

# THE ACTIVIST



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## **PORTS PLANS NOW LOOKING LIKE A TRAIN WRECK**

Today's injunction stopping Ports of Auckland progressing its plans to dismiss and replace its workforce, combined with the company's plan of an indefinite lockout, leaves Auckland Council with no choice but to intervene to find a workable solution to the industrial dispute, the Maritime Union said today.

Today the Employment Court confirmed the union had an arguable case that Ports of Auckland had acted unlawfully in some aspects related to collective bargaining.

Until the matter could be heard in full on 16 May, the Court has ordered Ports of Auckland against proceeding with its plans to dismiss and replace its workers.

On Friday the Court will consider the issues of the return to work of the workers who ended strike action last week, and of the legality of the Port lock out notice effective from 6 April.

Maritime Union president Garry Parsloe said the parties can keep slogging the issues out in Court, but in the end the solution to this issue is finishing negotiations for a collective employment agreement, to get the Ports of Auckland up and working again.

"Ports workers remain ready to return to work and get the Ports working on behalf of the businesses and customers of Auckland," he said.

"The people of Auckland are losing millions a day in returns, exporters and importers and other businesses are bearing extra costs and the workers are facing severe financial hardship."

"The only group that appear to be having a good time is the Ports of Auckland Board.

Aucklanders need to question why Board members continue to collect their massive salaries for initiating a train wreck of a plan that now is not only in tatters, but is unlikely to be resurrected," Garry Parsloe said.

The union has asked the Mayor and Council to step in and hopes to address Council at its meeting on Thursday.

Union members will meet tomorrow at noon to discuss today's developments.

## **IS IT THE END OF THE LINE FOR NAPIER - GISBORNE**

The RMTU is concerned that the threatened Napier - Gisborne Line might not reopen after part of it was destroyed by slips. Washouts north of Wairoa last week left part of the track hanging in the air and forced its temporary closure. Three or four freight trains a week operate between the two towns.

The line is one of four (Northland, SOL, Napier - Gisborne and North Wairarapa) signalled for possible closure by Kiwi Rail unless there was sufficient improvement to offset losses of more than \$2 million a year. The SOL has been officially mothballed.

## **PORT OF TIMARU**

Our members at Prime Port are holding a Branch meeting this Friday to hear a report back from the Ports Forum and to get the latest on the Ports of Auckland dispute.

We've been having discussions with management and updating them on the state of play with regard to events in Auckland and the subsequent industrial and legal events in Wellington, Tauranga and Christchurch.

Our delegates and Branch Executive are to be commended on the hard work they've put

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

in to maintain communication, both with RMTU National Office and Prime Port management.

#### Chinese Success

The DI locomotives are brand new. Locomotive reliability is measured in MDBF (Mean Distance Between Failure). The latest numbers supplied to the RMTU

## NZ SHOULD LEAPFROG FAILED PERFORMANCE PAY AGENDA FOR EDUCATION

The education sector union NZEI Te Riu Roa says principals and teachers oppose performance pay linked to student achievement outcomes because evidence shows this has a negative impact on quality teaching and children's learning.

NZEI President Ian Leckie said performance pay for teachers overseas was generally linked to student test results because it was seen to be more "objective" than principal or Board appraisals. However, recent US research<sup>1</sup> shows that judging teacher effectiveness based on gains in students' test scores resulted in one in three teachers being mis-identified. This was because of the large margin of error in test results and the wide variability in ability of students in any one class.

Performance pay systems resulted in teachers competing with each other, distorting learning by "teaching to the test" and putting test results ahead of a child's well-being and overall learning potential.

"Teaching is a job where people need to work together. Performance pay would result in competition between teachers that would be unhealthy for kids," Mr Leckie says.

"What we want is a pay system that keeps our best teachers in the class room and that recognises their skills, knowledge and expertise in a fair and professional way.

<sup>1</sup>[1] Error Rates in Measuring Teacher and School Performance Based on Student Test Score Gains (National Council for Education and the Economy report, 2010, USA).

We want to focus on recruiting the best teachers we can, keeping them learning throughout their careers, and making sure teaching is seen as a highly valued job."

"New Zealand teachers are always ambitious to do better, and relative to other western countries, we spend less on teachers and get more "bang for our buck" with our world-leading student results in international surveys like PISA."

He said as with any profession, the pay system for teachers needed to be built in partnership with Government and communities with the primary aim of supporting high quality teaching and learning.

## 0900 NUMBERS TO SUPPORT MEAT AND PORT WORKERS

Please let your friends, family etc know that this is another way to raise funds to support the striking Auckland port workers and the locked out (or striking) Affco workers.

For the Port Workers 0900OURPORT (0900 6877678)

For the Affco workers 0900LOCKOUT (0900 5625688)

Call cost is \$5.00 flat rate plus GST. Apart from an admin fee (around 50 cents), this will be a donation to support these workers.

Some landlines and mobiles are blocked for 0900 calls, so if anyone reports difficulties connecting that is likely to be the reason. Review of MMP submission guide for RMTU members

## HAVE YOUR SAY IN THE MMP REVIEW

The RMTU supported keeping MMP at the referendum at the General Election last year.

In the referendum, 58% of NZer's voted to keep MMP. This triggered an independent review to improve our voting system.

RMTU members can now have their say on what changes we want made to make MMP better and fairer.

Our preliminary view is that the most important changes are:



- Lower the party vote threshold to 4% (or maybe even lower) so more of our votes count;
- Change the rule so even if your party wins one seat, you still have to meet the party vote threshold to get list MPs in;
- Make sure MMP stays proportional – 10% of the votes should mean 10% of the seats;

How to make your submission

There is no special format for making a submission. Use your own words and write from your own experience.

Answer three questions:

- I think the 5% party vote threshold should be lowered because....
- I think the 1 electorate seat threshold should be scrapped because.....
- I want to keep MMP proportional (10% votes = 10% seats) because.....
- And add anything else you think is important about MMP.

Your submission must be received by the Electoral Commission by Thursday 5 April if you want to speak at an MMP Review hearing, or by Thursday May 31 if you don't.

Send it to:

Email: [mmpreview@elections.org.nz](mailto:mmpreview@elections.org.nz)  
 Post: MMP Review, Electoral Commission,  
 PO Box 3220, Wellington 6140  
 Online: [www.mmpreview.org.nz](http://www.mmpreview.org.nz)

For more information visit:  
[www.mmpreview.org.nz](http://www.mmpreview.org.nz) or call 0800 36 76 56.

## ARE YOUR HIPS CAUSING PROBLEMS?

Recent medical studies have shown that men with jobs involving regular heavy lifting (20-25kg+) are 2-3 times more likely to develop osteoarthritis in both hips. The studies involved builders, dockyard workers and other heavy manual trades. These studies have been used to obtain cover for hip osteoarthritis from ACC, as a workplace gradual process injury. The ACC cover pays

for treatment, weekly compensation while recovering from surgery and will help get you back working at full capacity.

If you, or someone you know, had or has a job involving regular heavy lifting and has now been told that you have bilateral osteoarthritis (both hips) you should have your doctor make a claim to ACC for a workplace gradual process injury.

If you want to discuss this please call Chris Boys at Hazel Armstrong Law 04 4736767.

## TOLL TRANZ LINK WAGE REMITS CALLED

The Toll Tranz Link Collective Agreement expires 30 June 2012. The renewal of the CA will see both the Union and the employer table claims. The RMTU claims come from members who are covered by the CA and have to have been raised and voted on and carried at a bona fide meeting of the branch.

The RMTU negotiation team shall be led by Northern Regional Organiser Scott Wilson.

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

**All remits for the Toll Tranz Link Wageround must be submitted to National Office by Friday 30 March 2012. No late remits will be accepted.**

## WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY – 28 APRIL

We are hopeful that there will once again be many ceremonies and services held to commemorate this very important Day throughout NZ by RMTU members. The RMTU and its membership pioneered the marking of the day here in NZ by Union's.

The purpose of this notice is to enable anyone wishing to organize or to attend a service to put it in their diaries. Please distribute this to your contacts who may be interested in attending or organising a short commemoration.

We can assist to organize speakers, local dignitaries or politicians. In many cases representatives of the families of killed workers attend and speak if they wish.



We expect trains to as usual stop at midday as a mark of respect wherever they are (clear of bridges, tunnels etc as per the rules) for 1 minute.

## **WORKS BEGIN ON ESPERANCE PORT ACCESS CORRIDOR**

The Esperance Port Access Corridor project will untangle the road and rail connections to the Port by realigning Harbour Road and replacing two existing level crossings with overpasses. Once completed in late 2013, this work will improve the movement of goods and freight into and out of the Port as well as make it easier for locals to get around their town, particularly when trains are passing through.

With one of the deepest harbours in southern Australia, Esperance Port is critical to the national economy. Each year more than 200 ships pass through it carrying over 11 million tonnes of nickel, iron ore and grain exports as well as imports of fuel and fertilisers—volumes which are only expected to grow in the years ahead. The project is being delivered by John Holland Pty Ltd with funding from both the Federal Labor Government (\$60 million) and the WA Government (\$60 million).

All up the Gillard Labour Government is investing \$3.7 billion over six years into WA's road and rail infrastructure, almost double what the Howard Government spent over a similar period of time.

## **DUNEDIN DELEGATE TRAINING**

We have a two day delegate training course planned for Monday 16 and Tuesday 17 April in Dunedin. This course is aimed at organising around bargaining and includes work on, amongst other things, preparation for negotiations, what to do at the table, strategic analysis, and breakdowns and campaigns.

We've invited our Port Otago, KiwiRail and TranzLink delegates and the accent will be on doing exercises that will prepare delegates for the challenges that bargaining throws at them.

The course was specifically written from a union perspective and will debunk some of the commonly held myths about

bargaining. The key message is that it's all about building organisation on and off the job.

## **MECHANICAL INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL**

This forum met in Christchurch on 22 & 23rd March. One of the key items was the pay progression project, which is attempting to achieve the same as the Networks project that aligned pay rates to the 'market median'. This kind of job is never simple and although we have made a great deal of progress there is still work to be done, particularly on Team Leader pay and progression.

## **CAMPAIGN CALLS FOR REFERENDUM ON ASSET SALES**

A campaign comprising a wide range of community organisations are calling for a citizens initiated referendum on asset sales today. Concerned that New Zealanders haven't had a chance to voice their concerns about selling our state owned assets (SOEs), the campaign is seeking to get enough petition signatures to hold a referendum on the issue. "Voters need the chance to have a direct say in whether they think the Government should sell our assets," said Campaign Spokesperson and Grey Power President, Roy Reid.

"The Government does not have the mandate to sell our strategic assets and it is time the public had their say," said fellow Campaign Spokesperson and CTU President, Helen Kelly.

The campaign will actively engage the public to seek support for a citizens initiated referendum on the following question:

## **KIWI RAIL/ACC AUDIT**

The KR Business group that was formerly known as Ontrack is applying for tertiary level in the ACC Accredited Employer Programme (or Partnership Programme). Tertiary is the highest level. As part of the application, an ACC audit was undertaken in Palmerston North 22 & 23 March in Palmerston North. The tertiary level can only be achieved when an employer has a clear history of established systems and processes



which function actively in the workplace. The remainder of KR has already achieved tertiary level.

Employers in the Accredited Employer programme have to show they have good health and safety and injury management systems to qualify for the programme and in return for managing ACC claims employer can 'hold on to' up to 90% of their ACC levies.

## MIXED OWNERSHIP MODEL BILL

Which enables the partial sales of the publicly owned energy companies is now before Parliament. Submissions close on 13 April. Because of Easter we will be aiming to get a draft submission to affiliates for comment by the beginning of next week.

For those wanting to make their own submissions, the bill is available [http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2012/0007/latest/DLM4326312.html?search=ts\\_bill\\_mixed\\_noresel&p=1](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2012/0007/latest/DLM4326312.html?search=ts_bill_mixed_noresel&p=1) and the Parliamentary Digest on it <http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Legislation/Bills/BillsDigests/a/0/b/5/0PLLaw19511-Mixed-Ownership-Model-Bill-2012-Bills-Digest-No-1951.htm>.

Some points you could make include:

- The state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are not simply financial assets – they provide benefits to the public that cannot be measured by their financial return or book value
- For the electricity companies the potential benefits of full public ownership include lower priced electricity, greater environmental sustainability in generation and energy saving, and security of electricity supply
- For Solid Energy the potential benefits include safer working conditions, and greater public say over what gets mined
- If the SOEs are not behaving as we would like them to, the solution is to change the SOE legislation which requires them to behave commercially unless directed otherwise by the government, or to change government directions to

them, or to change the regulation of the electricity market, not to partially or fully privatise them.

- Partial sale means the companies will have to behave fully commercially in the interests of their shareholders and so wider benefits won't be taken into account
- Fully commercial behaviour will demand higher profits which will be gained by raising prices, particularly for residential users, lack of interest in households with low electricity use, and skimping on investment.
- In any case, Treasury estimates that the return from full public ownership of the companies is greater than the savings in the cost of debt the proceeds of their sale will repay – by 2016 the government will be \$94 million worse off per year. That underestimates the loss from selling the companies because the value of the companies will rise steadily in the future.
- We already own these assets: selling them means only a fortunate few will own a larger share.
- In the end, most of the privately owned shares will be owned overseas, just like three-quarters of the shares in Contact Energy which were originally made available to small investors in New Zealand. (When Contact Energy was privatised in 1999, 40% was sold to US company Edison Mission Energy and the other 60% made available in a public share offering. The company is now only 16.5% New Zealand owned.)
- We also lose further accountability from the companies because they will no longer be subject to the Official Information Act, the Ombudsman and requirements to be a good employer, nor will Treaty of Waitangi safeguards apply to private shareholders.
- The government can't make up its mind why it is selling these assets. The explanatory note to the bill says it is mainly to reduce debt, but the Regulatory Impact Statement from Treasury bases its impact analysis on

a January 2011 speech from the Prime Minister which said it is mainly to deepen capital markets, instil sharper commercial disciplines on the companies, and give the companies other ways to raise capital. None of these reasons hold water.

The Green Party also have a guide to making submissions <http://www.greens.org.nz/takeaction/submissionguides/submission-guide-government-bill-partially-privatise-our-energy-companie>

## LYTTELTON PORT COMPANY LOGISTICS OFFICERS NEGOTIATIONS

We have terms of settlement for this bargaining and are working through the ratification process. A sticking point is concerns that members have around staffing. Discussions with LPC are continuing and these have been constructive. We hope to have this bargaining completed by Easter.

## CN TO ACQUIRE 161 LOCOMOTIVES

CN has said it plans to acquire 65 new high-horsepower locomotives, augmenting that purchase with one of 96 second-hand high-horsepower locomotives that will be upgraded or 161 locomotives in all. CN is splitting the new locomotive order in two, with GE Transportation delivering 35 new ES44AC 4,400 hp locomotives during 2013 and 2014, while Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD) will supply 30 new 4,300 hp SD70ACe locomotives.

## HUTT WORKSHOPS

All members working within the confines of the Hutt Workshops (incl Inventory, Networks Stores, Administration and the Mechanical Engineering teams) were called to an all up meeting on Tuesday at 1600hrs to be advised that KR had undertaken a building strength assessment as part of its post Canterbury Earthquake action plan. The Hutt Workshops were constructed in

1928 and BECA conducted the assesment and found the buildings New Building Strength (NBS) longitudinal direction rating was 20% and the transverse strength was 50%. The Hutt City Council requires buildings with a lower than 34% rating to be upgraded to 67% NBS by 2018. KR intends to complete the upgrade to plant 1 by Christmas 2012.

BECA have been commissioned to undertake a more thorough investigation to ensure safety. This will include;

- The likelihood of liquefaction occurring onsite
- The strength of plant 1's building materials
- The upper level connections so that details of strength capacities can be determined.

## SYDNEY TO SCRAP MONORAIL FOR LRT

New South Wales government officials in Australia have announced that the state has acquired Metro Transport Sydney (MTS), the company that owns monorail and light rail operations, in an A\$19.8 million (US\$20.6 million) deal. The acquisition is part of a plan to redevelop the Darling Harbour Convention Centre and precinct in Sydney, Australia's largest city with a population of roughly 4.6 million.

Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian says the monorail is in the way and it will be removed as soon as possible. Berjiklian says the monorail is not integrated with Sydney's wider public transport network and has never been embraced by the public. Plans call for the monorail to be replaced with an extension of the light rail network.

"Our options have increased in relation to light rail. Our options have increased in relation to how we integrate the convention centre with other modes of public transport," she said. "The monorail has been around for 20 years and many argue that its use by date has arrived, and that's certainly the government's position."



## KR D&A TESTING / MEDICAL STANDARDS

Issues have arisen over rumours that the new medical standards will involve drug and alcohol testing. These rumours seem to have come out of confusion generated during the D&A education meetings that have recently been held, it is believed that the question was asked at the manager only sessions, and the wrong conclusion was drawn from the answer given.

This issue has now been clarified; D&A testing is not part of the medical standards. The new D&A regime (subject to agreement/ratification) will be run as a standalone program.

## TOLL TRANZ LINK

South Island members have been holding meetings in Christchurch, Timaru and Dunedin in readiness for pay talks later this year. Essentially members have been raising what issues they want discussing at negotiations. No prizes for guessing that pay is top of the pops!

If you haven't made it to a meeting please talk to your delegate or our South Island Organiser John Kerr on 027 246 4941.

John will be calling into sites in Ashburton and Invercargill this week. If you miss him he can be reached on the above number. Greymouth TranzLink people can either catch up with Branch Secretary John Bannerman or contact John Kerr.

We do welcome your input so don't hesitate to get in touch.

## 270 KM/H FREIGHT TRAIN CONNECTS PARIS TO LONDON

Eurocarex has achieved a major first: the first test of a high-speed freight train between Lyon St Exupéry airport and St. Pancras International Station in London, passing via Paris Charles De Gaulle airport and the Channel Tunnel. This test demonstrates the efficiency, speed and environmental benefits of a shift in intermodal container traffic from air to the high-speed rail network. The high-speed freight train number 27274 (which has a

potential load of 120 tonnes of parcels equivalent to 7 articulated trucks or 7 Boeing 737 cargo planes) left Lyon-St Exupéry airport on Tuesday 20 March at 16:42 and arrived at St. Pancras International Station in London on Wednesday morning, after passing through the Channel Tunnel, travelling on High Speed 1 (HS1) and having made an intermediate stop to take on extra cargo at Roissy (Paris-Charles de Gaulle airport).

Eurocarex is planned as the answer to the continuing rise in fuel prices, to the growth in road congestion and the environmental constraints that limit the number of night flights. It is anticipated that at least seven train sets per day will be carrying freight between the two countries each night, when passenger services are not active.

## MIDDLETON YARD SAFE SHUNTING

Since the publication of the Australian ATRS report on health and safety at Middleton Yard last year the RMTU and management have been working hard to implement the recommendations in the report and maintain momentum around this vital aspect of our work. It's fair to say this has been hard work but our H&S Reps Lindsay Gough, Mike Williams and Peter McCaw put in a lot of time and energy, and management for their part, has demonstrated a willingness to tackle the hard issues by working with the RMTU. Changing the culture in a work place is never easy but a year after ATRS we've made some huge strides. That's not to say there isn't room for improvement but we're working on it.

## COASTAL SHIPPING REFORMS INTRODUCED INTO OZ PARLIAMENT

Federal Transport Minister Anthony Albanese introduced the second reading of the Coastal Trading (Revitalising Australian Shipping) Bill 2012 into parliament. "We are in the middle of a once in a generation resources boom," the Minister said in his speech. "Yet only one-half of one per cent of that trade is carried by Australian flagged vessels. In the past decade, the Australian fleet has gone



from 55 ships to 21 with only four operating on international routes. Our ports manage ten per cent of the world's entire sea trade. \$200 billion worth of cargo is moved annually. In a country where 99.9% of our trade is moved by ships, there will soon be no fleet to revitalise. "We need to act now or we won't have an industry left at all."

The Minister said the Bill aims to:

- Promote a viable shipping industry that contributes to the broader Australian economy;
- Facilitate the long-term growth of the Australian shipping industry;
- Enhance the efficiency and reliability of the Australian shipping as part of the national transport system; and
- Maximise the use of vessels registered in the Australian General Shipping Register.

The government's policy dictates that this scope of coverage will not change as the vessels are operating in the domestic economy and therefore seafarers are entitled to be paid Australian wages.

## KIC 14

The KiwiRail (Freight) Industrial Council met in Wellington 14/15 March. Some highlights from this meeting include –

- The identified hazards caused by the number of bull hooks now having to be used, a project team led by SL & John O'Neil has been established to review this issue
- Annual Safety Performance Report for the regulator, go to <http://rsg.trl/> to access
- Rail Operator training review
- LE Training and Minding
- Energymiser trial
- Proposal to incorporate Heat Restrictions in train work order.

And much more...

We expect the minutes for the KIC 14 meeting to be finalised and distributed in the next 2 weeks.

For those able to access the KR intranet, KIC minutes can be found at -

<http://rsg.trl/kic> otherwise ask your Manager or KIC Rep for these minutes.

## DOL EMPLOYER ACCREDITATION - ORICA

Orica New Zealand Limited has applied to the Department of Labour 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 to anticipate a future need to recruit offshore for talented staff. Among the positions it intends to fill are Technical, Specialist, Management and Sales roles.

## QANTAS, TWU FACE OFF IN COURT

Qantas and the Transport Workers' Union are blaming each other for the failure of negotiations that has led to compulsory arbitration by Fair Work Australia, which has begun hearings on Monday, 26 March.

Tony Sheldon, the national secretary of the Transport Workers Union, said that as Fair Work Australia hears the first day of full testimony it must decide whether the agenda by militant management to outsource and undercut Qantas is allowed to trump the rights of workers to enjoy fair job security and decent pay and conditions.

"Today is the first day of full testimony from the Transport Workers Union, representing





workers at Qantas and Q Catering. The full bench will hear testimony, in court and in sworn evidence from dozens of Qantas employees, economic experts and senior union delegates testifying as to the conditions at Qantas. Our case will show in detail the agenda from senior management to hollow out an Australian icon, to outsource work currently undertaken by Qantas employees.

"This court will hear testimony from Qantas workers around the country. It will hear of the freeze on skills training for existing Qantas staff while the company continues its outsourcing agenda."

Worker after worker will testify of morale at an all time low as a result of being vilified and isolated by management. It will be told of real and serious security breaches at our nation's airports as a result of expanded use of outsourced labour.

"Our case is built around the direct experience of workers, thousands of whom have served loyally with Qantas for decades, whose livelihoods are under threat from a management who have no stake in a secure future for Qantas. A management that is determined to outsource every job to shift growth to Jetstar Asia. This is a management responsible for locking out their staff, stranding 90,000 passengers, tarnishing the brand of an Australian icon and treating their 35,000 workers with disdain.

"At every juncture, workplace representatives have been willing to reach a fair resolution that allows Qantas to remain a great Australian company and ensures that workers can enjoy job security, safe working conditions and fair wages. The workforce is proud to have delivered multi-million dollar profits for Qantas every year since the changed structure in the 1980s. Our claim on behalf of our Qantas members is neither excessive nor aggressive. We have not made a claim on behalf of our members for a 71% wage increase like chief executive Alan Joyce did last year. We have not made any faulty claims for productivity increases like the board of management, which was responsible for the disastrous Asia strategy. In fact, we recently submitted a simplified, amended claim to FWA attempting to

reduce the scope of the case to be decided upon by the court."

Tony Sheldon concluded: "The decision on the future of Qantas is now in the hands of the full bench of Fair Work Australia. If we want Qantas to remain in operation, the court must reject the agenda of militant management to outsource and undercut Australian community standards.

## TRANZ SCENIC – OVERLANDER CHANGES

KR Passenger are proposing to -

- rebrand the Overlander,
- Operate with a set of the new AK Cars to replace the current ancient AO's,
- reduce the stops to speed up the timetable
- only run the new service 6 days a week in one direction each day (lay up Wednesdays) and
- run the new service with On Board staff based in Auckland only

On Board staff in other locations have provided feedback on the proposal and are understandably gutted if the full proposal goes ahead. Other members involved in the operation e.g. Mechanical, ancillary support and Drivers have yet to be consulted with. The RMTU has requested a financial breakdown of the current and proposed services. Todd Valster and Scott Wilson are the Union organisers assigned to this proposal.

## UPPER NORTH ISLAND STRATEGIC ALLIANCE (UNISA)

Prior to and immediately following the last local government triennial election, Waikato Regional Council raised with neighbouring regions the idea of working closer together. We were encouraged to draft an agreement which was expanded by Auckland to include Northland and the main urban centres of each region. This became known as the Upper North Island Strategic Alliance (UNISA).

### **UNISA Agreement**

The purpose of the UNISA Agreement is to establish a long-term collaboration between the Auckland Council (AC), Bay of Plenty



Regional Council (BPRC), Northland Regional Council (NRC), Waikato Regional Council (WRC), Hamilton City Council (HCC), Tauranga City Council (TCC) and Whangarei District Council (WDC) for responding to and managing a range of inter-regional and inter-metropolitan issues.

The 'first order' priorities for inter-regional collaboration are:

- economic development linkages
- transport, including rail, roads, freight
- ports, including inland ports
- tourism
- emergency preparedness
- waste
- water
- population and settlement patterns, liveability
- commercial and industrial land development
- international connectivity and competitiveness – air, sea, broadband
- energy security
- climate change, including greenhouse gas emission reductions.

You can [read the full UNISA Agreement online](#).

#### **Current focus**

The following four background papers have been prepared for UNISA, in relation to the upper North Island:

[Opportunities to grow the economy \(366 kb\)](#)

[Opportunities for transport \(243 kb\)](#)

[Opportunities for port networks \(94 kb\)](#)

[Opportunities for tourism \(69 kb\)](#)

## **WESTFIELD ENGINEERING CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

A consultative committee has been set up at Westfield to deal with Locomotive maintenance issues, this has been needed to deal with a number of local issues including training, and depot specific problems. In the future this may be expanded to include servicing and wagons. The initial RMTU representatives will be Rudi Brens, Chris Craft and John Lynch. The first meeting is scheduled for Thursday 12th April.

## **BITS AND BOBS**

- Loyal Unionist Lindsay Hanna has passed away. Lindsay was a past president of the Locomotive Engineers Association and a stalwart of the Auckland Rail Branch. His work as a union leader was admired by all who worked with him at both senior and branch level within the union. Our very sincere sympathy and condolences go out to Denise and the rest of the Hanna family.
- Port Marlborough CA – Preparations are coming together for the CA review in early May this year, expiry June 30<sup>th</sup>. A member meeting will be held April 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss remits and talks are planned for the first week of May.
- Port Taranaki CA – The Port Taranaki General CA expiry is 31 March. The remit meeting has occurred and the RMTU has initiated for this CA review. Dates and times for the talks to commence have not been agreed as yet.
- .

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

**“WE’RE STRONGER TOGETHER”!**

