*, will be doing a tour of the Port and Inland Port, meeting with members to talk about the work they do and any H&S practices, concerns,

improvements, training requirements members have identified at LPC.

Members have already identified that they are looking for improvements to reporting systems, a higher level of genuine worker participation in H&S, accountability from managers to workers, and updating H&S training for H&S delegates.

Karen and Libi Carr the Branch Secretary will then be meeting with LPC management where we anticipate a lively discussion on the points above.

NZ BUS OPERATIONS COORDINATOR CA UPDATE

Talks are due to commence for the renewal of the NZ Bus Operations Coordinator CA. Our Go Wellington NZ Bus members have had to endure a significant restructure to their roles, terms and conditions. We hope that this time round it goes a lot better than last time with the new faces across the table.

WORKSAFE NZ ESTABLISHMENT BOARD

It has been announced that the establishment board of the new stand-alone Crown agency to oversee workplace H&S consists of;

- Prof Gregor Coster (Chair), currently Chair of Counties Manukau DHB

- Paula Rose, previously on the Independent Taskforce on Workplace H&S and Nat Manager for Road Safety NZ Police
- Don Stock, director of Energy for Industry and of Pioneer Generation
- Patrick Strange, chief executive Transpower
- Ross Wilson, life member RMTU, former General Secretary RMTU and President NZCTU.

KIWI RAIL/TRANSDEV LE CHANGEOVER.

A tripartite meeting is to be held in Auckland with KR, Transdev and RMTU reps on Tuesday August 6th to discuss options for the smooth transition of 66 KiwiRail LE's to the employ of Transdev. The current Driver Hire Agreement for KR is coming to an end. Gen Sec Wayne Butson and Northern Organiser Stuart Johnstone will be joined by Auckland Branch reps at the meeting. This meeting has been some time coming; updates will be made as soon as they are available.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW ROSTERING TECHNOLOGY/BOOK-ON AND BOOK-OFF ARRANGEMENTS - KIWI RAIL

The Union has received a letter from KiwiRail to commence consultation for all KR Business groups on the above topic. Currently there is a memorandum of understanding between the RMTU and KR that the Freight Division will work through the KIC to ensure this technology is implemented successfully. KR now advise that the technology is being considered for the whole Company and so wishes to engage with RMTU representatives from a wider cross section of the business as well as continuing the dialogue agreed with the KIC.

KR advises that they are currently advanced in sourcing suppliers of this technology and that they intend to introduce it throughout the Company.

Timeframes may differ depending on business unit priorities.

KR advise that currently each business unit uses a different approach and system to fulfill their rostering and time and attendance needs (Rostprog, CMS and other Manual based systems). The diversity of these systems coupled with their fragility, increases the risk of failure and constrains our ability to plan how our assets are deployed and limit our ability to respond to changes in demand and disrupt situations. The purpose of purchasing the electronic system is to:

- Reduce business risk by replacing unreliable end-of-life ICT applications.
- Better visibility of costs and trends – scenario modelling, roster costing, attendance trend reporting;
- Reduction of manual and paper-based processes – introduction of electronic timesheets to optimise payroll processes;
- Overall standardisation of disparate processes across the enterprise in the Rostering, Time and Attendance areas.
- Identify and deploy the ideal mix of resources to minimise costs, through system-assisted workflow (Master roster creation, day of operation roster changes, attendance monitoring);

In addition there are a number of non-financial benefits such as:

- The ability to see at a glance who is at work at any one point in time in the event of an emergency
- The ability for staff to see unallocated leave and apply for this leave on line
- The ability to assign employee preferences to rosters such as preferred days off, roster swaps morning, afternoon or late shifts, availability for overtime etc.
- Fatigue monitoring during roster construction (using FADE) and after roster publication during disrupts
- Better visibility of skills and qualifications as well as expiry dates
- Better visibility of staff on standby

KR emphasises that the Rostering and Time & Attendance is not a replacement for the current payroll system.

KR is currently working with a short listed vendor Quintiq/Fujitsu to satisfy themselves that their system fully complies with our requirements and that it can accommodate

all our contractual provisions contained in the MECA and associated Rail Operations Manual as they relate to building and working rosters. We now wish to engage with the business users to draft a detailed design specification and a detailed implementation plan for the program before purchasing a system.

KR says that at this early stage they would also like to engage with the RMTU to give an overview of what is being planned and to get your feedback and involvement when the system is being configured and tested. It is envisaged that once fully tested, the successful solution will be trialled at a pilot site within the Freight Business Unit first before introducing the system to further KiwiRail sites and Business Units.

Whilst we don't anticipate this new system will affect or change the conditions of employment of any staff member we never the less recognise this is new technology and is likely to involve the introduction of new equipment or processes.

TRANZ SCENIC STAFFING AND RESTRUCTURE

Tranz Scenic in Christchurch is working through the winter with the Tranz Coastal Christchurch-Picton service suspended. Our members are using up leave and doing training in order to absorb the surplus staffing that this entails. This has meant that there have been no immediate job losses. While our union disagrees with the decision to suspend the Coastal, it's a fact of life now KiwiRail has taken it. We're pleased that no job losses have ensued.

The Company has also implemented a restructure of the onboard staffing, with the introduction of a new 'Onboard Services Manager' role. Members have been interviewed for onboard positions as part of this restructure and have also, via their delegates, had input into the training programmes for these positions. Thanks to

Brian Armstrong, Simone Dixon, Penny Taunui and Jo Carr for their work on this.

URINE TESTING BREACHES PRIVACY

Law firm Chen Palmer posted an article on their website suggesting the collection of urine specimens for workplace drug and alcohol testing, in light of recent case law, may contravene the Privacy Act due to its intrusive nature.

Both male and female RMTU members have contacted the RMTU National office to express their concern with the urine testing process. Members feel humiliated having a drug and alcohol collector of the opposite gender and consider the testing facilities lack privacy. One member said, "The sooner saliva testing is brought in the better... if it's good enough for other industries why shouldn't we have it here?"

WORKERS UNDER ATTACK

ERA Rallies – there's strength in numbers – are being arranged to enable YOU to have your displeasure heard by Government at their attack on workers' rights by amending the Employment Relations Act to transfer bargaining power to the employers.

The CTU is coordinating a campaign to raise awareness and opposition to these changes, and to emphasize the need for fairer alternative policies.

The EPMU contribution to the campaign is to sponsor and arrange membership rallies in the main cities that other unions can organise around and attend.

The RMTU contribution to the campaign is to get RMTU members to attend the rallies in good numbers so as to demonstrate to our fellow unions that we are prepared to join together and oppose these regressive changes to the Act.

Hopefully the rallies will also generate media interest and help spread the message about



these unfair and unnecessary employment law changes.

The ERA Campaign Rallies arranged;

Wellington – Tuesday 20 August, midday at the Petone Rec.

Auckland – Wednesday 28 August, 1pm at the Vodafone Pacific Events Centre in Manukau.

Christchurch – Thursday 29 August, 10.30am at the Wigram Air Force Museum.

Regional rally coordinators are:

Auckland – Robert Boswell
robert.boswell@epmu.org.nz

Wellington – Paul Tolich
paul.tolich@epmu.org.nz

Christchurch – Phil Knight
phil.knight@epmu.org.nz

The CTU ERA Campaign website – www.workrights.org.nz

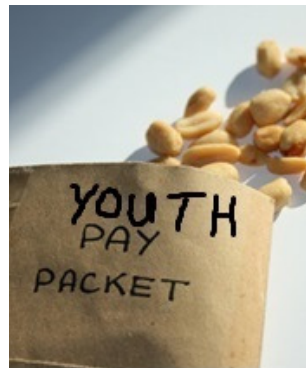
CHANGES TO TRUCKING SKILLS SHORTAGE RULES AN OPPORTUNITY TO TRAIN LOCALS

The removal of truck driving from an immigration skills shortage list provides must prompt a dedicated training plan to help New Zealanders to get behind the wheel of trucks, FIRST Union said today.

Immigration New Zealand is to remove truck driving from its Immediate Skill Shortage List (ISSL) at the end of the year.

“Trucking is a good industry for workers to be involved in. It needs a proper training plan to train a new generation of drivers,” said Robert Reid, General Secretary of FIRST Union, which represents truck drivers.

“In removing truck driving from the skills shortage list, government also needs to be more proactive in providing funding and opportunities to allow young workers to get behind the wheel. Heavy vehicle driving needs to be promoted much more as a career option in schools and elsewhere.”



FIRST Union is currently working with the National Road Carriers Association on a programme to encourage more Kiwis to take on the profession of truck driving, Robert Reid said.

“With the right training plan in place, we see this as an opportunity for more young New Zealanders to get behind the wheel of trucks.”

A REMINDER - SCHOOL HOLIDAYS – STATE SCHOOLS

☞ Term 3 Holidays – 27 Sept to 14 October 2013

☞ Term 4 Holidays – Commence no later than 20 December 2013.

WANT DELEGATE TRAINING?

Delegate training courses are being planned for Auckland. Finalisation of the names will follow the election process for the Branch at the AGM. A suitable venue is now being sourced. This will be a great opportunity for experienced and newer delegates to interact and learn from each other. If you are a delegate or are keen to attend make sure you talk to your branch exec and Organiser Stu Johnstone.

If you live elsewhere in NZ and want training please register your interest by contacting jharrison@rmtunion.org.nz at National Office so we can entre you into the training database.

PM CLUELESS ABOUT GCSB'S SNOOPING FOR HENRY INQUIRY

John Key has once again been shown to be clueless about the activities of his own spy agency, which helped snoop for the Henry inquiry, says David Shearer.

“John Key told Parliament on Wednesday that the Henry report was sent to the head of the GCSB (as it related to the Kitteridge report into the Bureau), and to the best of the Prime Minister’s knowledge that was the only role the GCSB played.

“But on page 16 of the Henry report, in Appendix Three, it quite clearly states:

"Substantial assistance, particularly in the gathering of records, was also provided by staff at GCSB..."

"Once again we are having to drag the truth out of John Key. He needs to front up and tell New Zealanders what the "substantial assistance" the GCSB provided.

"And while he is at it, perhaps he could explain what role his Chief of Staff played in the inquiry and the collection of phone and email records.

"John Key and his office were neck-deep in this inquiry, which we now know not only tracked the movements of a journalist but also received three months of her phone records.

"The Prime Minister wants us to believe that nobody ever asked for the journalist's phone records. That's despite the administrator of the inquiry emailing the Parliamentary Service saying they were interested in "any contact" between the Ministers personal landlines and the journalist's numbers.

"This story gets murkier by the day. The Prime Minister needs to come clean about what role he and his office played in this sorry saga," says David Shearer.

NO RADIO'S FOR AKLD'S CAF TRAINS

Transdev have informed members that entertainment Radios will not be fitted in the new CAF built EMU's destined for Auckland. Auckland Transport has based this decision on several reports that we have not been given access to. These reports apparently refer to practices from other countries but do seem largely based on the decision from Wellington to not have radios in the new Matangi fleet. We have asked unsuccessfully to have copies of these reports but hope to meet with both AT and Transdev in the coming week. LE Akld members believed Transdev were going to push strongly to have these fitted and so are angry.

ENERGYMISER – DRIVER ADVISORY SYSTEM (DAS)

KiwiRail Freight is introducing a Driver Advisory System to all mainline locomotives in the aim to achieve substantial fuel savings. This initiative was originally tabled at a KIC meeting this year and several KIC LE reps meetings since for ongoing consultation. KR wishes to share the savings gained by reduced fuel use. It is fair to say there has been a lot of negative feedback to date from LE's in the field but at this stage what is being proposed and probably introduced has not been clearly explained to LE's. To enable LE's to have a clear understanding of DAS, a series of meetings nationwide will be held in the near future for KR to give a presentation on DAS and for LE's to raise any issues following the presentation.

EXCHANGE RATE WITH AUSTRALIA

Over the past six months we have seen our exchange rate rise rapidly, from around 78 cents to 89 cents, against the Australian dollar. Although it makes holidaying in Australia much easier, it is making things difficult for our exporters. Australia is still our most important export market. Why has this happened? Australia has dropped its official cash rate from over 4.00% to 2.75% (ours is 2.5%) and secondly the outlook for their economy is not as rosy as it has been. There is every likelihood that Australia will cut its cash rate further and it may even go lower than ours. If this occurs, our exchange rate, against that country, may rise even further. This poses problems for us, and we may even have to cut our cash rate to ease back our currency. If we did this, mortgage rates would likely drop and further stimulate the Auckland housing market. This is an interesting dilemma for the Reserve Bank, as we cannot allow our exporters to go out of business and further increase our unemployment.

PALMERSTON NORTH DELEGATE TRAINING

This week twelve Palmerston North Branch delegates completed a one day delegate

training course at the Station. These delegates were from most sectors and all employers within the Branch and interaction was excellent. This course focuses on the RMTU structures and objectives, the role of the delegates, running effective meeting, negotiations, employment legislation, H&S, EAP and IMP.

Delegate could see which areas within the Branch need more attention and have plans to work on those gaps.



TRANZ ALPINE AND OTIRA TUNNEL

The Tranz Alpine is currently disembarking passengers and bussing them between Arthur's Pass and Otira as MOBIE and the Mines Inspectorate have deemed the risk of fire too great to allow the safe transport of passengers through the tunnel. Obviously this is a result of heightened awareness after the terrible events at Pike River.

Our members are currently working with the Company and the appropriate authorities, including a Mines Inspector who has extensive experience of this kind of hazard on the London Underground, to establish appropriate fire detection and fire suppression systems. Mike Williams, newly elected NMC Representative for Southern Rail, and Christchurch based LE; Brian Armstrong, Tranz Scenic Delegate; and Mike Morgan Otira Banker Driver and H & S Rep; have been working hard on this initiative.

We will keep members updated as events unfold.

BITS AND BOB'S

- ☞ The world's 15th largest tunnel boring machine is en-route to NZ. The machine has left China and when reassembled in Auckland will be used to bore the Waterview connection tunnels.
- ☞ NorthPort is planning to introduce random drug testing into the workplace.
- ☞ Our sincere sympathy goes out to our BOP Organiser Phil Spanswick whose father passed away a few days ago.

☞ Auckland Branch will be holding there AGM on Tuesday 13th August, 1100 - 1300 at "The Pearce Street Hall", 3 Pearce Street Onehunga, Auckland. Guest Speakers are Mike Lee from Auckland Council and Lester Levy AT Chairman. Northland Rail Branch will hold their AGM on Saturday August 10th at 0900 in the Loco Conference Room. We hope to see as many members there as possible, so far we are told of quite a number of members requesting to be rostered off at these times.

☞ Metro box Auckland bargaining is underway. Metrobox repair and handle containers as part of the Southdown CT Site. Our RMTU members are keen to get a collective agreement. We have initiated bargaining and are hopeful of getting a good deal for these members. More members on this site would be very helpful to our cause, so if you are considering signing up please do so. We may require solidarity action from other members in support of our Metrobox guys.

☞ The first of the new Auckland EMU fleet is on the water and due to arrive in New Zealand on August 13th. Many people are really looking forward to their arrival. Rail commuters and rail workers alike. There were several outstanding issues from the recent trip to Spain from the EMU committee, when they are unwrapped we hope to find these addressed. The significance of this project cannot be underestimated to the importance of a better transport network, it is however a crying shame that none of this manufacturing work has been carried out on our shores.

☞ Both Gen Sec Wayne Butson and SI Organiser John Kerr are back on duty after representing the RMTU at international events and a spot of R&R holidaying.

Let's Be Safe Out There