

THE ACTIVIST



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ARE YOU KEEN TO BUILD OUR UNION STRENGTH?

Libi Carr (RMTU Lyttelton Branch Secretary) is attending back to back International Transport Workers Federation Conferences in January 2014. The Conferences are focussed on women in Unions.

She wants to hear from you what RMTU women think we can do to build a stronger union.

Your ideas and thoughts will be represented at the Conferences.

Please contact Libi on 03 3288 694 or 027 446 8779 (text or phone) or email rmtul@xtra.co.nz to have your say.

Kia Kaha

Together we are strong.

TRANZ METRO LE PROGRESSION ISSUES – CALL FOR INFORMATION

The RMTU office is receiving many complaints from TMW LE's who have received a letter from TMW stating they will not progress through to the next pay level due to having a current warning in place. These letters have been sent to LE's that were due for Special 1 and also LE's that are in their first 5 years post certification. These LE's had not been informed they would be held back when being disciplined, being held back was not part of any discipline outcomes.

The RMTU office is requesting that any member that has received one of these letters to contact Todd Valster at the Wellington Office a.s.a.p. so we can prepare for a dispute.

REMEMBER TO VOTE IN THE ASSET SALES REFERENDUM!

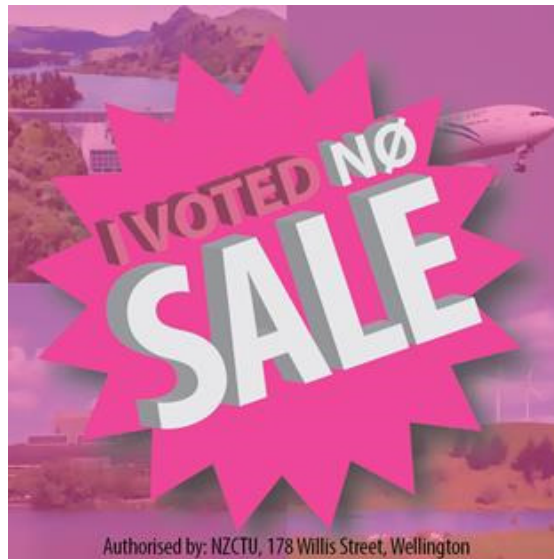
Despite widespread public opposition, selling public assets has become the flagship policy of the current government. Starting tomorrow, the public will get to vote on that policy.

Between 22 November and 13 December, New Zealanders can vote in a postal ballot on the question;

"Do you support the Government selling up to 49 percent of Meridian Energy, Mighty River Power, Genesis Power, Solid Energy and Air New Zealand?"

Over 300,000 citizens initiated the

referendum after signing a petition calling for it. TEU members helped to collect thousands of those signatures on campuses around the country. As in other citizens initiated referenda, the result will not be binding on the government. But, as Gordon Campbell notes in a [detailed analysis of the disastrous financial thinking driving the asset sale process](#), it does give us an opportunity to tell the government what we think of the process.



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

That process has been an unmitigated fiasco. As [Danyl Mclauchlan](#) notes, the government will spend hundreds of millions more on the sales process than it promised and end up with less than \$5 billion, which is less than its lowest estimate.

The government has done everything it can to make the referendum seem pointless - pointedly stating it will ignore the opinion of its own citizens, opting for a postal ballot at a time it hopes will result in low turnout and racing to sell Air New Zealand shares before the vote begins.

Despite all this we must take time to vote in this referendum. There are assets the government has not sold that the referendum can save, and more importantly it may stop the government expanding its programme to include other assets such as Kiwibank.

CTU president Helen Kelly is encouraging union members to vote.

"Delegates in workplaces can facilitate the voting in the asset sale referendum... So much work went into the referendum we need to ensure good participation. We can make the difference."

Authorised by RMTU, Level 1, 1 Thorndon Quay, Wellington.

JOINT RMTU – KIWIRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE & ENGINEERING ROADSHOW

This commenced on 25 November in Auckland and is making its way around the country. The roadshow is the result of the RMTU advocating that management face up to the front line staff that are keeping the network going as various initiatives relating to track access and changing work practices are developed. These have implications for hours of work and rosters and we want to hear from our members. There are also concerns to be addressed around the use of contractors and the natural growth of KiwiRail's in house

workforce. RMTU Industrial Council Representatives will be attending the meetings, together with local organisers, and they want to see you there.

PRIME PORT TIMARU BARGAINING COMMENCES

The RMTU has initiated Bargaining on behalf of our members at the port of Timaru. Given the events of the last few years and in particular the Port of Tauranga taking on part ownership of the port, it's going to be interesting to see how the negotiations develop.

At the recent Company AGM, Prime Port CEO Jeremy Boyes spoke about the restructuring that the industry was going through and that the partial acquisition of Prime Port by Port of Tauranga was part of this. It is self-

evident that the model of wholly or partially publically owned ports, in the hands of regional and city councils that compete against one another, is broken. Seen in this light, the Port of Tauranga deal has some positive aspects. Our concern though, is that the driver for the deal is a bid to take trade from other ports that are worked by unionised labour.

Until we have a national ports strategy, combining central public ownership and coastal shipping, the current free for all will continue and the losers will be workers and ratepayers.

In the meantime, The RMTU and our members in Timaru will be doing we can to achieve the best possible deal during this bargaining round.

OTIRA TUNNEL WORKERS GASSED

On 6 November 2013 workers in the Oira Tunnel were involved in 3 serious safety incidents during rail recovery work inside the tunnel. The incident prompted the Ministry of Business, Innovation, Employment's



(MBIE) High Hazard Unit to issue 11 Improvement notices and 3 Prohibition notices for KiwiRail to take action on.

The Specialist Health & Safety Inspector for the High Hazards Unit identified a long list of safety improvements for KiwiRail to implement, including the requirement for workers to be more involved with identifying the hazards they face whilst doing the job, task analysis and the development of how hazards are controlled.

The incident showed workers felt 'under pressure from above' to get the job done and put work demand ahead of safety.

The right to challenge unsafe work is fundamental and the RMTU will stand by you and support you to stop the job when safety is compromised.

The RMTU will be surveying members on their willingness to stop work on safety grounds during the current KiwiRail I&E Roadshow.

NEW REGULATIONS AND CODES OF PRACTICE

One of the big problems with our health and safety system has been that we didn't have enough regulations or codes of practice in place to make it clear what standards of safety were expected in our workplaces. MBIE are working to fix that and work will begin shortly on a bunch of priority regulations including: asbestos; worker participation; major hazard facilities; and hazardous substances. Unions will be involved in developing or reviewing these standards, which will take a lot of work, and we will be looking for members with the skills and knowledge to step up.

CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS AND YOUR OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE KIWIRAIL MECA

Clause 32.3 of the RMTU-KiwiRail MCA says that members shall tell their line manager of any charges laid against them that carry a potential custodial sentence of 3 months or more. You must do this as soon as it is practicable. We've recently represented a member who was genuinely unaware of his obligations under this clause. It's a little known clause, for both managers and members, but if a case attracts any publicity and you haven't notified your manager then the failure to do so could become a problem.

If in doubt speak to your delegate or organiser and get some confidential advice.

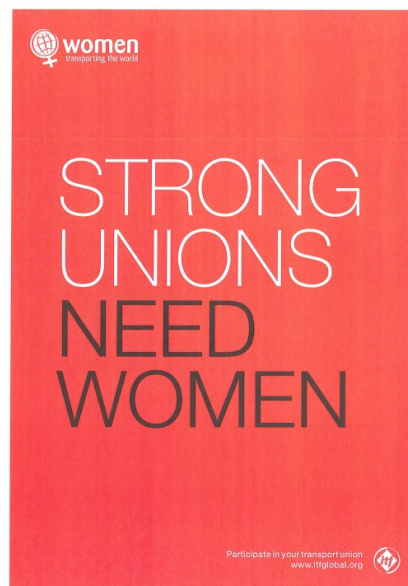
KR LE TRANSFER TO TRANSDEV.

The process to transfer 66 LE's from Kiwirail to Transdev has proven to be a great example of what can be achieved when full co-operation and goodwill is actually practiced and not just spoken about.

All 66 offer letters have now been signed and returned to Transdev, with Jan 5th 2014 the assigned transfer date. The "same or more favourable" for terms and conditions was met,

largely thanks to the efforts from Clayton Jones, Graham Norman, Bernie Henare, Stuart Marshall, Bill Sweeney, Anant Malhotra and Phil Davies, who were all at some stage involved in the line by line comparison of many documents including both Collective Agreements and ROM's.

These were RMTU member delegates hard at work representing their mates. There were many questions that came to this group to bring to the working party from the wider LE membership across the Auckland branch and not always were these questions from LE's that were involved in the process. Sometimes they were from members who just wanted to make sure that all questions were asked to ensure that the I's were dotted and the t's crossed. The process has



been open and transparent. Two of the drivers transferring have already been elected to join the group of LE's and Train Managers that will be signing off the new EMU's and developing the training requirements. Hats off must also go to the professional way the 66 "involved" have conducted themselves.

CANTERBURY RAIL AND LYTTELTON PORT COMPANY BRANCHES TO HOLD PAID STOPWORK MEETING

Following on the successful joint meeting we held last December, the RMTU has called a meeting of both Christchurch branches again this year. This is to be held at the Woolston Working Men's Club on Friday 13 July at 3.00 p.m. RMTU members employed by KiwiRail, Toll Tranzlink and Lyttelton port Company are invited and are entitled to be paid if this is a time during which you would be normally working. General Secretary Wayne Butson will attend and the main item on the agenda will be collective bargaining. Our collective agreements with LPC, KiwiRail and Toll all expire next year and we want to have the opportunity to discuss the implications of this. The meeting will give you the chance to spend some time working and discussing with your fellow workers about what is going to be important for us in 2014.

This isn't going to be a meeting where you just listen to a succession of speakers, we want you to spend some time in groups discussing your ideas and having an input. We'll also be recognising the contributions made by our active members and delegates over the year. So make the effort to come along and finish the year on a positive note!

Transdev Dumps Dry Cleaning

Our members at Transdev have recently had their Dry Cleaning entitlement reduced. Great pride is taken by our members desire to look professional and they feel this change impacts on their appearance and will add more personal cost. Delegates will hold discussions with Transdev management to find a swift resolution. This cost reduction move has gone too far in the eyes of our Transdev Brothers and Sisters.

WORKSAFE NZ NEWS

The establishment of the new health and safety agency, WorkSafe NZ, has been delayed until the middle of December, but it should still be in place before Christmas. The Acting Chief Executive, Geoffrey Podger, has been here since early September. Up until then Mr. Podger was Chief Executive of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the United Kingdom with extensive health and safety experience and in managing relationships with employers and unions. He will oversee the establishment of WorkSafe NZ before departing at the end of March when a permanent appointment will take over.

PALMY FINES

We recently received this from a first time writer to The Activist.

Just writing to say that the Palmerston North yard is finally getting fines put down. It has only taken a few years for this to happen so the change is very welcome by us all. We are looking forward to going forward and not backwards in the New Year.

Yours faithfully

Tom Lyons

ITF LAUNCHES GUIDE TO FIGHTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Global union the ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) is launching a guide on how to combat violence against women as part of its support for the UN Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women on



Monday, 25 November.

The 50 page ITF action guide on violence against women is designed to empower trade unions to take direct action against the worldwide problem, and can be downloaded now from www.itfglobal.org/infocentre/pubs.cfm/detail/41208.

The new action guide examines the enormity of the problem, including its manifestations in the form of trafficking, workplace violence, and female genital mutilation; records ITF-affiliated union campaigns to tackle it; offers campaign tools for fighting the violence; and includes a list of available further resources.

Diana Holland, chair of the ITF's women's committee, explained: "Millions of women worldwide today face physical and mental aggression and brutality – domestic violence and abuse, sexual assault, sexual harassment, violence at work, economic violence and human trafficking. This is a denial of their human rights and fundamental freedoms."

"We are proud to introduce this guide for unions who want to play their part in ending the scourge of violence against women. We hope to inspire more action by highlighting some of their successes, and by sharing fresh ideas, information and resources to support campaigning."

ITF president Paddy Crumlin added: "Most men treat women and girls with respect. But others use contempt and violence, and it is up to the majority of men to help create a culture in which this is wholly unacceptable."

He continued: "This guide is a tool for unions in their ongoing fight against this global problem. It shows how we can all, men and women alike, take responsibility for confronting this disgusting behaviour. Unions are at the forefront of campaigning against this violence against women and for

equal rights in the workplace. That's part of building better, stronger unions and better, healthier societies."

ITF BACKS NORWEGIAN DOCKERS

The ITF has spoken out in support of dockworkers in Norway who have begun a boycott at Risavika terminal. The action is over the reported refusal of management to sign up to the national Norwegian agreement covering dockworkers.

Instead, employer Risavika Terminal AS is said to be proposing to use seafarers to carry out cargo handling duties.

The ITF has issued a statement condemning the intentions of the company which are in direct contravention of the ITF dockers' clause. The statement reads: All ITF agreements contain the dockers' clause, which stipulates that on vessels covered, neither the ship's crew nor anyone else on board shall carry out cargo handling work traditionally or historically done by dockworkers. Cargo handling must be done by professional dockworkers that have the relevant skills and training to be efficient and safe in this role.

The ITF finds the intentions of management to violate the dockers' clause in this way totally unacceptable and agrees with the NTF's assessment that this is a blatant attempt to cut costs and maximise profits in a move which poses a great risk to health and safety standards as well as trade union rights.

ITF dockers' section chair Paddy Crumlin said: "We are behind the dockers of Norway 100 per cent. They are taking action because they have been left no other choice. This is a long running dispute at the heart of which is the company's lack of respect for dock work as a profession and its willingness to put lives at risk by allowing those without the proper training and experience to do a job which is skilled and dangerous. That's something that we just can't stand back and accept."



Norwegian maritime unions have requested that vessels divert to other ports where there is a NTF agreement in place, while the boycott is in force.

For more about cargo handling see: www.itfseafarers.org/ITI-cargo-handling.cfm

MIC TO MEET

The KiwiRail Mechanical Industrial Council (MIC) will meet this week in Wellington. Some of the agenda items are, training, overalls, feedback from what repairs/changes have been made following the Air Quality report for Depots, Health and Safety statistics and getting the minutes completed in a more timely manner. If your Mechanical area does not receive minutes please contact Stuart Johnstone RMTU Organiser at sjohnstone@rmtunion.org.nz

TRANS-TASMAN WAGE GAP AT A RECORD HIGH

The wage gap between Australia and New Zealand has blown out to a record high of more than \$210 a week, Labour Leader David Cunliffe says.

"Closing the wage gap was one of John Key's major election promises, but he been strangely quiet on the issue.

"Who could forget National's 2008 election slogan: 'Wave goodbye to higher taxes, not your loved ones.'

The new wage gap figure of \$NZ211.51 was calculated by the Parliamentary Library by comparing gross average weekly earnings in Australia and New Zealand, adjusted for purchasing power parity. This OECD comparison method has been used by John Key.

"The wage gap is now the highest on record and has increased by \$90 since John Key took office, promising to close the gap.

"The National Government will try to defend its record by using after income tax figures, but this hides the impact of its rise

in GST. "It's not surprising more than 200,000 Kiwis have moved to Australia under the National Government.

"This hands-off Government has done nothing to reduce the wage gap with Australia. In fact, National's unfair labour laws are keeping wages down," David Cunliffe says.

NZ PAY LAGS

New Zealanders' pay continued to lag behind inflation even as the nation's jobless rate fell for the third quarter ending September, Statistics New Zealand (SNZ) reported November 6.

"It's time working people saw much more recognition in their pay packets of a growing economy. These meagre increases do not recognise the efforts of working people and the difficult times many have been through," said CTU Economist Bill Rosenberg.

The labour cost index showed annual wage inflation fell to 1.6 per cent from 1.9 per cent a year ago. But the nation's jobless rate dropped to 6.2 per cent from 6.4 per cent, the lowest level since early 2010. Rosenberg said those who received an increase in the last year got only 2.5 per cent compared to 3.0 per cent a year ago when annual inflation was 0.8 per cent.

Labour's employment spokesperson, Grant Robertson, also noted that 45,000 more New Zealanders were out of work than when National took office. "Without the Christchurch rebuild, the unemployment rate nationwide would be 6.5 per cent," Robertson said. "When it comes to jobs,

Christchurch is the only driver keeping New Zealand's head above water. Relying on national disasters is not a jobs plan."

NEW UNION

PRESIDENT CALLS FOR LOGGING FIRM TO STOP HOLDING TACHIKAWA WORKERS TO RANSOM

FIRST Union's new president is calling on a logging firm to stop standing in the way of Tachikawa's 120 workers getting urgently

GOOD, SAFE JOBS

IN FORESTRY



FIRST
UNION
Putting Workers First

CTU
NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS
Te Kaitiaki



needed money owed to them before Christmas.

Syd Keepa was elected FIRST Union president at regional conferences last month. He chairs his first meeting of the union's national executive in Rotorua today. He is a former National President of the Wood Industries Union, one of FIRST Union's historical constituent unions.

"Tachikawa workers were expecting to get a substantial payment before Christmas with their wages, redundancy and holiday pay," Syd Keepa said.

"But late last week it emerged that this is being put in jeopardy by a claim from one of the log supplying companies on the same pool of money, over and above what the receivers believe they are entitled to."

"Regardless of whether they have any grounds for this claim, if they continue with their legal action then the receivers have no option but to place the matter before the Court which takes both time and money away from the pool available to creditors including workers."

"Tachikawa workers have been dealt a huge blow with the loss of their jobs and livelihoods. The actions of a logging firm in blocking them getting partial payment of what they are owed is unforgiveable," Syd Keepa said.

The union's national executive will be updated on the Tachikawa situation today and what further support is needed for the workers.

KIWI RAIL/RMTU (FREIGHT) INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

The next KIC meeting is to be held on the 27th – 28th November in Auckland. There will be a handover to the newly elected reps – Les Perrin, Antoon Whiu, Rick Barnes and Marty Duncan and farewell to Wally Wallbutton, Doug Blakie and Lennie Millar.

Agenda items for this meeting include –

- The lack of minutes for previous meetings
- Transition head issues for terminal staff
- LE roster – day of operation v master roster issues
- DL ergonomic and other issues
- LE OJT assessment and B&E minders
- LE Trainees used as Rail Operators
- Review of recent Midland line TAIC report
- Radio issues (note a separate meeting of KIC LE reps has been scheduled for Dec 3 specifically to resolve Tait radio and the associated infrastructure issues)
- Cab air conditioning
- Wearing hoodies in terminals v the issues wet weather gear that includes a built in hoodie

- Summer SPAD campaign

- And much more

KR have stated that there will be a new minute secretary from this meeting on so there will be no reason for the

minutes to not go out before Christmas.

CONFIRMING TOO LITTLE TOO LATE IS STILL....TOO LITTLE TOO LATE

"Support of the oil drilling in Taranaki has received more attention from the government than protecting the critically endangered Maui's dolphins. There are just 55 adult Maui's left on the planet and all of them are in New Zealand. Yet the government is taking pathetically weak and slow measures to save this species" says Labour's Conservation spokesperson, Ruth Dyson.

"These moves may be too late and they are certainly not the comprehensive measures called on by New Zealand and international experts. Last year, the International Union for Conservation of Nature conference met in

vote 
FAIRNESS 2014

Korea and backed a package for ensuring the survival of Maui's dolphins. The government refused to back it.

"The international conservation movement has increasingly been considering calling for a fishing boycott of New Zealand fish if serious moves are not taken to save Maui's. This is now a step closer to becoming a scary reality.

"New Zealand needs a comprehensive package which protects Maui's dolphins in all their habitat areas. And we need to move to eliminate unsustainable fishing practices.

"If you want to drill for oil then you are likely to get a big thumbs up from the government. But if you want to save a critically endangered dolphin, no such luck."

Ms Dyson said Labour is committed to doing all it can to help save the Maui's dolphin.

RECENT USE OF FACEBOOK IN EMPLOYMENT CASES

There have been a number of recent cases where Facebook entries have been used as evidence. In this month's update MDJ Law consider two Employment Court decisions where Facebook evidence was relied upon.

In *Taiapa v Te Runanga O Turanganui A Kiwa* (18 March 2013) an issue arose around a request for five days' leave (28 March 2011 to 1 April 2011). The employer offered 3 days' leave 30 March 2011 to 1 April 2011.

On Monday 28 March 2011 Mr Taiapa went home early due to a "calf injury" and said he had to have two days' leave to recuperate. Later that morning he was seen travelling to Rotorua where he attended the Waka Ama Championships. His Manager later saw a picture of him on Facebook which portrayed him at the Waka Ama Championships.

The Manager became suspicious that he was misusing the sick leave. Mr Taiapa was subsequently dismissed and in the particular circumstances of that case the

Employment Court, upheld the decision of the Authority that the dismissal was justified.

In *Hook v Stream Group (NZ) Proprietary Limited* (9 October 2013) Mr Hook became "disenchanted" with his job after a merger which led, amongst other things, to the New Zealand staff of his company working to an Australian management team.

When it came to the employer's attention that Mr Hook was looking elsewhere for work, the company indicated that it did not want to lose him, but that it would support his desire to look for a new job if that was what he truly wanted. Subsequently, Mr Hook was the subject of a written warning after interacting in an aggressive manner with company management. Mr Hook indicated that he wished to resign. The company considered this then accepted his resignation. Mr Hook later raised a personal grievance claiming constructive dismissal.

The evidence for the company, which argued that Mr Hook resigned of his own free will, included Facebook entries he had made (which were in the public domain). In one of these he said:

"Mr Hook: Going to quit my job tomorrow, while in annual leave (sic). Probably should have timed that better.

Reply: Is your boss on Facebook?

Mr Hook: Nah. If he was, I would tell him he is a dickhead.

Reply: That's putting it awfully nicely. I hope he gets mauled by a pack of rabid Dingos."



In Mr Hook's case, Judge Inglis accepted that the Facebook evidence "tended to support the contention that Mr Hook resigned of his own free will".

To close, in *Hook* Her Honour Judge Inglis stated:

"...It is well established that conduct occurring outside the workplace may give rise to disciplinary action, and Facebook posts, even those ostensibly protected by a privacy setting, may not be regarded as protected communications beyond the reach

of employment processes. After all, how private is a written conversation initiated over the internet with 200 "friends", who can pass the information on to a limitless audience?"

Each case will turn on its facts as to the admissibility and relevance of Facebook information but in these two cases the Facebook entries were considered important.

FEARS AUSSIE H&S LAWS COULD BE ATTACKED

We may be basing our health and safety laws on the Australian Model Law, but unionists in Australia fear that the new laws could be attacked now that conservative governments lead all but one state government as well as the federal government. Already Queensland they are looking at such things as weakening union rights of entry to the workplace and inviting employer submissions on the cost impacts of the model laws. The Model Law was the result of extensive discussion and compromise - it should not be undermined in this way.

AIR NZ APPLICATION FOR OVERSEAS WORKERS UNJUSTIFIABLE

It is unjustifiable for Air New Zealand to seek to recruit aircraft engineers offshore when it recently announced it would lay off Kiwi workers, Labour's spokesperson on industrial affairs Andrew Little says.

"Air New Zealand has already said its new fleet with modern engineering and materials means it will be shedding aircraft engineers very soon.

"It will be scaling back its aircraft maintenance operations in Blenheim, so it's hard to see what reason the airline might have to want to recruit overseas in the foreseeable future."

The Engineering, Printing and manufacturing Union revealed today Air New Zealand has applied to renew the

permission it currently holds to recruit aircraft engineers from overseas. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment is seeking feedback from interested parties about the application.

"All indications are there is or soon will be a surplus of these skilled workers in New Zealand, so the Ministry should treat the application sceptically.

"Air New Zealand has prided itself on constructive relations between management and its workforce, so I am surprised the airline has seen the need to press ahead with this accreditation application without the apparent support of its workforce.

"I expect the Ministry will conduct a thorough investigation into this application and if it is satisfied there will soon be a significant surplus of aircraft engineers, it will have to decline air New Zealand's request," Andrew Little says.

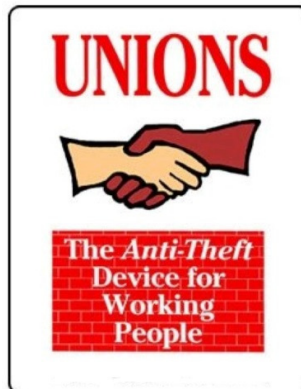
LE ROSTERS – ROM S3

Several years ago issues were raised about the At Risk Shifts matrix in the Rail Operating Manual Section 3 (ROM S3) and mix of At Risk A & B shifts being treated differently for "Master Roster Construction" versus "Day

of Operations" since the 2005 update of the Freight ROM S3.

The RMTU LE Reps on the KiwiRail Industrial Council (KIC) insisted that the requirements for mandatory time following a series of A & B shifts is the same in both scenarios. A compromise was reached whereby LE Rosters would trial the safer threshold, Master Roster Construction, in both scenarios and provide feedback to KIC if the trial severely disrupted rosters and the running of trains. No feedback was received so we rightly believed there were no issues.

From time to time the Roster Centre would slip back to the "Day of Operations" arrangement but when the issue was raised with delegates and the union office we would repeat the understanding and agreement reached at KIC and the Roster Centre would correct the rostering to the Master Roster Construction threshold - that was up until last week when KR refused.



During a conference call with the Soren Low, National Freight Manager Aaron Temperton, Waikato Rail Branch Secretary John Marsh and Todd Valster last Friday, we were surprised to find out that what was agreed at KIC in regards to the mix of A&B's/Master Roster Construction threshold was not well understood in the Roster Centre or by Soren.

Immediately after the call, Soren Low put out the following to the rosters team –

"Team,

Aaron Temperton is currently reviewing the use of the "Day of Operations" column in the ROM3 At Risk Matrix with the RMTU.

Effective immediately, can you please note the following:

- *Covering shifts using the Day of Operations provisions is only to be used as an absolute last resort*
- *Should you encounter a situation where you need to use this, please e-mail me with the basic details (who / what / when) and the impact if this was not done*
- *Please also note that the use of this may mean that some LE's feel unable to complete some shifts due to fatigue, if this occurs can you please also drop me the basic details in an e-mail*

Over the next few weeks we will be doing more work around the circumstances under which we have applied this to better understand the business impact of removing the Day of Operations provisions. This is likely to involve a national review of several fortnights to identify the where / when / impact.

I am also interested in your general feedback around any thoughts that you have about removing the Day of Operations column from the matrix.

The intent is to get to a position reasonably quickly where we can clarify this situation once and for all.

Let me know if you have any questions or queries regarding this."

This issue shows that persistence pays off, the delegates who relentlessly raised this issue are to be praised for doing so. We

commend Waikato Secretary John Marsh for the final push!

JR EAST INSTALL ATAC'S

JR East plans to introduce its Advanced Train Administration and Communications System (Atacs) on the busy Saikyo Line in Tokyo from autumn 2017.

Atacs' functions are similar to those of European Train Control System (ETCS) Level 3 and communication-based train control (CBTC). The first commercial operation of Atacs began in October 2011 on the Senseki Line, a commuter line in the Sendai area, with all trains switching from conventional train control to the new system.

The 23.5km Saikyo Line which connects Ikebukuro and Omiya opened in 1985 and has become the most congested commuter line in Tokyo, with trains running from Osaki to Kawagoe using the Yamanote, Saikyo and Kawagoe lines.

The Saikyo Line was fitted with automatic train control (ATC) using audio-frequency track circuits from the outset. The other sections of line over which Saikyo Line trains operate are equipped with automatic train protection (ATP) with track circuits and transponders (balises). JR East will replace the existing ATC with Atacs.

MORE LIGHT RAIL FOR SYDNEY

NSW minister for transport Mrs Gladys Berejiklian announced that the state government has begun the procurement process for two contracts covering the construction, operation and maintenance of Sydney's \$A1.6bn CBD and South East Light Rail line.

The 12km, 21-station north-south line will run from Circular Quay to Sydney Central station, and the Moore Park sport and entertainment complex, where the line will divide to serve Prince of Wales Hospital at Randwick and the University of NSW in Kingsford.

The main contract is being tendered as a PPP which includes design, construction, operation, and maintenance of the system, as well as operation and maintenance of the Inner West Light Rail line, which is currently

being extended to Dulwich Hill. A separate contract will be issued for preliminary works.

CHEAPER VEHICLE REGO A LONG TIME IN THE MAKING

Kiwi motorists should have been paying less to register their cars long before now, Labour's ACC spokesperson Iain Lees-Galloway says.

ACC has just announced it plans to cut levies – including vehicle levies - from next year.

"Paula Rebstock can make out she's delivering New Zealanders some sort of pre-Christmas bonus, but she's not fooling anyone.

"ACC charges have been unacceptably high since National created a phony crisis and imposed massive hikes, the result of which was a \$4.9 billion surplus last year.

"That surplus came out of the pockets of New Zealanders.

"National deliberately pushed ACC levies up to support its privatisation agenda. As Judith Collins has now accepted, there is no way insurance companies could compete with ACC while levies were set at a fair rate.

"Since National appears to have backed away from privatising ACC for now, there is no need for them to keep levies artificially high.

"National has also driven a programme of cost cutting by denying treatment, cutting back on rehabilitation and home support and reducing access to compensation. While there is room for levies to come down, ACC should also be focussed on making sure claimants get fair treatment.

"The idea of imposing lower levies for safer vehicles has merit. However Labour is concerned that people on low incomes who cannot afford the newest cars will be penalised by the proposed regime. The way to improve the safety of our vehicle fleet is to make sure people have enough money to buy safe cars, not by penalising them for being poor.

"Labour is committed to making ACC fair for everyone. New Zealanders should be paying fair levies and should expect fair treatment when they make a claim with ACC."

Bits and Bobs

- Methanex NZ has restarted its Waitara Valley Methanol plant which had been mothballed in 2005. Record volumes of Methanol are expected to be exported out of Port Taranaki.
- CentrePort has announced a full year profit of \$11.7m on revenue of \$52.1m.
- The merger of Primeport Timaru with Port of Tauranga has been given the green light by its owner the Timaru District Council in a unanimous vote.
- A broker has speculated that Port of Tauranga may increase its dividend payout ratio as cashflows return to normal following a period of strong capital expenditure.
- LPC has announced a \$1b development plan for the port and surrounding land.
- LPC has announced that its profit in the current year is set to rise as much as 6%.
- KiwiRail announced its replacement for outgoing CEO Jim Quinn. It is Peter Reidy is currently chief operating officer, Infrastructure services with Downer EDI in Australia.
- Navigation software company Tom Tom reports that Auckland is rising fast on the ranking of traffic congestion. It is cited as being the city of snails. Tom Tom compare 169 cities and in the latest report Auckland is ranked 15th, Christchurch 17th and Wellington 37th most congested.

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

"WE'RE STRONGER TOGETHER"!

