

# THE ACTIVIST



**Published Regularly - ISSN 1178-7392 (Print & Online) 18 December 2015**

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY, JOYOUS AND SAFE 2016!**

Wow, where has the year gone. It has been a very busy and productive year for the RMTU and its members. For all of our members who are having a break over the Christmas and New Year, we hope you have a restful time off, and for those members who have to work – take care and above all think safe and be safe.

### **UNION OFFICE CLOSURE**

The Union's National and regional offices will close at 1700hrs on 18 December 2015. The Auckland Office reopens 4 to 8 January 2016 and the National Wellington Office reopens on 26 January 2016 @ 0830hrs.

The **Emergency** "on call" roster for Union Industrial matters during the closedown period is;

- John Kerr 19 December to 25 Dec 2015. Call 0272464941
- Todd Valster 26 and 27 December 2015. Call 0274454691
- Phil Spanswick 28 December 2015 to 3 January 2016. Call 027 2188126

- THE AUCKLAND OFFICE OPEN 4 January to 10 January 2016. Call Stu on 0272464961 or 09 2705115 (KR Ext 98115)
- Wayne Butson 11 January to 17 Jan 2016. Call 0274962461
- Todd Valster 18 January to 25 January 2016. Call 0274454691

On behalf of the Union's President, National Management Committee and Staff we wish all members and their families a happy and joyous Christmas. We also wish you a healthy, safe and prosperous (the only way with collective bargaining) 2016.

### **QUALITY MARSHALLING COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT IN TIMARU RATIFIED**

These talks progressed well and the RMTU and QM bargaining teams reached the point where we were able to agree on terms of settlement a couple of weeks ago.

Members met last week to vote on the three year deal which delivers a 2% increase in year one flowed by 2.5% in each of years two and three.

The proposed collective agreement was ratified unanimously.

A big thank you to Branch Officials and delegates Naylor Young or Josh Meyer for their hard work on this agreement.

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

## RAIL WORKERS' UNION CONDEMNS RAIL PRIVATISATION IN WELLINGTON

The rail workers' union is condemning the Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC) decision to privatise Wellington's metro rail services, says RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson.

"We're saddened to see the GWRC opt for privatisation."

GWRC has selected Transdev Australasia in association with Hyundai Rotem as the preferred future operator for Wellington's metro rail service.

"We know that privatisation comes with future costs. To councillors the upfront costs might look like a saving, but we know from past experience that private rail operators often provide poorer service at a greater cost over time. Eventually the public has to step in again to prop up services," said Butson.

"This decision will place Wellington in the same rail operating framework as Auckland. But we've seen that privatisation in Auckland has meant increasing ratepayer subsidies per passenger journey."

"Privatisation just isn't needed. Wellington metro rail services have been delivered by the national rail operator for more than 80 years," said Butson.

"KiwiRail, as a state owned enterprise, will be the poorer for the loss of work and our members are deeply saddened at the prospect of leaving the KiwiRail family."

The RMTU's collective agreement is robust and contains provisions dealing with the transfer of union members to a new employer. The RMTU will work with Transdev as an operator and maintains an existing relationship with the company in Auckland.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: RMTU/KIWI RAIL INDUSTRIAL COUNCILS

The Joint RMTU-KIWI RAIL Industrial Councils have governing terms of reference (TOR) signed by them. The TOR's are available for viewing on the [www.rmtunion.org.nz](http://www.rmtunion.org.nz) website. The Councils are intended to be the main forum for consultation to occur between the Union and KiwiRail on matters affecting the employment of members and to be an escalation point for industrial and H&S issues which arise from time to time which have not or cannot be resolved at a local or branch level or issues that have national significance. For various reasons there are now three Industrial Council vacancies to be filled.

Nominations are called for following Council Representatives:

- **KiwiRail Freight Industrial Council - Northern locomotive engineer Representative**
- **KiwiRail I & A Industrial Council Train Control-Signalboxes, and**
- **KiwiRail I & A Industrial Council Track Supervisors Representative.**

The term of office for the role is the balance of the 2 year electoral term to early 2017

### ***KiwiRail Freight Industrial Council***

- Position      Description:      Locomotive Northern

If you are employed by KiwiRail Ltd as a Locomotive Engineer in the Northern Freight Region (Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty or King Country) then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

### ***KiwiRail I & A Industrial Council***

- Position      Description:      Operations - Train Controller/signalbox

If you are employed within the Train Control and Signalbox specialised area of KiwiRail I & A then you are eligible for nomination to this position.

- Position Description: Infrastructure Track Supervisor (incl Ganger)

If you hold a position of a Track Supervisor, Ganger, Leading Hand or Foreperson in any area of KiwiRail I & A operation then you are eligible for nomination for this position.

Nominations MUST be in writing on the official Nomination Form and contain the signed consent of the candidate, be proposed and seconded by financial members (Rule 1) of the Union from the equivalent industry designation or operating area/sector.

Official Nomination Forms are available on the RMTU Website

www.rmtunion.org.nz or from the National Office on 04-499-2066, or emailing [admin@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:admin@rmtunion.org.nz).

Correctly completed nomination forms must be received by the National Returning Officer at the National Office of the Rail & Maritime Transport Union, PO Box 1103 Wellington 6140 no later than 1700 hrs. on Friday 29 January 2016.

In the event that there is more than one nomination for any position, a postal ballot shall be run. Nominees must have their photo and a short promotional statement of up to 150 words to the National Office no later than 1700hrs on Friday 29 January 2016. Electronic receipt of this information is preferred.

Please ensure you advise National Office if you have changed addresses or your designation in the Company since the last RMTU mail-out. Call RMTU 04-4992066 or alternatively update your details online [www.rmtunion.org.nz](http://www.rmtunion.org.nz) or email [admin@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:admin@rmtunion.org.nz)

**Howard Phillips**  
**NATIONAL RETURNING OFFICER**

## CAF BARGAINING

Good progress was made again in our latest round of talks with CAF. Negotiations were held on Monday Dec 14 with the main focus discussing the pay scale and progression criteria. We will be meeting again on February 10 but between now and then a draft CA will be developed and wording for clauses will be worked on to reflect what has been agreed in principle.

## RMTU SUPPORTS NZ MW UNION AFFCO-TALLEY'S WORKERS

Members will have been following the attack on workers by the Talley family owned AFFCO group. This is an assault on the whole labour movement, if Talley's get away with the sort of behaviour they have been engaging in then all unionised workers should be worried.

A full bench of the Employment court ruled Talley's have unlawfully locked out workers in an attempt to impose oppressive individual agreements, and they have breached good faith by undermining the Meat Workers Union and collective bargaining.

The RMTU has been supporting these working people and their families alongside other unions such as the PSA, ETU, and FIRST. We know that plenty of employers are watching the fight between the MWU and AFFCO and are ready to roll out their own union busting campaigns. That's why we all have to back the MWU.

Our Union has supported the Meatworkers' Union by providing training and support for their delegates and active members, financial donations and by standing alongside them on picket lines and at demonstrations.

Last Sunday our South Island Organiser John Kerr attended a hui of MWU AFFCO delegates and activists in Taupo with CTU President Richard Wagstaff, CTU Maori Vice President Syd Keepa, ETU Assistant Secretary John Ryall and Meat Workers Union National Secretary Graham Cooke. John's job was to provide some basic



training so these delegates could get on with organising on the job.

'It was a privilege to work with these MWU members,' John said, 'I'd met some of them before when I did some training for the CTU in Tauranga earlier this year and it was great to see more of them and feel the energy and solidarity these working people have.'

'The Employer may have more money and more resources but these workers have something no boss can beat – they are fired up and they are unified,' said John.

'The RMTU can be proud of our support for the MWU, their fight is a fight for all working people and their families'.

## **CONTRACTING OUT WORK AND PROPOSED REDUCED KR NETWORKS WORKFORCE**

Last week a proposal from KiwiRail landed at the RMTU Wellington Office. This proposal was to use contractors to repair three bridges in the Wellington area over up to a six month period, this is core RMTU members work. The week before KiwiRail proposed significant downsizing of Network staff in the Central North Island region. With the downsizing proposal, KR stated their intentions was not to increase the use of contractors on the network so clearly the use of contractors in Wellington conflicted with assurances given. The use of contractors proposal was also very late with very little time to meet and discuss with members.

Our views were strongly expressed to KiwiRail and a meeting between RMTU and KR was arranged last Friday to further raise concerns. The outcome of that meeting was for the proposal to go on hold, the proposal to be rewritten and for the opportunity for the local RMTU organiser to meet with members at the Upper Hutt depot on Monday morning. This meeting occurred as planned and from there one bridge (Br 28) will be re-sleepered by contractors. KR and the RMTU will consult in the New Year on the other two bridges with the clear aim of

KiwiRail/RMTU members doing the work. Another piece of work, platform 4 Wellington Railway Station was also being considered by KiwiRail for contractors during the Christmas / New Year Block of Line but that work has also been deferred.

While not 100% success, members standing up for each other enabled the RMTU to reduce the use of contractors down to one main on one bridge as opposed to the initial proposal.

Local management is keen to set up better consultation and communication on a regular basis. It is clear that long term planning would avoid the last minute urgency and proposals to use contractors, better planning would enable KiwiRail teams from out of Wellington to assist the locals to get the work done in house.



## **JOINT CHRISTCHURCH RAIL AND LYTTTELTON PORT BRANCH MEETING A POSITIVE AFFAIR**

It's become a tradition these branches get together at the end of the year and we try and keep the occasion up beat.

John Minto (Keep our Assets Campaign), Graeme Cook General Secretary Meat Workers Union, RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson and National President Aubrey Wilkinson were our guests.

John Minto spoke about the groundswell of support from Cantabrians opposed to the plan to sell of the City's assets including the Port Company. The meeting unanimously carried a resolution of support and solidarity following his address.

Graeme Cook spoke about the current dispute with the Talley's family owned AFFCO meat company. Graeme acknowledged the strong financial and education support that the RMTU had given to the delegates and members in the dispute. Members were shocked at the behavior and antics of management. The Meeting unanimously carried a resolution of solidarity and support for the AFFCO workers.



In keeping with tradition 6 delegates (3 port and 3 Rail branch) were recognised for their immense contribution to organising in the two branches this year. Aubrey Wilkinson presented certificates of appreciation to (Lyttelton Branch) John Smith, Darryl Haines, Laurie Collins (Canterbury Rail) Duncan Browne, Guy Miller and Ian Dixon. All of them have done tremendous work – thank you brothers!

All told it was another very positive meeting that reminded us of the comradeship and strength that the two arms of our union provide.

## LPC LO'S RENEW COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

The RMTU has successfully concluded bargaining on behalf of LPC Logistics Officers, who have their own collective agreement with the Employer.

Members will recall that this bargaining was a fractious affair a couple of years ago and negotiations broke down leading to some brief industrial action.

Since then, and the dispute over the wider LPC-RMTU collective agreement earlier this year, relations between the Employer and the RMTU have shown a marked improvement.

Last Friday the Logistics Officers ratified their new collective agreement after the smoothest round of negotiations for many years.

RMTU delegates John Smith and Joe Satherley, together with Lyttelton Port Branch Secretary Heiner Benecke and South Island Organiser John Kerr, sat down with LPC Industrial Relations Manager Sally Williams and LCT manager Doug Parker and reached settlement in less than two hours.

The deal is for two years from expiry on 16th January next year and delivers an immediate 2.5% increase on pay plus

another increase of 2.25% from 16 January 2017.

Given that the Consumer Price Index, or the rate of inflation is currently running at 0.4% and is not forecast to exceed 2% in the next couple of years this agreement achieves our objective of real wage growth during the term of the document.

There are no changes to other terms and conditions.

## ROM REVIEWS – KR MECA

As part of the Memorandum of Understanding from the KiwiRail MECA 2014-2016, the various sections of the Rail Operating Manual (ROM) were to be reviewed. The most active section within the ROM is section 3, Rostering Locomotive (Engineer) Running. It was decided between the RMTU and KiwiRail that this section would be reviewed first. Two attempts at organising the first face to face meeting of the KiwiRail

and RMTU teams to review ROM S3 have not been successful so we are in the process of firming up dates in early February to commence the review.

In the first instance the review will look at what is not working with ROM S3 now and analysing any gaps in interpretation of ROM S3 between KiwiRail and the RMTU. The RMTU will be seeking for the review to then move on to assessing the use of Fatigue Risk Management tools like FAID ([www.interdynamics.com](http://www.interdynamics.com)) and the UK H&S Executive resources - RR446 - The development of a fatigue / risk index for shift workers (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrhtm/rr446.htm>).

There are also many administrative changes that will be included in the review e.g. it is a Toll document and the progression scale at the back needs updating.

Any changes to ROM S3 requirement agreement are subject to the variation provisions in the KR/RMTU MECA.



The RMTU team for the ROM S3 review are – Les Perrin (Central KIC LE rep), Mike Fleck (LE Roster delegate Waikato Branch), Mike Williams (Southern KIC LE rep), Jed O'Donoghue (LE Roster Canterbury Rail Branch) and Todd Valster (RMTU Office).

Any LE's or Roster Centre members that wish to provide input can contact any of the team above or make contact via e-mail to [tvalster@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:tvalster@rmtunion.org.nz)

## EVEN LONGER AND HEAVIER TRUCKS

The Ministry of Transport and the NZ Transport Agency review team has been looking at how the Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2002 (VDAM) rule - which regulates the size and weight of vehicles - can be revised to allow trucks to carry more per trip, while maintaining road safety.

Following a number of stakeholder meetings and extensive research and investigation, Associate Transport Minister Craig Foss announced on 9 December the release of the discussion document which outlines a number of proposed changes to the VDM rule:

- increases to some axle and total vehicle mass limits
- increases to the allowed permitted width and height limits
- allowing '50 MAX' vehicles operating within the HPMV framework to work without permits
- allowing Road Controlling Authorities, such as local councils, more authority to approve heavier vehicles and specialised loads.

The discussion document and submission form are available online at [www.transport.govt.nz/vdam](http://www.transport.govt.nz/vdam) with submissions closing on 17 February 2016.

Please distribute this to your membership and/or any interested parties, include it in any upcoming newsletters, or post it on your website.

VDAM discussion document released

- VDAM consultation began on 9 Dec 2015
- Consultation closes 17 Feb 2016
- For more info or if you have any questions please contact [VDAM\\_reform@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:VDAM_reform@nzta.govt.nz)

## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF RMTU'S ACCOMMODATION & CAR RENTAL RATES

If you're making online bookings with either Budget Rental Cars or Millennium Hotels (includes some Kingsgate Hotels and overseas destinations), RMTU members can take advantage of the RMTU Corporates Rates by entering the RMTU Promo Code.

You will need to have your own valid Credit Card at the time you make the booking on-line it will not be charged back to our account. Overseas bookings are also available (conditions may apply so please check the terms and conditions before finalising your bookings).

Budget Rental Cars [www.budget.co.nz](http://www.budget.co.nz)  
Promo Code: E721200

Millennium Hotels Chains (includes some Kingsgate Hotels & also Overseas destinations) [www.millenniumhotels.co.nz](http://www.millenniumhotels.co.nz)  
Promo Code: **RMTU**

## LYTTELTON PORT AREA OPERATIONAL FORUMS

Members will recall that one of the sticking points in our dispute with LPC earlier this year was our claim to establish some form of industrial democracy after the pattern we have in KiwiRail so we could engage with the Employer on matters of mutual interest. In the past the only time we had had dialogue with LPC was when we were in a dispute or representing individual members, hardly the basis of a mature relationship.

The compromise we struck at the end of the dispute was that the RMTU and LPC agreed to set up Area Operational Forums in different parts of the port so that we could start to have a dialogue about matters of mutual interest such as technology, work practices, productivity and so forth. Health



and safety remains part of the H & S structure where we have good representation.

The AOFs are now up and running in most parts of the port with elected worker representation. Some good work is being done, particularly at the inland port in Woolston, the Container Terminal and in the Maintenance Workshop. LPC deserve credit for putting in the time and effort to making this work and its incumbent on us and our membership to do likewise. To date we have seen some excellent work done by our representatives and LPC have signalled that in the new year a joint worker-management training session to further develop people in these forums is the next step.

### KR PAYSCALE 3 – NETWORK OPERATIONS MEAL & REST BREAK COMPENSATION

The result of the ratification ballot is as shown below. The change during currency specified within the MECA requires that more than 70% of the members directly affected by the proposed change vote in support of the change.

Ballot Papers Issued: 72

Ballot Papers Not Returned: 69 (95.83%)

Ballot Papers Returned: 3 (4.17%)

Total Invalid Ballot Papers 0

95.83% OF MEMBERS VOTED TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDED VARIATION AND THE PROPOSED VARIATION IS DEEMED RATIFIED.

As more than 70% of members employed within KiwiRail and paid under Pay Scale 3 indicated overwhelming support for the proposed variation to the Collective Agreement, the Union will sign on behalf of members.

Howard Phillips

**National Returning Officer**

### IF YOU HAVE AN A&D PROBLEM ASK FOR HELP!!

This is a stressful time of year and often we turn to alcohol or drugs for relief or solace. If you're a rail or port worker and work in a safety critical area or operate heavy machinery, taking alcohol or drugs prior to coming on shift can have disastrous consequences. We urge all members to be conscious of this fact, and if you do indulge, that you immediately absent yourself from duty rather than come to work. Remember some drugs take a long time to be removed from your system.

The RMTU is concerned that members are testing positive for alcohol and/or drugs post incident or reasonable cause within our industries. Our advice is if you think you might have a problem with alcohol or drugs then ask for help. Help is available through Employee Assistance Programmes or by contacting the Union.

Members in the rail industry can enter into voluntary rehabilitation, which is not disciplinary, but rather aimed at helping people sort out their problem with A&D. Some Port employers operate similar systems.

For further details contact your Union delegate or organiser.



### KIWI RAIL D&A REVIEW

Drug and alcohol (D&A) testing results for KiwiRail have been very positive (as in very few failed tests). The majority of failed tests occur in the pre-employment screening phase.

The Union and KiwiRail are working together to review how the joint D&A policy is applied across KiwiRail. Contractor D&A testing is also being looked at. The purpose of the review is to identify inconsistency between the agreed policy and the practice of testing. Next year refresher training on the D&A policy and procedures will be rolled out for Managers and RMTU Delegates.

### CRYSTAL BALL FOR 2015

A financial advisor we have a relationship with shared this assessment as to what

working people should expect as the framework for things finance in 2016.

The financial markets are always difficult to predict with interest rates, exchange rates and commodity prices constantly changing.

But we see some trends. Interest rates will continue to stay low. The Official Cash Rate, as mentioned above, is now at 2.50%. This means that the economy is slightly weaker than anticipated. The Governor of the Reserve Bank is hoping for some strengthening of our economic activity over the Christmas period, and the early part of next year. If this is not forthcoming, then a further rate cut next year, is likely.

A conundrum for the western world is, that despite interest rates having been low for several years, and oil prices dropping all year (and forecast to continue to ease), global economic activity is still relatively subdued.

Growth in this country will remain low until dairy prices pick up, despite other sectors such as tourism performing well. Inflation is certainly not an issue, although oddly, it is in some countries, where it is now considered too low. Overall we are predicting another year much like the current one, albeit with softer interest rates.

## **KR – RMTU HUTT WORKSHOP TEAM - UPDATE 1**

The Joint RMTU and KiwiRail Hutt Workshop Team is a pilot project for HPHE (High Performance High Engagement) and are looking into ways workers and management can enhance the Hutt Workshops.

The Team met last week over 3 days to launch the working group, gain new skills and developed a terms of reference for the work ahead. The group was facilitated by independent High Performance Partners (HP2) Scott Camlin and Owen Harvey.

During the 2 days dedicated to training, the group conducted a number of exercises that developed the following skills:

- Team work
- Communication and listening

- Problem solving and decision making

An important principle of HPHE is that team decisions are made by consensus agreement of members of the team. This is a key element to ensure that the decisions that are made are able to be supported by all parties. In the training, considerable time was spent on understanding what consensus decision making means. Team decisions are then typically forwarded as recommendations to the leaders of the respective organisations for approval.

On the third day the Team worked on the terms of reference for the work scope for the next 6 months. This included:

- Developing the Issue Statement and Objectives (published below)
- Outlining what data and information is required for the group
- Developing a list of briefings needed on specific topics
- Establishing what questions to be answered to get a full picture of the future

The Team has developed the following Issue Statement and Objectives:

Issue Statement;

How can we enhance the Hutt facility as an engineering Centre of Excellence which is an integral part of the whole of life care of rolling stock assets for KiwiRail?

Objectives;

1. Modern, healthy and safe
2. Provides a secure future for employees
3. Provides a robust and compelling business plan
4. Sufficient people, skills, tooling and infrastructure to meet KiwiRail business requirements.
5. Hutt is an efficient and integral part of the KiwiRail maintenance task.

All members of the Team agreed that over the 3 days discussions were constructive about the challenges and opportunities confronting the Hutt Workshop.



The Terms of Reference will be released after the draft version has been circulated within the team.

The next meeting is scheduled for 4 February 2016 where the company will be presenting information to the team and giving briefings to the questions identified.

## CCC STARTS THE ASSET SELL OFF

Earlier this week the Mayor Lianne Dalziel announced the Christchurch City Council intends to sell City Care as part of a "capital raising" programme. Dalziel and seven other councillors have voted to sell \$750 million of our assets over three years and City Care is the first one they want to flog off.

The Mayor's reasons for selling don't stack up.

The projected budget shortfall in future years would disappear if the Council insisted the Government meet its share of the cost of fixing damaged infrastructure and renegotiated the timeline for building the Government's so-called anchor projects (which Treasury has declared to be financially non-viable)..

The Mayor has frankly admitted she has not asked the Government to consider changes in the building programme for the anchor projects. With the anchor project programme in disarray anyway there is no point in selling in any case. However, it's clear the Mayor is working for a National government agenda for Christchurch rather than for Christchurch citizens.

The RMTU has promised the hardest possible industrial and political response to asset sales, in particular any attempt to sell the port of Lyttelton. We know that privatisation means health and safety is compromised and so this is literally a matter of life and death for our members.

## KR NETWORKS CHANGE PROPOSAL

This is being rolled out by management nationally. The RMTU is arranging for

organisers and/or branch officials to attend meetings. There are some proposed job losses in the lower and central North Island and one in Whangarei. The RMTU has grave concerns about the thinking behind this restructure, in our view it has little to do with so called efficiency and leanness and everything to do with knee jerk short termism in an attempt to save dollars.

The RMTU has successfully got KiwiRail to agree to extend the consultation period out to beyond Christmas and we are gathering submissions in order to try and save jobs. We will be providing preliminary submissions to management on 18 December and we have an Industrial Council scheduled for 26 January where there will be further discussions. KiwiRail will release their final decision on 29 January.

Should you have any questions please contact your local RMTU Organiser or your KNIC representative.

Your KNIC Reps are:

- Infrastructure Bridges & Structures – Lou Watene.
- Infrastructure Mechanical – Jerry Hohepa.
- Infrastructure Track Supervisors – Hopa Bell.
- Operations Scale 1 – currently vacant.
- Operations Train Control – Carey Sullivan.
- Infrastructure Track Worker – Brad Claridge
- Infrastructure Sigs, Comms, Traction – Ian Walker

## NASTY CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR SENIORS

The Government's decision to cap the funding to regional councils for free bus trips for over 65 year olds is a nasty Christmas present from John Key, Labour's Senior Citizens spokesperson Ruth Dyson says.

"It will mean that the current free off-peak time bus travel for Super Gold card holders will be cut. "Social isolation and loneliness are the biggest challenge facing our increasingly older population. Being able to get out and about is a critical factor in overcoming these



barriers.

"We know that many buses have lots of spare seats during off-peak times. Filling them up with older people who want to get out is a smart investment in their wellbeing.

"The Prime Minister has been talking about tax cuts in future but he is funding them by cutting services to people who have given years of work to our country.

"The Auckland Council has already looked at chopping free non-peak transport and today ECan is considering cuts as well. This is a short-sighted decision by the Government and will be a Scrooge-like Christmas present for our seniors," Ruth Dyson says.

### **C3 NEGOTIATIONS IN TAURANGA**

We are hoping to sign off on the Bargaining Process Agreement [BPA] this week, and to exchange claims. The holdup has been the payment for the Union's negotiating team. Where C3 was only prepared to pay for hours at the negotiations and only at ordinary pay, our view was that they should not be financially disadvantaged in representing the union members at negotiations. Our view was confirmed at the union meeting of the 1st of December. Once C3 were advised of the member's view there has been a positive rethink of the BPA, hence the move to having the BPA signed off.

### **A NEW RAIL ENQUIRY RO-2015-103 OPENED BY THE COMMISSION.**

The New Zealand Transport Agency notified the Commission on Wednesday 16 December 2015 of a rail worksite incident that had occurred the previous day on the North Island main trunk line near Taumarunui.

The reported circumstances are that a passenger train had stopped at the compulsory stop board that protected the work site. The person in charge of the work site gave the driver permission to proceed through the work site, at the same time that he had authorized a track

maintenance gang to occupy a rail bridge within the work site ahead of the train. While his train was travelling through the work site the driver saw the track gang on the bridge ahead and was able to stop his train 100 metres short of the bridge.

There was no collision and nobody was injured.

Since the accident we have been gathering information before deciding whether to open an inquiry.

I have opened an inquiry under Section 13(1)b of the Transport Accident Investigation Commission Act and appointed Mr. Vernon Hoey as investigator-in-charge and appointed Peter Miskell and Chris Asbery to the investigation team. Peter and Chris have begun securing the necessary records and planning interviews and a site visit.

### **BITS AND BOBS**

- The Maritime Union of Australia's Quadrennial National Conference will be held on the Gold Coast Queensland, Australia from 29 February to 4 March 2016.

**"We're  
Stronger  
Together"!  
PLEASE TAKE CARE  
OF EACH OTHER  
AND ABOVE ALL  
ELSE – HAVE A  
MERRY, SAFE AND  
JOYOUS FESTIVE  
SEASON!**

