

# THE ACTIVIST



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## **ASBESTOS LOCOMOTIVES**

19 RMTU representatives met with KiwiRail in Auckland Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. A mechanical and locomotive engineer representative from each depot in the North attended. The discussion was robust with a number of delegates expressing very clearly their embarrassment at KiwiRail continuously being in the headlines in a negative way, their concern for the job security of their North Auckland workmates owing to the line suspension, their concern that they may have been exposed to asbestos and the fact that even now we do not know where all of the asbestos is located within the locomotives.

It was agreed that all of the DL locomotives will remain quarantined until all of the asbestos material is removed from the engine bay and electrical cabinet doors and additional tests will be done on the "witches Brew" that contains asbestos which is sprayed under the motor (Gen 1 only) and on the roof of the engine bay, electrical cabinet and Cab environment to identify at what temperature it breaks down at etc.

The parties thrashed out a draft document for agreement and signing by KiwiRail and the RMTU which may set out a framework for allowing the return to service of selected Gen 2 locomotives on the Auckland, Te Rapa and BOP lines only.

A team comprising reps from these locations supported by Union staff are to meet next week to continue the discussions. A joint statement is being developed by the parties for distribution internally and externally.

<http://www.political-kiwi.com>



**Lets Vote The Bastards Out On September 20th, 2014!**

## **GOVERNMENT COMMITTED TO MAKING LIFE WORSE FOR WORKERS**

Workers in New Zealand will be one step closer to worse employment conditions and less employment rights when the Employment Relations Amendment Bill passed its second reading. The Bill was debated in Parliament last night.

"These are very significant changes to employment law. The rights of workers to collectively bargain will be fundamentally compromised and as a result wages will be lower. This Bill weakens protections for workers at the times they are most vulnerable: when they are trying to get a new job and when their jobs are at risk.

Removing the right for workers to have a tea break is evidence that the Government doesn't care about workers." CTU President, Helen Kelly said.

"This is a mean-spirited attack on workers and their families. This Government listens to employers but plugs its ears when workers are speaking. Over 12,000 workers wrote submissions calling on the Government not to make these changes to employment rights. These voices have not been listened to in any way."

"This law breaches international obligations and is unfair on working people in this country. This Government does not value the contribution workers make." Kelly said.

Note: Follow this link to see the debates in Parliament

<http://www.inthehouse.co.nz/video/32171>

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

## TOLL NETWORKS BARGAINING – CALL FOR REMITS

Your Union is preparing for the renewal of the Toll Networks Collective Agreement which expires on 30 June.

The RMTU is calling for remits to go forward into our log of claims for these negotiations.

Remember, for a remit to stand a meaningful chance of being a successful claim in negotiations it must reflect a deeply and widely felt issue amongst the membership. In plain English that means lots of members back the remit and are prepared to do something to support it if we reach an impasse in negotiations.

Delegates, speak with your organiser and sort out membership meetings to discuss remits. Remits need to be passed by a bona fide meeting of members and must be submitted to the Union National Office by 30 April.

The other key fact is that there is no substitute for strength in numbers. So, if there are people in your Depot who haven't joined the RMTU yet, **then sign them up!** If you're not sure if they're union members then ask them.

And, if you need membership forms and pamphlets call National Office on 04 499 2066 or talk to your local organiser.

## PRIME PORT TIMARU BARGAINING

At the time of writing this is still dragging on despite our best efforts to reach a workable compromise.

Members are asked to keep a close eye on developments in Timaru as we may be calling on you to support our brothers and sisters who work at the port there.

## REMINDER TO ALL ELECTED TRAINED HSAT REPRESENTATIVES - KIWIRAIL

Clause 5.6 of the KiwiRail / RMTU Employee Participation Agreement outlines that "health and safety representatives can

issue hazard notices". Schedule 3 confirms what a hazard notice is and also outlines an employee's right to "refuse work likely to cause serious harm". The RMTU strongly reminds HSAT representatives that they **MUST** give serious consideration to the issuing of hazard notices and a refusal to work when dealing with H&S issues on the job!

Just say NO!

## INTEREST RATE OUTLOOK

On 13 March the Reserve Bank increased the official cash rate from 2.50% to 2.75%. This is good for those with cash deposits at a bank or with finance companies.

It is not good for those with mortgages, as floating rate mortgages will increase by at least 0.25%. We believe this rate rise is premature. Housing markets are only strong in Auckland and Christchurch. In the rest of the country they are reasonably flat.

With our interest rates the highest in the OECD, and with a growing economy the OCR increase will predictably increase our exchange rate – this is bad for our exporters.

Is our economy as strong as some say? Our unemployment figures suggest otherwise - we still have 6% of our work force unemployed and in some provincial areas this is around 10%. We believe the Reserve Bank has increased its rates too soon and should have waited until the recovery is fully underway and unemployment has dropped further.

## LYTTELTON PORT COMPANY LOGISTICS OFFICERS BARGAINING

This is still underway. We've yet to receive a 'final offer' from the employer, despite being in bargaining since before Christmas, although in fairness meaningful discussions only started in late January.

Once again we call on the wider membership to keep a close eye on developments at LPC – there is a lot of bargaining to be done this year and it'll be interesting to see if a pattern starts to emerge across the ports.



## TRANZ SCENIC ANNOUNCE COASTAL PACIFIC SUSPENSION AND PROPOSES JOB CUTS

KiwiRail have announced the suspension of the Coastal Pacific service over the winter months in what is becoming an annual hibernation for the iconic train service.

The RMTU finds this hard to understand given that, by KiwiRail's own admission, the Tranz Scenic as a whole is performing well financially and the Coastal has at least broken even over the summer. The winter months have been lean in recent years, largely as a consequence of the Christchurch earthquake but, again by KiwiRail's admission, hotel bookings in the Garden City are up and South Island Tourism in general is enjoying a resurgence.

KiwiRail are also looking to re-structure staffing and slash three train attendants' roles. Once again, we find the rationale for this hard to understand given the success Tranz Scenic has been enjoying of late.

We are now in a consultation phase around these proposed job cuts, with all the stress and angst that goes along with this.

South Island Organiser John Kerr and Christchurch Tranz Scenic delegates Giovanni Giambianco, Jo Carr and Graham Ealam want to hear from members if they have any concerns or issues they want to discuss in relation to the above. The consultation closes on 31 March so if you have feedback please get it to us as soon as you can.

## HUGE LOCOMOTIVE ORDER – SOUTH AFRICA

Clearly South Africa cares more for its local industry and workers than the John Key lead National Government does for the NZ equivalent. Read and weep for what could have been here if we had driven a local component requirement for recent locomotive procurement.

"In a big move to revitalise South Africa's rail system, Transnet has awarded a R50 billion contract for the building of 1,064 modern and technologically advanced

locomotives. Transnet group chief executive Brian Molefe announced four global original equipment manufacturers, including Chinese company CSR Zhuzhou Electric Locomotive and Bombardier South Africa, which will supply 599 electric locomotives. "The other two companies, which will build and supply 465 diesel locomotives, are General Electric South Africa Technologies and CNR Rolling Stock South Africa.

All of the locomotives, except 70, will be built at Transnet Engineering's plants in Koedoespoort, Pretoria and Durban. Transnet Engineering's role in the agreement has been defined to ensure that it is transformed into a global original equipment manufacturer over time. It will also take 16% of the total build programme, about a third of which will be outsourced to local emerging engineering and manufacturing firms. In total the localisation elements are expected to contribute over R90 billion to the economy. "We are going to create and preserve approximately 30,000 jobs. This transaction is intended to transform the South African rail industry by growing existing small businesses and creating new ones," he said. "The suppliers have complied with or exceeded the minimum local content criteria for rolling stock of **60%** for electric locomotives and **55%** for diesels.

"In terms of the agreements signed with the successful bidders, the last locomotive will roll off the production line within three and a half years. The majority of the locomotives will be deployed to Transnet Freight Rail's general freight business (GFB)." - See more at: <http://www.railwaysafrica.com/blog/2014/03/18/huge-transnet-loco-orders/#sthash.bp1X8IO.dpuf>

## KR MECA WAGEROUND REMIT CALL

The KiwiRail MECA expires 30 June 2014. The renewal of the MECA will see both the Union and the employer arrive at the table with "claims". The RMTU claims come from members who are covered by the MECA and **have to have been raised and voted on and carried at a bona fide meeting of the branch.**

The RMTU negotiation team composition is yet to be determined but will operate under the oversight of the members of the KiwiRail



Industrial Council's with the lead negotiator being Wayne Butson the General Secretary.

The remits will be prioritised by the negotiation team. Regular updates will be disseminated to members once bargaining commences.

**All remits for the KiwiRail Wageround must be submitted to National Office by Monday 31 March 2014. No late remits will be accepted.**

## VACANCY - RESIDENT CUSTODIAN, OREWA

The position of Resident Custodian at the NZ Railway Staff Welfare Trust's Orewa complex will shortly become vacant – Robyn and Rob Kakahi have reluctantly decided to relinquish the position to pursue other business interests. Robyn and Rob have done a great job at Orewa. Many members have appreciated their friendly and professional service and we all wish them well in their new ventures.

The Custodian is the Trust's representative at Orewa and liaises with members staying at the complex. The appointee will be expected to manage and maintain the facility - this includes the maintenance of a swimming pool. A list of responsibilities is available on request. The Custodian is required to live on site and a three-bedroom unit is available to the appointee.

## WORKSAFE RELEASES NEW DEFINITION ON WORKPLACE BULLYING

Worksafe New Zealand has now released its Best Practice Guidelines for "Preventing and Responding to Workplace Bullying".

Definition of "workplace bullying":

"Workplace bullying is repeated and unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety.

- Repeated behaviour is persistent and can involve a range of actions over time.
- Unreasonable behaviour means actions that a reasonable person in the same circumstances would see as unreasonable. It includes victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening a person.

A single incident of unreasonable behaviour is not considered workplace bullying, but it could escalate and should not be ignored."

## PROPERTY PRICE RISES OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS

According to Quotable Value, property values from February 2012 to February this year have increased by 9.3% nationwide. They are 13.1% above the previous peak in late 2007. However, these are averages, and there are significant regional differences.

Two markets in general have seen strong growth - Auckland at 14% and Christchurch at 11%. Hamilton's price growth is 5.4% and New Plymouth is 5.7%.

Most other provincial areas and Wellington have experienced little growth - Wellington at 2.9%, Napier at 1.0% and Dunedin at 1.7%. Growth rates are likely to be less over the next twelve months due to higher interest rates and the loan to value restrictions.

## RENEWAL OF EMPLOYER ACCREDITATION STATUS - KIWIRAIL

KiwiRail Holdings Ltd has applied to the Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment for RENEWAL of Employer Accreditation status. The objective of accreditation is to allow accredited employers to supplement their New Zealand workforce through the recruitment of workers who are not New Zealand residents and whose talents are required by the employer in their core area of business





activities. While other options are available to employers to recruit offshore, employer accreditation allows for streamlined processing of applications which meet the minimum criteria below.

The key requirements for accreditation are that the business is financially sound, has good work place practices, human resource policies and processes of a high standard and a commitment to training and employing New Zealand residents. All employees recruited under the policy must have a minimum base salary of \$55,000 per annum.

The Company has stated they wish to retain its employer accreditation because of the current need to recruit offshore for talented staff. **Among the positions it intends to fill are ship masters, 1st and 2nd mates, IT specialists, engineers (with rail specific skills), project managers, signalling technicians, traction specialists, geologists and locomotive engineers.**

In determining an application for accreditation we consult with relevant unions having site coverage to comment on any concerns they may have regarding the Company's work place practices, commitment to employing New Zealand residents and human resource processes.

**NOTE: Help us to form a view as how the RMTU should respond? We are surprised that Loco Engineers are included when our own internal people cannot get released to be trained as LE's!**

## **FORESTRY UNION WELCOMES LABOUR'S WOOD SECTOR POLICY**

FIRST Union, the union representing forestry and wood sector workers, welcomes the release of the Labour Party's Forestry and Wood Products Economic Upgrade today.

The policy includes creative proposals to shift the industry's focus from 'volume to value', such as tax deferrals for investment, a focus on research and development, a "Pro-Wood" procurement strategy, new regulations to protect forestry workers and

corporate manslaughter charges to discourage unsafe work practices.

"Finally we have a consistent and coherent policy that looks at big picture issues like raw commodity exports, the exchange rate and investment, while not losing sight of the workers on the ground", said FIRST Union General Secretary Robert Reid.

"Our forestry industry is increasingly embedded in the global economy, and domestic processing has all but stalled. These policies provide investors with the incentive to process wood before it's exported."

"However changing the tax system and boosting investment will crash into the economic headwind of the high NZ dollar until monetary policy is addressed and the dollar returns to a sustainable level", warned Reid.

"New Zealand needs to take note of some of our largest competitors – Russia, Canada and Chile – that all have a lower price for logs for domestic production. The Labour Party needs to consider either a domestic pricing structure or other measures to ensure NZ manufactures are not undercut by unfair competition."

## **RED STAG ANNOUNCEMENT SHOWS UP STARK CONTRASTS IN WOOD POLICIES**

A signal of increased investment from Rotorua company Red Stag Timber is very positive news, especially following the loss of 120 jobs from the closure of Tachikawa Forest Products, the union for wood processing workers says.

Red Stag Timber has said today that if Labour's Pro Wood policy was implemented, it would proceed with a \$120 million capital investment upgrade of its Rotorua facility.

FIRST Union represents 1500 workers in wood processing, and has members at Red Stag Timber.

"Already some former workers at Tachikawa have gained employment at Red Stag. Senior officials of FIRST Union and the company met two weeks ago to re-establish a good working relationship," FIRST Union General Secretary Robert Reid said.



"We welcomed Labour's policy announcement on the wood industries. It is a consistent and coherent policy that looks at big picture issues like raw commodity exports, the exchange rate and investment, while not losing sight of the workers on the ground."

"National has sat on its hands while the high New Zealand dollar, the high price of logs and the inadequate government procurement strategy around both the Canterbury rebuild and government house building programmes has made life tough for wood processors and workers in the sector."

"Unless these issues are address we are still concerned that the New Zealand wood processing industry will further decline."

"Some of our largest competitors – Russia, Canada and Chile – have a lower price for logs for domestic production. We think Labour also needs to consider a domestic log price so we can add value to wood products and keep good wood processing jobs here."

## KR – LOCO TRAINING

An issue is frequently arising where internal candidates for Loco Engineer training regarding the rate of pay they will be paid whilst in training. The agreement between KiwiRail and the RMTU is that if the trainee is in a position with a higher rate of pay to the LE trainee rate in the MECA then they remain on their current hourly rate until they go into OJT at which time they will go to the OJT hourly rate in the appropriate section (Freight or Passenger) of the MECA.

## WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY – 28 APRIL

International Workers Memorial Day is 28 April 2014. The day is about remembering those workers, especially RMTU members, who have been killed whilst at work.

All Branches are asked to commence formal arrangements for services at memorial sites.

All members are requested to attend a memorial service organised near them.

**As usual we ask all members to stop what they are doing at midday to "Mourn the dead – Fight for the living" and to think about how important personal safety is to us all going home safe at the end of our days' work.**

**As usual we will be requesting KiwiRail to approve all trains stopping at midday on the 28<sup>th</sup> for 1 minute.**

Please advise us of all services to be held on the day?

## RSW TRUST HOUSE OCCUPANCY – A REMINDER

The RMTU has received advice from the Trust that a number of rules breaches have occurred with Group C (members of the RMTU who are not employee's of KiwiRail or its subsidiary's) category members of the Trust. The rules breached are;

- At NO time is the number occupying the unit permitted to exceed the maximum shown on the inventory sheet for the unit being occupied, and;
- The member and/or member's spouse/partner must be in attendance throughout the period of the tenancy. Family/friends etc are not permitted to occupy units without one of these persons being present.

Group C category membership of the Trust is a privilege NOT a right. Any breaches of the Trusts rules will be dealt with seriously and they additionally do not portray the RMTU as an organization in a good light.

Please obey all of the Trust's rules when occupying Units?

## LVR RESTRICTIONS ARE HAVING AN EFFECT

The loan to value ratio (LVR) restrictions, which were brought in by the Reserve Bank late last year, are influencing the market. Predictably it is affecting first buyers, who are in the under \$400,000 part of the



market. This is a pity, as this is the very group we want to encourage to purchase their own homes. According to the NZ Property Investors Federation, it is affecting another group - some property investors. These tend to be the more highly geared ones, who are in their active phase of acquisition. It will have no impact on overseas buyers at all, as they normally have larger deposits.

## **D&A TESTING – CONTRACTORS – RAIL**

Recently a KR employee was working on a rail contractor's worksite and raised a safety complaint. The contractor's response was to demand an immediate D&A test of our member. It is clear that this move by the contractor was made to intimidate our member and get him to back off. He didn't and he did the right thing and refused the test. This created considerable telephone activity. The contractor claimed that they have a D&A testing policy that every worker is tested daily before work commences and any KR worker on their site will be covered by this policy. NO BLOODY WAY is the RMTU response. We have negotiated a D&A policy and process with KR on whose property the contractor is working and so they must comply with the KR policy and the KR employed workers will too.

So, if you are working with contractors remember that the KR D&A policy applies at all times as expressed in the MECA and the policy process document and so if you are asked to do a different testing scenario then you are entitled to refuse to do so.

## **RMTU MEMBERSHIP DATABASE UPDATES**

The RMTU membership database is an important tool in contacting Union Members or ensuring members are kept up to date with the latest information. We are concerned at the number of "unknown" or "return to sender" envelopes returned to National Office as part of this year's officer elections. We remind members that if you wish to exercise their rights and participate in the decision making aspects of the Union they should ensure they inform National Office of any change of address or contact

details as soon as possible. This includes any change of designation or employer.

Branch Secretaries hold "update of membership forms" that you can post or fax in or alternatively for immediate action members are reminded to utilise the update of membership details link on our website [www.rmtunion.org.nz](http://www.rmtunion.org.nz).

For example – The rail industry MECA expires 30 June 2014 and so there may be strike and/or ratification votes conducted by mail. If we have the incorrect address, employer info you will not get a vote as you will never receive a voting paper.

Update now!

## **HOW FOOTBALL CAN HELP WORKERS TO ORGANISE**

South Island Organiser John Kerr attended an International Trade Union Congress Asia Pacific Region 'Strategic Organising Workshop' in Indonesia as a CTU Representative last week.

The workshop was fascinating, as it was attended by representatives from across the region, some of whom are working to organise workers in very difficult circumstances – for example Sri Lanka is just emerging from a bloody civil war and many workers in Nepal are illiterate.

In one country (which will remain nameless for the obvious reason) where the government is particularly anti-union and has banned union meetings, the local federation has come up with a novel solution. Instead of calling a union meeting and risking police and military repression they simply hold a football tournament and the meeting takes place on a pitch while the 'players' kick the ball around. One assumes there is plenty of close passing.

It really is the beautiful game...

## **DO PIRACY RISKS AND MEGA SHIPS POSE NEW RISKS FOR BUSINESSES?**

A new report has highlighted some of the increasing risks for Australian and New Zealand businesses involved in the international shipping trade. The report, by



Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty (AGCS) – the Safety and Shipping Review 2014 – highlights the shift in the number of piracy incidents from the Gulf of Aden to Indonesia and West Africa, with piracy attacks in Indonesian waters up by 700% in the past five years.

Ron Johnson, regional marine manager for the Pacific at Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty, said “the shift of the piracy focus from the Gulf of Aden to a new hotspot in Indonesia should be of concern to all businesses in the Pacific region involved in international trade, as all shipping between the region and Asia has to transverse these waters.”

The development of ‘mega ships’ is creating new risks. Last year marked the arrival in Australia of the largest container vessel on record, which is over 400 metres long and with the capacity to carry in excess of 18,000 shipping containers (TEU). Mega ship incidents pose particular issues for Australia due to its large coastline and limited ports.

The report also highlights an emerging shipping industry risk from these ‘mega ships’ because events involving serious casualties in remote locations could involve unprecedented and complex salvage operations.

For example, when an incident on board the 15,000 teu Emma Maersk in 2013 whilst transiting the Suez Canal, it was unable to make an unscheduled stop at a port to unload her cargo due to its size, highlighting the risks associated with these larger container vessels.

“Given Australia’s large coastline, and limited ports of refuge and repair facilities to handle such vessels, the arrival of these mega ships could heighten the risk to cargo owners. And there are even larger vessels, capable of up to 24,000 TEU, on the horizon and which are expected to come into service in 2018,” Mr Johnson said.

Shipping casualties, along with other emerging risks on the rise, such as the use of alternative fuels such as LNG and Arctic trading routes, are also covered in the report.

## MILLIONS INVESTED DUE TO LABOUR’S FORESTRY PLAN

Red Stag Timber has today announced it will invest \$120 million in upgrading its plant on the basis of Labour’s Forestry and Wood Products Economic Upgrade, says Labour Leader David Cunliffe.

Red Stag General Manager Tim Rigter said. “We are confirming today that if we can get a Pro Wood policy with a future government, we would proceed with a \$120 million capital investment in upgrading our plant and facility. We want to be able to process another 500,000 tonnes of logs.”

“This is great news for the Rotorua region that suffered through the closure of the Tachikawa sawmill and the loss of 120 jobs,” says David Cunliffe.

“A new world-class mill fitted with the latest technology will future proof jobs in a region hard hit by the National Government’s hands-off approach. I am delighted that our policies can secure jobs in a region that desperately needs them.

“It is a terrific endorsement for Labour’s Economic Upgrade for Forestry and Wood Products that I announced yesterday.

“Our upgrade is supported by the sector. Our focus on investment, innovation and industry is part of the upgrade that will create better jobs that pay higher wages where they are needed.

“To encourage investment we will provide tax deferrals in the form of accelerated depreciation to encourage industry to invest in new technology and plant.

“To boost innovation we will work with the industry and public science bodies to develop new products and technologies.

“To support industry development we will introduce measures including a Pro-Wood policy for government buildings, loans for new forest planting and forestry taskforces for long-term unemployed.

“Labour’s economic upgrade will lead to better jobs and higher wages for all New Zealanders,” David Cunliffe says.





## WHO IS GOING TO BENEFIT FROM GDP GROWTH?

"Yes, there is growth in the economy, but the big question now is who will benefit from it", says CTU Economist Bill Rosenberg. "The 0.9 percent growth in the three months to December 2013 was about what was expected, but we have yet to see the results in sharply falling unemployment and good wages growth."

Business investment, which drives jobs growth, had been expected to be booming by this time but is looking surprisingly weak. In December, Treasury forecast 11.7 percent annual growth in market investment by March 2014. Business investment grew only 0.9 percent in the December quarter, with only one good quarter growth (7.4 percent in June) during 2013.

"Tuesday's productivity statistics for the year to March 2013 showed average wages were falling behind labour productivity increases again: another sign that wages are stagnating and workers are not getting a fair share of what growth there has been in the economy.

Wages rose quite strongly until mid 2009, with some momentum from wage settlements prior to the global financial crisis. Since then, the bottom of the recession, labour productivity has increased 10.1 percent but the average wage after inflation has risen only 0.6 percent. Even in the year to March 2013, labour productivity rose faster at 2.1 percent than the real average wage (that is, after CPI inflation) which rose 1.5 percent." Rosenberg said.

"Household purchases are also consistent with some households doing well and feeling confident enough to buy new appliances and furniture while others can barely afford to pay for necessities such as groceries and electricity." Rosenberg said.

"The growth is heavily driven by progress on the Canterbury rebuild and strong commodity exports. What happens when this music stops?" Rosenberg said.

## UP TO 125 MORE AUCKLAND JOBS SET TO GO

Up to 125 Auckland jobs will be gone by Christmas, with the closure of the Cerebos South Auckland operation.

Service and Food Workers Union Food Sector Leader, Chas Muir, said the job loss was a devastating result of poor government manufacturing policies.

"Government's lack of support for manufacturing is hitting areas like food processing hard," he said. "That flows on to families and communities."

Chas Muir said around half of these workers have given Cerebos loyal service for over 10 years.

"Although the work is not highly paid, it is well above the minimum wage, with stable hours of work," he said.

"It is decent work that these workers have relied on. None of the big food factories are employing and it will be very hard for them to find jobs in their communities of South and East Auckland, especially at Christmas time."

Chas Muir said government was very happy to promote New Zealand as a low-wage/insecure work destination for multinational companies, but did nothing to keep decent jobs in sectors such as food manufacturing.

"Today we are seeing more evidence of Government's couldn't care a less attitude," he said. "The human cost of this closure is decent stable jobs lost from poor communities that need jobs more than ever.

"This overseas-owned company is investing \$10 million to expand their Dunedin production, but there is little hope of this creating a single job. Meanwhile up to 125



Auckland workers and their families are out of a job."

## **QUALITY MARSHALLING ARRIVES ON SULPHUR POINT.**

Quality Marshalling [QM] which is 100% owned by the Port of Tauranga is the new contractor for the Container Transfer [CT] Site Rail Siding work that was previously undertaken by C3.

As a result of the change of contractor a number of key CT site members moved from C3 to QM on different terms and conditions, rather than continuing their employment with C3 as straddle drivers. None of the members were able to take redundancy as they were offered continuing employment with C3.

The smooth transition on the 17th / 18th March was due to the experience of the ex C3 workers which is a tribute to their skills and understanding of the job.

The Bay of Plenty Port branch executive have conducted a thorough analysis of the changeover and are looking to incorporate those findings into any discussions with stakeholders on Sulphur Point as to any further contract changes that may take place in the future.

## **Bits and Bobs**

- Last year hard coking coal sold for US\$164 a ton and has fallen almost US\$2 a day since then to be US\$110 a ton now. Rumours abound that at this price it is unprofitable for Solid Energy to mine due to extraction costs. We have heard that the poor price is the reason Bathurst Coal will not mine its coal. They are apparently waiting for the coal price to pick up. Solid Energy need to cut costs in all areas of the business and will be making it a priority so the email I sent you about contractors and staff will be the first casualty I suppose. There is also a rumour circulating amongst Solid Energy staff (do not know how true) that the Indian outfit that was involved with Pike River is interested in buying Solid Energy so watch this space I suppose.

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

**SAFETY FIRST!**

