

THE ACTIVIST



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ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 15th Annual Conference of the RMTU was a resounding success in the opinion of almost all who attended. Delegates heard from, and had an opportunity to pose questions to;

- The Minister of "road" Transport Steven Joyce.
- Hon Darren Hughes Opposition spokesperson on Transport
- CTU President Helen Kelly, Secretary Peter Conway and Economist Bill Rosenburg
- KiwiRail CEO Jim Quinn
- Centreport CEO Blair O'Keefe
- Officials from Australian unions (MUA, TWU and RTBU)
- Officials from the Confederation of Japanese railway unions
- Officials from the RMT of Great Britain
- Rail Welfare Manager Chris ball
- LE Trust Fund Chair and Harbours Super Roy Cowley.

Conference delegates will report back to their local branches at meetings and a report will be published in the December issue of the Transport Worker. The minutes will be distributed to branches as soon as they are finalised.

Conference had separate rail and maritime workshops on the second day. The Maritime workshop had an education seminar on the ITF's FOC and POC campaigns. The Rail workshop received a presentation from KiwiRail GM HR Nicola Brown assisted by the DOL Partnership Resource Centre's Bernard McIlhone. A presentation from Hazel Armstrong law who were engaged by the RMTU to do an analysis of the

"differences" between the various collective agreements (CA's). It would be fair to say that most delegates were surprised at the scope of the differences between the CA's. Some being very meaningful and material.

Conference signed off on the nil Union membership fee increase and the Union financial budget for the financial year 2009-2010.

Delegates endorsed that the priority for the 2010 rail industry bargaining was to merge all the Collective Agreements into one Industry agreement. It was acknowledged that the challenge of merging the documents may limit the ability of the Union to achieve any significant increases to current terms and conditions arising from branch/member remits for the wageround. The focus will be on merging the documents with the universalisation (if such a word exists) of current core terms and conditions of employment. The core Union bargaining team was also resolved with reps from all sectoral industrial councils being voted into the team.

SO LONG TREV

At the MUNZ triennial Conference being held this week in Wellington the retiring MUNZ General Secretary Trevor Hanson will be formally farewelled. The RMTU wishes Trevor a long and healthy retirement and good luck in his role as Industrial relations spokesperson for the Alliance party.

Trevor remains a staunch trade unionist. In our dealings with Trevor we have never disagreed on the need for action or if a wrong has been done to working class men or women however we have sometimes disagreed on "how" to react or deal with the matter which is a tribute to the strong moral compass has used to plot his course through his Union work. Enjoy your rest comrade - you have earned it!

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

A ballot is being conducted to decide on Trevor's successor with Joe Fleetwood and Russell Mayn both seeking the job. The RMTU looks forward to having a good working relationship with the new general secretary as was enjoyed under Trev's leadership of MUNZ.

RAIL INDUSTRY BARGAINING PROCESS BEGINS

Representatives from KiwiRail management and from the RMTU will meet in Wellington this Thursday (29 October 2009) in what could be described as the first meeting for the renewal of the Rail Industry Collective agreements. The RMTU team for the day (and the core team for the subsequent wageround) is;

- Hohepa, Jerry (Track Infrastructure)
- Kearns, Phil (Sigs, comms, Traction etc.)
- Young, Geoff (TCO, Standards, Codes)
- Blakie, Doug (Yard Terminals) *Not able to attend the 29th meet.*
- Snook, Bernie (Long Distance LE) *Not able to attend the 29th meeting as in China for new loco's visit.*
- Smith, Hayden (Short Distance LE)
- Duffy, Terry (KRMS Workshop)
- Spence, Tim (KRMS Depots)
- Phillips, Howard (Passenger Mechanical)
- Sladen, Randolph (Veolia Observer) *Not able to attend the 29th meeting.*
- Haraki, Tania (Interisland Line)
- Sukha, Garesh (CT terminals)
- Armstrong, Brian (Long Distance TM)
- Patterson, Harvey (Short Distance TM) *Not attending 29th meet as on leave.*
- Jones, Kevin (Scale 1)
- Kelly, Jim (Hillside)

RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson will be advocate for the rail wageround and other Organisers will assist subject to commitments.

REST BREAK BILL TREATS WORKERS UNFAIRLY

The changes introduced by the Government today to legislation providing entitlements to workers for rest and meal breaks are unnecessary and ignore the basis of the current provisions, said CTU President Helen Kelly.

"These changes remove the absolutely fundamental right to minimum breaks at reasonably spaced periods during a working day," said Kelly. "The current rules came into effect only this year and were designed to create rights to a break for the most vulnerable workers."

"Workers in collective agreements and working for reasonable employers will be getting breaks," she continued. "The whole point of this law was to ensure some minimum requirements for those in workplaces that were unorganised and where employers disregarded the need every worker has for some time to rest during a working day."

The current provisions are extremely flexible and simply provide for two ten minute tea breaks and a half hour lunch break for the average type of normal length day. The changes proposed today will enable employers to determine whether or not a worker should have a break and then how long and when it should occur. It will also enable employers to put strict restrictions on what a worker can do in that break, even when it is unpaid. Technically it could even enable an employer to require a worker to perform some of their duties during an unpaid break period.

"This legislation removes the most basic of minimum standards which, in a country with no regulated working hours, is fundamental to workers' wellbeing. Neither unions nor business were consulted and no notice was given that it would be introduced today in the speech John Key gave to the CTU conference only last week," added Kelly. "It is yet another instance of this Government pandering unnecessarily to what it thinks are employers' interests at the expense of the most vulnerable workers."

THE REST BREAK FACTS

The Bill removes the requirements to 2 ten minute paid breaks and a half hour meal break in a normal 8 hour working day. The current law allows 10 mins between 2-4 hours work, 10 mins plus 30 mins in a 4 to 6 hour shift and 2x 10 min plus 1 30 min break in a 6-8 hour shift. It also provides a similar pattern for those working more than 8 hours. The 10 min breaks are paid.

The current law also says the breaks should be taken at a time agreed, but it also provides reasonable spacing of the breaks if agreement can't be reached.

The proposed law continues an entitlement to rest and meal breaks but lets the employer determine what is reasonable and when they will be taken. It also allows compensation in lieu of breaks (but not specified as there are no proscribed breaks and no proscribed compensation) and for an employer to set requirements during the breaks including remaining on the premises etc.

CALLS FOR PAY TRADE-OFF FOOLED NO ONE

Comments by the Prime Minister to the CTU conference last week that teachers should trade off their own pay rises to fund fair pay rates for low paid school support staff were provocative and a cynical attempt to shift blame for his Government's unacceptable approach to support staff negotiations on to their colleagues, CTU President Helen Kelly said today.

"The low pay of school support staff is a result of continued undervaluation and gender discrimination in their pay rates," said Kelly. "Firstly the Government closes down the pay and employment equity unit established to address this type of issue, then it takes a zero pay increase policy and tries to apply it across the state sector regardless of the genuine claims many workers are making, including school support staff. Then it tries to suggest that this is somehow all the fault of the teachers."

"Yet in the same speech the Prime Minister repeated his desire to see pay rates in this country reach the levels of Australian

workers. The mixed message and underlying attempt to deflect the approach of the Government to wage increases that will actually only widen that gap did not convince anyone. I have no doubt teachers will enter into their own wage negotiations seeking resolution of a number of genuine concerns teachers have including pay rates. Short changing teacher pay will not result in fair pay for school support staff and would create a legacy of teacher shortages and ultimately reduced educational achievement."

"The CTU calls on the Government to think longer-term about its pay policies in the state sector and approach all these negotiations with a willingness to negotiate and find fair outcomes for the workers it employs."

SAY NO TO PRIVATISATION!

The privatisation of ACC would result in higher levies and less cover for injured New Zealanders to pay for the profits of Australian insurance companies and lawyers, says Labour's ACC spokesperson David Parker.

"ACT Leader Rodney Hide is misleading New Zealanders when he says that privatising ACC would result in lower levies. All the evidence suggests the opposite is true.

"The Employers and Manufacturers Association says employers are 'wary' and predict significant instability and fluctuating levies which will make it hard for businesses. Unions are clear that costs would go up and cover reduced.

"Not even Treasury is convinced, saying in a document released by John Key yesterday, that it is unclear whether privatisation would result in net gains. It says it's 'not clear that levies are excessive' and that the current publicly-owned ACC system provides 'a comparative advantage'.

"The reality is the real beneficiaries of privatisation would be the big Australian financial institutions. They are in a position to capture the market and hike up levies as they have done in Australia – where levies are higher. It is inevitable they will seek to impose similar levies here," says David Parker.

"Lawyers will be the only other beneficiaries, as legal battles over access to cover mount, which is a feature of privatised schemes overseas.

"Treasury and last year's major Pricewaterhousecooper's report into ACC have both concluded administration costs would rise as a result of privatisation. The latter report found heavy regulation would be required if the scheme was to retain its integrity.

It also concluded the current publicly-owned scheme was 'the best observable mechanism' for the Work Account," says David Parker.

"The inevitable result of creating profit margins for private insurance companies and higher administration and regulatory costs is that hard-working New Zealand families will pay more for less care and protection in the event of an accident.

"Unions are clear that in the brief period during which the account was privatised in the late 1990s, workers were pressured not to make claims to drive costs down. Doctors and other health professionals have described the period as a chaotic nightmare.

"The ACC Bill introduced today already seeks to reduce ACC entitlements for large numbers of New Zealanders. Privatisation will pave the way for a further erosion of the scheme and will inevitably re-open the argument that New Zealanders should regain the right to sue. When entitlements are removed, injured New Zealanders have to foot the bill for themselves – the costs do not go away," says David Parker.

INFRASTRUCTURE ROLLOUT SEES INCREASING 'SQUEEZE' ON SKILLED RAIL WORKERS

From Rail Express - The "increasing squeeze" on skilled workers in the rail industry is a major issue for companies who are part of Australia's national infrastructure rollout, according to O'Donnell Griffin (ODG) Rail general manager Dave Howe. And this is the case for projects that are funded by Federal or State Governments or in conjunction with private parties.

"We are now having to recruit overseas simply because of the shortage in skilled resources here in Australia to meet the demands of the works that are planned to be undertaken or currently being worked on," Howe said.

"Business opportunities at the moment are extensive in rail and resources...and the resources market is going to continue to get more and more restricted, with new major mining and LNG projects coming on, heading into the start of 2010."

PRIVATE COMPANIES HAVE POOR RECORD SAYS ACC FUTURES COALITION

The ACC Futures Coalition is concerned that ACC plans to call in private third party administrators to handle up to 1500 long-term accident compensation claimants.

"This group of people receiving accident compensation face major challenges in returning to work," said ACC Futures Coalition spokesperson Hazel Armstrong.

"The private operators ACC are planning to bring in are administrators, not rehabilitation and treatment providers, and have poor track record in getting long term claimants back to work."

"When the private sector was last involved in this area in the late 1990s they moved almost a quarter of the long term claimants onto welfare benefits. We don't see that as progress."

"Recent research has also indicated that outcomes from ACC managed clients are generally better than those managed by private third party administrators engaged under the accredited employers programme."

"This move could be the thin edge of the wedge for the privatisation of ACC."

"The Corporation has the capacity and capability to provide a quality service in this area and it should not allow itself to be stampeded by the Government into an ideologically driven decision."

The ACC Futures Coalition is also deeply concerned by recent reports that the Government is planning to introduce

legislation under urgency to introduce cutbacks to accident compensation. The targeting of work-related gradual process disease is of particular concern.

"Occupational illness is a work injury," said Ms Armstrong. "More people die from occupational illness than from traumatic injury in the workplace in New Zealand and that is why the 2007 changes were introduced."

"It would be profoundly undemocratic and against the intentions of current accident compensation law if cutbacks are made under urgency."

"The ACC Futures Coalition does not accept that ACC has a massive unfunded liability."

"A political decision was made by the previous government to introduce a fully funded scheme by 2014 and we support moves to push this out to 2019 or even beyond."

"The Government could even explore shifting to a pay as you go funding arrangement," said Ms Armstrong.

NON PAYMENT OF TEA AND COFFEE ALLOWANCE

Due to an oversight, a number of KiwiRail staff at Westfield were not receiving their tea and coffee allowance. The explanation was that, somewhere along the line a manager had forgotten to "tick the box". Fair enough, these things happen. When the issues were raised, there was no dispute over what had occurred or that back pay was due. The issues were put in the hands of the pay office and the problems, procrastination, avoidance, duck shoving began.

Finally after months of requests, inquiries, follow-ups and threats the money was paid, the result was that eleven Westfield staff received back pay of up to \$1,159.07. This may not be an isolated incident; members should all check that they are being paid the allowance.

EMPLOYERS WARY ABOUT COMPETITION FOR ACC

Employers are wary about the reintroduction of an open competitive market for ACC workplace accounts, says Paul Jarvie, Occupational Health and Safety Manager for the Northern Employers and Manufacturers Association.

"The single year when we had a private market for ACC turned into a bun fight between insurers trying to capture business and employers trying get accident insurance within prescribed time frames," Mr Jarvie said.

"Insurers at the time cut premiums to capture market share early on. Most commentators agreed at the time that the ensuing years would have seen large premium increases to offset the low entry price points.

"Having a full private insurance market won't provide stability in the premium setting market, and it would make more forecasting and budgeting work for employers.

"What employers want is an ACC market with stable premiums and competition around workplace accident treatment and rehabilitation.

"These are the areas where the costs are. Ensuring a tight focus on outcomes with dedicated treatment rehabilitation providers would significantly reduce costs.

"ACC should set the level of levies, and work at reducing them, while employers choose from amongst treatment and rehabilitation providers competing to deliver cost effective services.

"Employers also want experience rating brought back to ACC with urgency to ensure there are strong incentives to retain safe workplaces.

"Just as important is for the scheme to become cohesive on the injury prevention side. To do this ACC, the Department of Labour and OH&S professional consultants should be better aligned.

"OH&S professionals number over 1000 providers while ACC and DoL have around 200 between them. Getting these 1200 people all doing similar things would be far

more cost effective than them doing different things."

PSA AND SFWU TO CEASE MERGER TALKS

The PSA and the SFWU have decided to stop discussing the potential for a merger between our two unions. The primary reason for doing so was the inability of both unions to reach sufficient agreement on the issue of political relationships and affiliations. Both unions have long standing and proud traditions on the issue of political relationships.

The SFWU has a long standing affiliation status with the Labour party, is this week signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Green Party and has explored a formal relationship with the Maori Party. The PSA has an equally strong commitment to remaining non affiliated and independent of political parties.

Both unions have looked at various alternatives to affiliation or non affiliation of the new union, but a jointly acceptable position has not been achieved.

Governance representatives of both unions met four times over the past few months exploring the concept of a merger.

Both unions agree that we have significant areas of common interest and will benefit from working even closer together in the future, especially in the health and NGO sectors. Our important joint campaigns in the disability sector will continue and other joint campaigns are likely to follow.

While it is disappointing that the potential benefits of a merger will not be realised, both unions remain committed to continuing our close and constructive relationship.

The openness with which our potential merger discussions have occurred has done much to strengthen our already close relationship.

ACC SERIOUSLY THREATENED BY NATIONAL'S PRIVATISATION AGENDA

The CTU wants to know why the National Government wants to privatise ACC when every informed party is telling them that they don't want it and it wouldn't deliver better value for money or outcomes for accident victims than the publicly owned scheme in its present form.

"Is John Key being straight with the country when he says he wants to preserve ACC's no-fault 24/7 comprehensive protection? Because he must know - and the country must know - that taking ACC down this privatisation road will destroy it and dismantle all the protections that it currently provides," said CTU President Helen Kelly.

"The Insurance Council has said they don't want it, and even the Employers and Manufacturers Association has said they don't want it. Price Waterhouse Cooper have said that privatisation will be more costly and won't provide better service to New Zealanders. Who exactly, apart from Nick Smith and Rodney Hide wants this priceless public benefit privatised?"

"If National is allowed to push through its drastic and far-ranging privatisation of ACC then public life in this country will be transformed. Before long ACC will have been replaced by a private insurance scheme which will leave every ordinary New Zealander vulnerable to discriminatory levies targeting those most at risk because they work in farming or construction, run adventure tourism, play rugby, or go fishing. The ACC scheme is the envy of the world and supports the very essence of the NZ life style. It must not be privatised."

ITF BACKS BRITISH POSTAL WORKERS

The ITF has outlined its support for British postal workers who this week began a nationwide strike to defend jobs and wages, which are being undermined in the name of modernisation.

The ITF expressed its backing for the workers in a resolution that was adopted on 23 October by the ITF executive board in



London, UK. The resolution notes how tens of thousands of postal workers, represented by the Communication Workers' Union, had shut down Royal Mail, the state-run service, for the first time in two years. The ITF was supporting the workers "in their resolve to resist bullying bosses' attempts to cut jobs and force them to work harder for less pay - in the guise of modernisation."

The resolution also condemned Royal Mail managers' failure to participate constructively in talks, as well as "the collusion of the British government ministers with Royal Mail management to veto any resolution through negotiations."

The ITF has pledged to work with global union federation UNI, which represents postal workers across the world, to build international solidarity support for the union.

ITF inland transport section secretary Mac Urata said: "The British postal workers' dispute is not an isolated case; all around the world restructuring processes are threatening the jobs and conditions of postal and other employees in the transport sector. That's why it's so crucial that workers show international solidarity wherever such threats occur."

ATC RADIO FAILURES

All Locomotive Engineers are reminded that in the event of the ATC train radio system failing then all trains must immediately be double crewed through the area of radio failure. There is NO individual discretion in this matter as it is a fundamental H&S matter.

WAGE INCOME AND RATES STILL RISING DESPITE TOTAL INCOMES STAGNATING

Wage and salaries still show positive increases in the latest annual New Zealand Income Survey for the three months to June 2009, says CTU Economist Bill Rosenberg.

The survey shows that the median hourly rate for wage and salary earners was \$19.47, a rise of 3.8 percent over the June

2008 quarter. The median rate shows the wage which half earn below and half earn above, and is more representative of what people earn than the average which is pulled higher by a relatively small number of high earners.

The average hourly rate reported was \$22.96, an increase of 2.7 percent over the year, but it shows up significantly lower than the quarterly employment survey's \$25.09 which is probably more accurate. The New Zealand Income Survey differs from the Quarterly Employment Survey in that it asks householders directly about their incomes rather than using employers' data.

Māori workers show a notably lower hourly rate than all wage and salary earners, with a median of \$18.31, and they recorded a lower increase than other earners from last year at 1.7 percent. Pacific peoples' hourly rate is even lower, with a \$16.96 median but a much higher increase at 6.0 percent.

However, when looking at weekly earnings for all people over 15 years old (including those not earning), there is a different picture. The total median weekly income has barely changed - from \$536 to \$538. Wage and salary weekly income has risen faster, from \$447 to \$455, but only by 1.8 percent - just below inflation of 1.9 percent in the period. Total weekly incomes have been dragged down by falling income from self-employment and investments. Government transfers have increased.

But against the general trend, both Māori and Pacific peoples' weekly wage and salary earnings for over 15 year olds have fallen - from \$398 in 2008 to \$392 in 2009 for Māori (a fall of 1.5 percent), and from \$375 to \$359 for Pacific peoples: a large 4.3 percent fall.

This appears to show a picture of increasing incomes for wage and salary earners who are in work, but increasing stress on incomes from lower hours of work and unemployment. It is harder to get income from self employment and for those receiving it, investment income has fallen as a result of the recession.

Finally, the survey shows a stark picture for people who are unemployed. Their median income is zero. That means that over half of people who are looking for work have no

income. The average income is \$123 per week, but only a minority receive anything.

ITF URGES AFFILIATES TO ACT OVER HORRIFIC GUINEA MASSACRE AND RAPES

The ITF has called on affiliated unions to demand action on the outrageous atrocities committed against the men and women of Guinea.

On 28 September, soldiers violently intervened in a peaceful demonstration organised by trade unions and religious and civil society groups at a sports stadium in the capital, Conakry. The demonstrators were protesting against the Guinea's military junta, led by Captain Moussa Dadis Camara.

One hundred and fifty people lost their lives during the assault; 1200 were wounded. Human rights activists have also collected testimony from at least 30 women who were raped in the streets.

So far the victims' remains have not been returned to their families and arbitrary detentions have also taken place.

In a circular to affiliated unions, the ITF called for solidarity with the Guinean people following these shocking acts of repression and urged them to write to the authorities in their own country to make a number of demands. These include that all victims receive full medical attention as well as redress for their injuries and that those detained be released unconditionally.

These appalling acts of violence were also highlighted during a meeting of the ITUC's human and trade union rights committee in Berlin, Germany, on 4 October. During the meeting delegates welcomed the launch of a human and trade union rights networks across the world's regions, designed to provide information and follow-up on key human and union rights abuses such as those in Guinea.

CALL ON WORKERS IN GLOBAL DELIVERY FIRM TO JOIN ACTION WEEK

The ITF has urged transport workers employed at one of the big four global delivery firms, Deutsche Post DHL, to take part in an upcoming action week.

A resolution that was adopted on 23 October at a meeting of the ITF executive board in London, UK, has called on workers to participate actively in the joint ITF-UNI DHL workers' week, which is being held from 9-13 November. The action week aims to strengthen, publicise and build the Respect for DHL workers campaign, which demands that workers have a voice in how the company is run regardless of where they work. The campaign is being promoted through a dedicated website.

The ITF resolution also expresses condemnation of: the reduction in the number of Deutsche Post DHL workers worldwide and the effect on their livelihoods; the company's trade union rights violations and its failure to consult legitimate trade unions on issues such as redundancies. It calls on the company to respect its workers and their trade union rights and to implement a policy of social dialogue culminating in the adoption of a global contract covering all of its workers around the world.

Ingo Marowsky, ITF regional and industrial coordinator, said: "Thousands of DHL workers are facing job cuts and uncertainty. We are demanding that the company respect workers and urging DHL workers to have their say and highlight their concerns by participating in the action week."

To download materials for the DHL workers' week visit:
<http://www.itfglobal.org/campaigns/dhlworkers.cfm>.

CTU CHALLENGES KEY TO SET TONE FOR THE NATION

CTU President Helen Kelly today challenged John Key and the National Government to set the tone for industrial relations in New Zealand to move the country away from the

conflict and disruption of the current lockouts. Kelly was speaking to delegates at the CTU's Biennial Conference in Wellington.

"The Government has created the climate where employer is king and thinks it can act accordingly," said Kelly. "Government sets the tone in a country – if it promotes rights and respect, then employers and the broader community are more likely to follow suit."

"We have seen a number of employers keen to use lockouts and suspensions in an environment of rising unemployment and Government attacks on worker rights."

Kelly also criticised the Government's attacks on ACC as an attack on the welfare of every New Zealander. "Nick Smith has a big agenda in mind – sack all those on the board that care about and understand the scheme, create a crisis that looks like you are saving the scheme, propose outrageous levy hikes and then save the day by cutting the entitlements and moving into privatisation." She said the community was looking to unions for leadership on this issue and their fight for ACC would be a strong one.

Helen Kelly also outlined the other main business of the conference which included the discussion of union change – how the union movement is adapting to today's world and to changes in work and employment, how unions can develop their leadership and the offer they make to working people.

Tomorrow the conference will open a debate on an alternative economic policy proposed by the CTU – a new way of looking at the economy to close the widening gap between rich and poor, consider new definitions of wealth and value that sustain the planet for future generations, and the start of a conversation on principles and initiatives which would move the NZ economy to the place it should be to deliver the outcomes New Zealanders want.

CTU LAUNCHES CONVERSATION TOWARDS A FAIRER ECONOMY

The CTU launched a national debate on how to create an economy that works for everyone at their Biennial Conference today in Wellington. CTU Economist and Policy Director Bill Rosenberg hopes the publication of the paper on an alternative economic strategy will kick start a conversation across society about principles and initiatives which would enable the NZ economy to deliver the outcomes New Zealanders want.

"We accept that efficiency, productivity and return on investment are vital characteristics of a functioning and effective economy. But the principles have to be about people," said Rosenberg. The principles outlined included fairness, participation, security, improving living standards, and sustainability.

Delegates at the conference discussed policy proposals aimed at closing the widening gap between rich and poor such as wages that give workers a fair share of the growth in the economy, and redefining wealth and value in a way to sustain the planet for future generations.

"We are seeking a coherent alternative to current policy principles and institutional structures which will improve the position of working people and New Zealand as a whole. We believe a new foundation must be built on three pillars: sustainable economic development, decent work and a good life, and voice, by which we mean real participation by people in decisions in the workplace, economy and community," continued Rosenberg.

The numerous policy proposals in the document cover a range of issues including economic development, international economic relationships, taxation, the environment, productivity and employment.

CTU Secretary Peter Conway said that the proposals will be discussed over the next six months within the union movement and with a broad range of economists and commentators.

An executive summary and the full document are attached. Both versions of the document can also be downloaded from

[http://union.org.nz/sites/union/files/CTU Alternative Economic Strategy Executive summary.pdf](http://union.org.nz/sites/union/files/CTU%20Alternative%20Economic%20Strategy%20Executive%20summary.pdf) and [http://union.org.nz/sites/union/files/CTU Alternative Economic Strategy.pdf](http://union.org.nz/sites/union/files/CTU%20Alternative%20Economic%20Strategy.pdf)

THAT THE NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS - TE KAUA E KAIMAHI CONFERENCE 2009 RESOLVES THAT IT:

- will continue to build solidarity and tangible support for workers and unions in dispute;
- will continue to argue for investment in skills development, job creation; job retention and transitional support for workers in this situation of high unemployment;
- calls on the government to abandon the state sector wage freeze recognising the recessionary impact of this policy;
- calls for the Government to expand initiatives to assist workers affected by the recession;
- calls on the government to abandon initiatives to dismiss public sector workers which only worsens the impact of the recession;
- condemns employer militancy and the aggressive stance of an increasing number of employers including the use of lockouts and suspensions at a time when unemployment has been rising;
- calls for a public inquiry into the growing use by employers of non conventional forms of employment such as dependent contractors and the manipulation by employers of legal structures to avoid or defeat worker's rights and employment obligations, both of which tactics are usually used to exploit workers and suppress pay and conditions. The inquiry to consider the extent to which workers exercise real choice over these arrangements; the impact of these arrangements on wages and conditions, skills and development in affected industries; other effects on workers such as the loss of coverage of industrial law and the assumption of financial and other risks; and statutory and other measures needed to ensure workers are not negatively affected by these arrangements;
- will continue to argue against low pay and for improved wages and conditions for workers, including those in the state sector;
- will campaign against Government attacks on workers' conditions of work including holidays, meal breaks, and the right to appeal against unfair dismissal;
- will campaign for government procurement of goods and services to be tendered according to "responsible contracting" criteria including genuine commitment to environmental sustainability and socially responsible employment practices (union rights to organise recognised, union collective employment collective agreement in place);
- condemns the attacks on the Accident Compensation scheme, and will oppose the rush to full-funding, and will support ACC as a social insurance scheme, not a private insurance model;
- will continue to advocate on behalf of all vulnerable workers including labour hire agency workers;
- opposes any attempts to privatise state assets, and reasserts our support for strong and comprehensive public services;
- will continue with major CTU projects including health and safety training, learning representatives and the workplace injury advocacy service;
- will strengthen our work on Te Tiriti o Waitangi issues including giving effect to Te Ture Whakawhangaungatanga;
- supports mechanisms to promote and reflect diversity at all levels so members can see themselves reflected in the union movement;
- will support Stand Up in its efforts to mobilise young workers;
- will continue to build strong links with the ACTU and Australian unions to strengthen Trans-Tasman cooperation and solidarity;



- will maintain our international work including active involvement in the Pacific and support for UnionAid;
- will conduct a series of workshops on the alternative economic strategy culminating in a revised paper to May 2010 NAC and a final document in June 2010;
- will continue to develop our knowledge of sustainability issues and also develop solutions that enhance our contribution to sustainable work, sustainable communities and a sustainable environment;
- expresses our concerns about the continuing impact of the high NZ dollar on jobs and the economy;
- will engage fully in the MMP referendum process in support of retention of MMP as a way of maintaining diversity of representation.
- Asciano has quietly shut the gates at its Patrick intermodal operations at Bathurst in Central Western NSW. Workers and contractors were given just three weeks' notice of the closure, affecting up to 80 people directly. Apart from its own employees, many workers whose companies are co-located on the Patrick site – such as timber handlers, welders, loaders - have also been affected.
- **Safety is not someone else's responsibility – IT'S YOURS!**

“WE’RE STRONGER TOGETHER”!

Bits & Bobs

- Toll Group has now purchased the Express Logistics Group (ELG), one of New Zealand's largest freight forwarding companies. ELG currently operates 12 freight forwarding branches across New Zealand, Australia and the USA, and also provides value adding warehouse and transport services to its customers.
- Vice president Aubrey Wilkinson and General Secretary Wayne Butson will attend the MUA National Conference next week in Sydney and also attend an ITF Asia Pacific meeting.
- Three days have been set aside next week for the Napier port CA negotiations.
- KiwiRail has announced a plan to consolidate all mechanical functions into a mechanical group headed by Lloyd major. This will see KRMS and Passenger mechanical facilities merging with KiwiRail. Consultation has commenced on the impacts but KiwiRail reps have been quick to stress that no terms and conditions of employment are under threat as a result of the structural change.