

THE ACTIVIST



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5 June 2009

PASSING OF BROTHER GREG HARVEY

It is with deep sadness that we report the death of Rail Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) National Secretary Greg Harvey after a long battle with cancer. He died on Wednesday 3 June. Greg has been a strong and loyal comrade of the RMTU and those who attended last year's RMTU National Conference will recall that he and his wife Liz were amongst the overseas guests attending. Greg will be sadly missed by his comrades within the RTBU and by other comrades within the wider Trade Union movement.

In recognition of the strong bond of comradeship between the RMTU and RTBU the National President Jim Kelly and I have agreed that the Union will be represented at the funeral service. Industrial Officer Brian Cronin has agreed to attend as the RMTU representative as the funeral clashes with the next NMC meeting on Wednesday 10 June.

The RMTU expresses its sincere sympathy and strong condolence to Greg's wife Liz, their friends, family and the Officers, staff and members of the RTBU.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS - NATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (NMC)

In accordance with Rule 24.6 of the Rules & Standing Orders of the Rail & Maritime Transport Union nominations are hereby called from current financial members for the position(s) of:

- **North Island Ports** (A member of a North Island Port Branch of the Union)

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- **Northern North Island Rail** (A member employed within KiwiRail Group - e.g. Freight, Network (Ontrack), Passenger, Tranz Metro, CT Sites and Mechanical (Incl Westfield AAM and Loco/Wagon depots). The Northern Rep covers all KiwiRail Group worksites north of a straight horizontal line drawn across the North Island at a point of the Porotarau Tunnel,
- **Central NZ Rail** (A member employed within KiwiRail Group - e.g. Freight, Network (Ontrack), Passenger, Tranz Metro, CT Sites and Mechanical (incl EMU Depot, Hutt Shops and Loco/Wagon depots). The Central NZ Rep covers all KiwiRail Group worksites south of a straight horizontal line drawn across the North Island at the Porotarau Tunnel and north of a horizontal line drawn across the South Island at Seddon.
- **South Island Rail** (A member employed within KiwiRail Group - e.g. Freight, Network (Ontrack), Passenger, Tranz Metro, CT Sites and Mechanical (incl Hillside and Loco/Wagon depots). The Southern South Island Rep covers all KiwiRail Group worksites south of a straight horizontal line drawn across the south Island at Seddon.
- **General** (A member **not** employed within KiwiRail Group or a Port branch member. The General Rep is a member of the Union employed within NZ in any area not covered by the Rail or Port representative position (employed by Veolia Transport, Toll

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

Networks (Tranz Link), NZ Bus – Go Wellington, Cityline Hutt Valley, Taieri Gorge Rail, Mt Maunganui Cosmopolitan Club, Orica NZ Ltd, Pinnacle Corporation, CRL Energy Ltd, Farmers Industries Ltd, Goodman Fielder, Gough Forklifts, Halls Refrigerated Transport).

The term of office is for 2 years (Rule 24.2) and the duties are as contained in Rules 17-19 of the Union's Rules & Standing Orders.

Nominations for NMC positions must be for current financial members of the Union who work within the area for which they are being nominated (e.g. for North Island Ports the Nominee and the Mover/Secunder must all be employed by an employer within the ports sector and a member of a port branch of the Union).

The Union encourages the participation of women and other minority groups within the Union and members should consider this when nominating a person for the role.

Each nomination must be moved and seconded by a financial member of the Union. The nominee must indicate his/her acceptance of the nomination on the prescribed nomination form and due at National Office no later than **8.30am on Tuesday 30 JUNE 2009**.

Nomination forms are available from the Unions National Office Ph. 04-499-2066 or the website www.rmtunion.org.nz

In the event that more than one candidate stands for election then a postal ballot of members who fall within the voting constituency shall be conducted to identify the preferred candidate.

RMTU NATIONAL PRESIDENT ELECTION

The postal ballot result for National president which was conducted in accordance with the Rule 42 of the Union rules and Standing Orders are as follows:

Ballot papers issued:	4433
Returned:	1397
Total ballot return rate	31.51%

Invalid:	0
Bosworth, Phil	472 (33.79%)
Kelly, Jim	925 (66.21%)

MR JIM KELLY IS DECLARED ELECTED

Commiserations to Phil and congratulations to Jim.

KIWI RAIL INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL CENTRAL TERMINALS REP BALLOT RESULT

The postal ballot result for the KIC Central terminals rep which was conducted in accordance with the Rule 42 of the Union rules and Standing Orders are as follows:

Ballot papers issued:	121
Returned:	47
Total ballot return rate	38.84%
Invalid:	0
Maguren, John	29 (61.70%)
Goss, Kelvin	18 (38.30%)

MR JOHN MAGUREN IS DECLARED ELECTED.

Commiserations to Kelvin and congratulations to John.

BARGAINING INITIATION

The Union has initiated bargaining for the renewal of the current MECA with NZRC and Ontrack Infrastructure Limited in accordance with the Employment Relations Act. A considerable amount of work by the company and the Union has been occurring during the currency of the MECA working on issues which were at the centre of the disputation last round. A national road show of stopwork meetings is planned for mid June for the working party report back and also to discuss the strategy for this year's bargaining round.

All members are urged to attend a meeting when called for your area.

RMTU ORGANISER BRANCH RESPONSIBILITY ALLOCATIONS

The following is for the information of Branch Officers, Delegates and members;



Scott Wilson - 0272464961 - swilson@rmtunion.org.nz

- Northland Port
- Northland Rail
- Auckland Rail
- King Country Rail

Phil Spanswick - 027 2188126 - pspanswick@rmtunion.org.nz

- Bay Of Plenty Rail
- Tauranga Port
- Waikato Rail
- Hawkes Bay Port
- Hawkes Bay Rail

Todd Valster - 0274 454691 - tvalster@rmtunion.org.nz

- Wellington Port
- Wellington Rail (share)
- NZ Bus Wellington
- Cityline Hutt Valley
- Hutt Workshops
- Palmerston North Rail
- Taranaki Port
- Taranaki Rail

George Laird - 027 6006581 - glaird@rmtunion.org.nz

- Wellington Rail (share)
- Marlborough Rail
- Marlborough Port
- Nelson Port
- Nelson Rail
- Greymouth Port
- Greymouth Rail
- Westport Rail

Brian Cronin - 027 2464941 - bcronin@rmtunion.org.nz

- Lyttelton Port
- Canterbury Rail
- Timaru Port
- Timaru Rail
- Port Chalmers

- Otago Rail
- Hillside
- Southland Rail/Port

NOTICE TO WELLINGTON RAIL MEMBERS

The Institute of Professional Engineers (IPENZ) holds 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 please complete the survey to assist in this global work?

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.

OPEN SEASON FOR EXPLOITATION OF WORKERS

The CTU has deplored the Government's removal of the minimum wage protection for workers on the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. Allowing employers to make deductions which will reduce pay rates below the minimum of \$12.50 per hour will significantly increase exploitation of RSE workers and undermine the credibility of the scheme, said CTU Vice-President Richard Wagstaff.

The RSE scheme facilitates the temporary entry of overseas workers, mainly from the Pacific, to plant, maintain, harvest and pack crops in the horticulture and viticulture industries.

"There have been significant examples of unauthorised and unfair deductions from RSE workers' pay even under the existing regulations," said Wagstaff. "Relaxing the minimum wage rule will only result in more blatant exploitation of already vulnerable workers as unscrupulous employers shift costs onto them."

"These workers are not in the same situation as any other New Zealand worker. They do not have any choice about who they work for once in the country. They often have little or no understanding of what their rights are or whether deductions from their wages might be reasonable, and they often feel obliged to accept deductions if they want to keep the job."

"The Government is opening the door for employers to treat the Pacific islands as a source of cut-price captive labour."

EPMU WELCOMES ZEAL SOLIDARITY PROTEST

Australian transport unions stopped traffic at the busiest intersection in Brisbane's travel district late yesterday afternoon in support of EPMU Zeal 320 members who are in dispute with Air New Zealand. The protest was eventually stopped by police.

The solidarity protest by the Transport Workers Union, Maritime Union of Australia and the Rail, Tram and Bus Union came against the backdrop of the triennial Australian Council of Trade Unions congress and shows anger over Air New Zealand's behaviour toward workers in its subsidiary is spreading across the Tasman.

EPMU national aviation organiser Strachan Crang says he welcomes the Australian union movement throwing their weight behind Zeal 320 members.

"We welcome the support and solidarity our Australian brothers and sisters have shown by taking this dispute to Air New Zealand's Brisbane HQ and hope that it signals to the company just how widely the response to their actions is travelling.

"Air New Zealand's use of a shell company to deny workers access to a decent collective agreement is just one example of the increased use of corporate structures to undermine workers here and in Australia

and won't be taken lightly on either side of the Tasman.

"We sent one of our members from Zeal 320 to address Australian aviation union representatives at the ACTU congress yesterday and they have told us that our members will have their full support if this dispute continues."

The EPMU is meeting with Air New Zealand in mediation today to continue negotiating a Zeal 320 agreement.

The Australian Council of Trade Unions represents two million Australian workers.

Youtube footage of the solidarity protest is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4S1Oi1r0l3Q>

Photos are available at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/epmu/sets/72157619215305246/detail/>

More footage is are available at <http://www.youtube.com/NZAEPMU>

UNION HAILS SUMMIT'S RESPONSIBLE APPROACH TO RECESSION

The National Distribution Union (NDU) is hailing the response of Oamaru's Summit Wool Spinners to a further downturn in the international wool yarn spinning industry.

NDU Regional Organiser Ken Young said that a meeting between Summit and the unions today had developed a very humane way to deal with the downturn in orders and production that Summit is still experiencing.

"Summit and the unions today agreed to call for up to 30 more voluntary redundancies and a paid 8 day mill closure," Ken Young says.

"This comes on top of almost 50 voluntary redundancies and short weeks that have been negotiated and undertaken from late March this year.

"A traditional corporate approach could have seen more than 150 redundancies made over the last few months which would have been devastating for the workers concerned and a disaster for the local community," says Ken Young.

"The union is very pleased at the responsible attitude being taken by the Japanese and local management of Summit in this very difficult time," says Robert Reid, President of the NDU.

Summit is owned by the Japanese Sumitomo Corporation.

"Although we may see a further 30 voluntary redundancies occur, since the global economic crisis has hit, Summit has not made one compulsory redundancy. A combination of workers agreeing to work short weeks, voluntary redundancies, the Government's Job Support Scheme (nine day fortnight) and the company willing to fund a two week close down has averted an economic and social disaster for Oamaru and the workers concerned," he says.

"It is a pity we are not seeing the same approach from some New Zealand owned firms and their banks; they seem to prefer a slash and burn approach which contributes to the recession rather than helping resolve it.

"We hope the global wool yarn market will improve over the next period so that normal production will be able to recommence as soon as possible," says Robert Reid.

LOCO FUND INVITES NEW MEMBERS

The Chairman and Trustees continue to invite enquiries and applications from prospective members to apply for membership of The New Zealand Locomotive Engineers' Sickness, Accident & Death Benefit Fund, 'the Fund'.

Benefits payable include a range of Loss of Certificate Medical Retirement benefits payable based on age of joining and age at date of loss, as well as a Death Benefit.

Applicants must:

- Hold a Locomotive Engineers Certificate,
- Be a full time Employee of KiwiRail Ltd, United Transport Ltd (previously Alstom Transport NZ Ltd), or Veolia Transport (previously Connex Auckland Limited), and Taieri Gorge Railway Ltd, and

- Have completed medical examination within four (4) months of application.

There are no changes for Existing Fund Members who will continue with their current arrangements and receive benefits as detailed in the First Schedule of the Trust Deed.

For further information and an application form contact the Secretary Julia Harrison on (04) 499-2066 or email jharrison@rmtunion.org.nz

REMAINING IMPORTANT DATES FOR RMTU

Annual Delegates Conference	13 – 15 October 2009
NZCTU Biennial Conference	20 – 22 October 2009
RMTU Ports Forum	5 & 6 May 2009
Transport Worker Branch contributions deadlines for printing	Issue 3 – 10 August 2009 Issue 4 – 9 November 2009
Branch AGM's (Election Officers & Conf Dels)	To be held in the month of August 2009 as per rules & standing orders
National Management Committee Meetings	NMC 2nd ¼ Meeting 10 June 2009 NMC 3rd ¼ Meeting 9 September 2009 NMC 4th ¼ Meeting 9 – 10 December 2009

US CALL FOR INTERSTATE 2.0

Gil Carmichael, founding chairman of the board of directors of the Intermodal Transportation Institute (ITI) at the University of Denver, told a group of transportation academics, industry and

government leaders at the National Transportation Infrastructure and Regulatory Policy Forum, held at the University of Denver, in Denver, Colorado, that an 'ethical' high-speed rail-based intermodal transportation system must be implemented - and soon. "Like President Obama, a growing number of American people have a vision of a high-speed rail, intercity passenger transportation infrastructure system in the U.S.," said Carmichael. "It is a logical and necessary next step forward from President Eisenhower's Interstate Highway System of the 1950s, but proponents have long had a hard time being heard until recently."

Americans woke up in the late 90's and realised that we had built a mobility system on a finite fossil fuel. "So what do we do now?" asked Carmichael. "What major public-works project can we implement this century that will help keep our 400 million people working, will produce a prosperous economy, and will build a long-lasting, sustainable transportation system? My answer is we build 'Interstate 2.0'. I initially said it should be 20,000 miles of high-speed rail. It really should be 30,000 miles. We should give the private railroads their 25% investment tax credit to encourage them to upgrade and double- and triple-track their main lines to increase speeds and double freight capacity. These high-speed tracks should be grade separated just as were the Interstate Highways. Our objective is to enable Amtrak and its partners to run frequent and safe 110-125 MPH passenger trains. We have the technology with GPS/PTC to do this with a high degree of safety. It will cut highway fatalities at least 50% and drastically reduce the wear and tear and cost of maintaining the highways." "So intermodal and high-speed passenger rail visionaries have finally been heard by a young, new President who produced \$14.3 billion to be spent on high-speed rail corridors in the next five years to begin Phase I of this century's most important infrastructure program.

are looking for the support of all Wellington members, other ITF affiliated unions and the Wellington union movement in general. We are planning a strong vocal protest at this Rally with plenty of signage, hopefully a brass band, drums and a street play depicting locked up Iranian

Here in NZ we have a Minister of Transport who is hell bent on building more roads so as to continue NZ's love affair with the car and the truck. It really is time for our leaders to be thinking sustainable and Rail and coastal shipping provide a return on both counts. The full text of the Gil Carmichael story can be read at: <http://www.tandlnews.com.au/2009/06/04/article/US-call-for-rail-transport/FOTAOUUAQS>

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY ACTION DAY – JUSTICE FOR IRANIAN WORKERS



Four Global Trade Union Organisations (including the ITF) are calling on their affiliates to join a worldwide Action Day on June 26th to demand justice for Iranian Workers. The RMTU are organising a rally outside the Iranian Embassy on the day and



are looking for the support of all Wellington members, other ITF affiliated unions and the Wellington union movement in general. We are planning a strong vocal protest at this Rally with plenty of signage, hopefully a brass band, drums and a street play depicting locked up Iranian

Unionists.

More information on the issues facing Iranian workers and unionists can be found at www.justiceforiranianworkers.org. Anyone willing to assist and or participate at this rally can George or Todd at the Wellington RMTU Office 04 4992066.

KIWI RAIL NETWORK (ONTRACK) INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT BACK MEETINGS

Joint management-RMTU meetings are currently being planned for the week of 15th-19th June. The meetings will be conducted in two parts, the first part to jointly report on progress on the skills development and hours of work projects, and secondly for the RMTU to discuss with

members the approach to the wage round that is due to commence.

Meetings will be conducted for all depots at times and dates to be announced shortly. The meetings will be attended by Scott Wilson, the appropriate RMTU KiwiRail Network Industrial Council infrastructure representative and Graeme Boomer acting GM HR KiwiRail Network (Ontrack) and the appropriate company manager for the site.

KIWI RAIL NETWORK INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The Council will have 5 elected infrastructure representational RMTU positions and 3 Operations elected representational RMTU positions on it. To date 7 of the 8 positions have been filled. They are;

- Infrastructure – Trackworker – Albert Barr
- Infrastructure – Signals, Comms, Traction – Phil Kearns
- Infrastructure – Bridges and Structures – Buzz Terrey
- Infrastructure – Mechanical Group – Jerry Hohepa
- Operations – Train Controller – Geoffrey Young
- Operations – Signalpersons – Paul Bryden
- Operations – Clerical Admin – Kevin Jones

The position yet to be finalised is the Infrastructure – Ganger/Foreperson and the Ballot closes 12 June with the candidates being Hopa Bell and Brodie Neville. Make sure you cast your vote.

I'M SICK OF FREEZING

Wellington Passenger Operations staff are sick of being kept in the cold and at times the dark when the lights fail as well as the heaters on services.

Tranz Metro Wellington have not provided a healthy workplace due to the lack of heating; the Activist could quote members

concerns but let's hear what Kiwi Rail customers have to say on the issue from stuff.co.nz:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/wellington/2412838/Commuters-resort-to-blankets-on-icy-trains>

"We should be encouraging people to use public transport and how are we going to do that when they are freezing cold? Not to mention its affecting health"

"I have been travelling on them for years and the guys are trying their best to get the trains up and running and then the guards get moaned at for the trains breaking come on guys get a grip it's not the guards fault"

"They not only have to put with your constant whingeing but have to stick to a strict uniform policy which does not allow them to "layer up" to keep warm."

These echo the view of our members who have identified freezing at their place of work as a physical Health and Safety issue and the stress of being verbally abused by members of the public as having a detrimental physiological issue.

There will be a stop work meeting for Metro members within the operations area on 12 June, Venue and time to be confirmed. The meeting will discuss the Resolution

passed at the Wellington Rail Branch meeting 11th June 2009 in regards to placing a Health and Safety ban on any consist that does not have operational saloon heaters.

I'm sick of freezing – are you? If you are then see you at the meeting.

BITS & BOBS

- Wayne Butson and Aubrey Wilkinson leave NZ to attend the Asia Pacific Regional ITF Conference on 14 June 2009. The conference is held 4 yearly and brings all ITF affiliates within the Asia Pacific region together. Each section (Rail, Dockers, Aviation etc) will meet separately during the meeting. Wayne is the current chair of the AP railway section.



- State Railway of Thailand is considering using German Rail (DB) to operate the Airport Rail Link between Bangkok Airport and Bangkok city, trials are due to start in August
- Japanese Freight (JR) is planning to develop a hybrid diesel/battery powered locomotive which may use 40% less fuel and put out 40% less harmful emissions
- The RMTU will be represented on the KiwiRail selection panel for the Employee Assistance Programme provider on Wednesday 10 June by Organiser George Laird in Auckland.
- The Australian Federal Government has committed \$4.6 billion for rail infrastructure in the 2008/9 budget. Such a committed is aimed at boosting the economy by growing the infrastructure.
- KiwiRail Network is to install a European Train Control System (Level 1) in the Auckland suburban commuter rail network. The \$90m contract has been awarded to Westinghouse Rail Systems Australia.

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

**“WE’RE STRONGER
TOGETHER”!**

