

# THE ACTIVIST



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## **HEALTH AND SAFETY REP TRAINING-HOW TO REGISTER FOR A COURSE**

Following the Union AGM's, new Health and Safety Reps who've recently been elected to Health and Safety Committees are required to register for H&S Rep training. H&S Reps attend 2-days paid training per year paid for by the employer.

To register on a course go to [www.worksafereps.co.nz](http://www.worksafereps.co.nz)

## **RAIL WORKERS CELEBRATE DECISION TO KEEP ELECTRIC TRAINS RUNNING**

The Rail & Maritime Transport Union welcomes the decision to keep KiwiRail's electric locomotives running on the North Island Main Trunk.

The government has honoured its campaign pledge, committing an extra \$35 million to refurbish the 15 electric engines currently in operation between Hamilton and Palmerston North.

"We're thrilled to see the Labour-led government protecting Kiwi jobs," says RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson.

"Union members, environmental campaigners and industry experts have all spoken out about the importance of investing in electric rail, and we clearly have a government that listens to the people."



If KiwiRail had been permitted to go ahead with its plans to replace the EF Class electric locomotives with DL class diesel engines imported from China, it would have added an extra 12,000 tons to New Zealand's carbon footprint while jeopardising local jobs.

The plans were announced in 2016, despite internal studies suggesting the DL locomotives are unreliable, overly expensive and at risk of asbestos contamination.

"Our position has always been that New Zealand must electrify more of our rail network, not less," says Mr Butson.

"The highly skilled workforce in KiwiRail's workshops can now build a modern, sustainable fleet of locomotives that will be the envy of the world."

The RMTU and its allies in the International Transport Workers Federation are part of the Trade Unions for Energy Democracy initiative, a global campaign to prevent damage to the environment, create green jobs for transport workers and campaign for climate justice. "We're thrilled to see the Labour-led government protecting Kiwi jobs," says RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson.

## **AN EXCELLENT WEEK FOR NEW ZEALAND'S RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE**

NZ Transport 2050 Inc fully supports the Government's plan to keep the electric locomotives on the North Island Main Trunk.

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

A large percentage of the North Island rail network is already electrified so this move is critical for retaining the value of this significant infrastructure investment (\$250M). This also helps the government deliver on its ambitious environmental goals.

Paul Miller, Chair of NZ Transport 2050 says "electric trains are proven cleaner and more efficient than the diesel locomotives that were previously being proposed. The engines being used are of a family of units also used for moving cars through the Channel Tunnel so certainly designed for extended life. This initiative, as well as the Marsden point extension, makes for an excellent week for New Zealand's rail network".

NZ Transport 2050 now encourages the Government to step up and prove it truly wants to reduce carbon emissions and fund completing the electrification between Pukekohe (Auckland) to Hamilton, the Kaimai tunnel to Tauranga. "On top of the environmental benefits the Kaimai tunnel's current capacity restraints could be maximised by upgrading the line to electric, further expanding the life of the forty-year-old tunnel" Miller added. "What would be great to see next is the government expanding Auckland's rail network directly to Auckland Airport and Mangere, leveraging the significant investment that is occurring with the CRL and avoiding the slow tram overspend which has already seen forecast costs double since 2016."

## **CALL FOR CASUAL VACANCY NOMINATIONS – NATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (NMC) – REMAINDER OF 2017/2019 TERM OF OFFICE.**

As a result of the resignation of the current incumbent, John Keenan, from his position as **North Island Rail Rep** on the RMTU National Management Committee "the Union" calls for nominations from current

financial members for the following position on the Unions National Management Committee.

John has been successful in obtaining a promotion to become the KiwiRail Linehaul Operations Manager based in Palmerston North. We wish John great success in the role and thank him sincerely for his work on behalf of members whilst on the Union's NMC.

**North Island Rail Representative** (A current financial member of the Palmerston North, Taranaki Rail, Hawkes Bay Rail, BOP Rail, Waikato and Northland Branches).

The period of office is the remainder of the 2017/2019 electoral term for the NMC. Nominations shall be in writing on the official NMC Nomination form and contain the signed consent of the candidate, and be proposed and seconded by financial members (Rule 1) of the Union from the correct branch and industry designation. Nomination Forms are available on the RMTU Website [www.rmtunion.org.nz](http://www.rmtunion.org.nz) or from the RMTU National Office by calling 04-499-2066 or [admin@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:admin@rmtunion.org.nz) or your local Branch Secretary.



Correctly completed nomination forms must be received by the duly appointed National Returning Officer at the National Office of the Rail & Maritime Transport Union, PO Box 1103 Wellington 6140 **no later than 1700 hrs on Monday 30 November 2018.**

The term of office is the remaining period of the 2017 - 2019 years (Rule 24.2) and the duties are as contained in Rule 18 of the Union's Rules and Standing Orders.

**For the information of members** – KiwiRail employed NMC members are normally appointed to an applicable KiwiRail Industrial Council upon election to NMC however this may not be assured depending on the employment rail occupational sector that the successful candidate is from.

*Howard Phillips*  
*National Returning Officer*

## PROVISIONAL UPDATE – S.I. NMC VACANCY

Nominations for this position close on Monday 12 November 2018 at 1700hrs but we can report that to date we have received four correct nominations. Those nominated to date are;

- Blakie, Doug
- Kearns, Dave
- O'Donoghue, Jed
- Walker, Ian

A postal ballot is being prepared and will be issued out of National Office week commencing 12 November 2018. Watch your letterbox and make sure you cast your vote. In accordance with the Union Rules and Standing orders the ballot will be a preferential ballot and so, if voting, you will need to place a number beside each candidate's name of 1 to 4 (unless further nominations are received of course).

## KIWI RAIL BUMP CAPS

The introduction of bump caps for mechanical staff has not gone smoothly. This was in part due to the lack of consultation with the mechanical council during the risk assessment. The company has agreed to re-do the risk assessment and will this time involve the mechanical council representatives.

## LYTTELTON PORT BRANCH FULL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

This is being held at St. Mary's Church Hall, 2 Martindales Rd, Heathcote at 1400 on Wednesday 14th November. It is a paid stop work meeting i.e. you will be paid if you attend the meeting at a time when you would otherwise be working.

The agenda will cover the state of Fatigue Management at LPC and issues relating to the Container Terminal. Your Branch Executive has heard loud and clear the membership's concerns at management's

continuing coercive and punitive approach in the Container Terminal.

Your union is investigating all our options so we can support our members fully and effectively. We need a good attendance at the meeting from all members employed by LPC to demonstrate solidarity and support for our brothers and sisters in the Container Terminal.

## IXOM - UPDATE.

Our RMTU members are working through a number of issues with Ixom as part of the bargaining for the renewal of the Collective Agreement for Morrinsville. The issue include;

- proposed update of the Drug and Alcohol Policy,
- medical tests for the drivers being contracted out to a private provider, which the drivers have rejected.

The Collective Agreement negotiations are off to mediation on 8th November in Hamilton.



## TRANSDEV/ WELLINGTON AND HYUNDAI ROTEM/RMTU MECA

The result of the recent postal ratification ballot is 95.44% of members voted to accept the recommended settlement and the proposed settlement is deemed ratified.

The union will sign on behalf of RMTU members employed by Transdev Wellington and Hyundai Rotem Company limited.

Thank you to the delegate negotiators and to the members for their patience and trust in the process.

## BANKS ON NOTICE TO LIFT THEIR GAME

Banks must lift their game to ensure the rights of customers are protected, Commerce and Consumer Affairs Minister Kris Faafoi says.

A review of bank conduct, released today by the Financial Markets Authority (FMA) and

Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ), identifies instances of poor conduct by bank staff and weaknesses in bank processes to manage them.

"We are not happy to hear that there are problems, but by identifying them we now have an opportunity to fix them. New Zealand customers should get fair treatment and their needs must be put first," said Kris Fafoi.

"It's important banks do much better at identifying problems and risks in their business and fixing them before they become a much bigger problem."

Minister of Finance Hon Grant Robertson said that dealing with the problems identified in the report was critical to ensure New Zealanders have confidence in their banking system.

"Any weaknesses in how banks manage the way they behave is a concern.

"This report highlights why we must remain vigilant to the risks that Australian customers are facing. Banks need to provide a service that's acceptable by New Zealanders and my hope is they will do this by placing customers at the heart of their decision making," said Grant Robertson.

"This is not an end, rather a beginning to ensure banks deliver on the privilege of being licenced to operate in this country."

The FMA and RBNZ will provide specific individual feedback to each bank later this month. The banks will then have until March 2019 to report back to the regulators and provide plans for addressing the feedback.

The Government would also be looking closely at the findings from the Australian Royal Commission, anticipated in February 2019, and will be asking the RBNZ and FMA to study the final report to determine if further action is needed in New Zealand.

Kris Fafoi said the Government would be taking on board the report's recommendations on the regulatory

environment for bank conduct and will determine if regulations need to change.

A programme of work is already underway to improve the regulation of New Zealand's financial system and to prioritise customer interests. This includes the Financial Services Legislation Amendment Bill to strengthen regulation of financial advice, changes to the Credit Contracts and Consumer Finance Act to target irresponsible lending, and a review of insurance contract law.

"Ultimately, New Zealand banks need to step up and take greater responsibility for their systems and processes, so that consumers can have confidence that their finances are in safe hands," said Kris Fafoi.

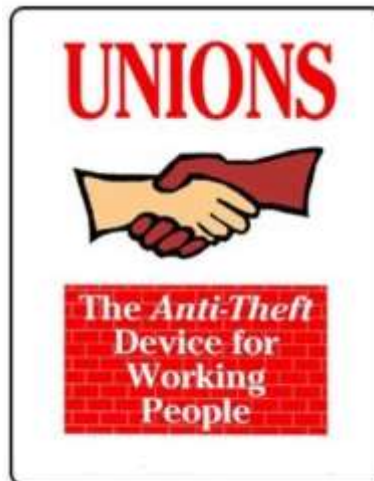
## KIWI RAIL NETWORKS INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL - UPDATE

This council met on Tuesday 6th November and as well as the usual business and safety updates had a big agenda that came out of the recent MECA settlement. In addition to that we had to discuss the issue of KiwiRail's failure to abide by clause 29 regarding contracting out of Non Destructive Testing in Wellington and Auckland.

Your representatives can report that we have timetabled work arising from the MECA settlement as follows:

1. Clarification of entitlement to flexible working allowance: before Christmas 2018
2. Network Services staffing Levels: immediately post-Xmas 2018
3. Pay Progression Review: post Xmas 2018

The last item is the biggest piece of work and we intend to tackle it using a High Performance High Engagement principles. It will involve addressing some legacy and outdated terms and wording in the MECA as well as a full review of pay and progression. The last time such a project was completed was in 2011. The Council will be drawing on additional people to participate – the RMTU will communicate directly with Network



Services delegates and active members through our usual channels regarding this.

The issue of NDT contracting out was thoroughly aired. Obviously it is in no-one's interests if this safety critical work is not done. What seems to have occurred however, is a genuine mistake on the part of one manager regarding consultation and, on the face of it, a failure to meaningfully consult by a couple of others who, in our view, should know better. What has been agreed is that decisions of this nature will be centralised with Planning and Engineering who will consult with the RMTU on a national level. The intent in the future is to do this work in-house which will require increased staffing and KiwiRail and the RMTU will work through this. Your representatives were very pleased at the constructive way in which KiwiRail dealt with this and we are optimistic about the steps that have been agreed.

## 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 – All national Union elected positions are up for election this year and so there may be votes conducted by mail. If we have the incorrect address info you will

not get a vote as you will never receive a voting paper. Update now!

## KIWI RAIL – CENTRAL NI AND BOP ISSUES ROUNDUP.

A report from Organiser Phil.....

- We are still working thru a new roster for Sulphur Point and we are closing in on an agreement.
- The issue of protection for the contractors working on the log trains in the Mount yard has resurfaced as a result of an incident on 6 September. The outcome is that the findings will be worked thru so that there will be a common users protocol put in place to improve the protection for all workers in the Mount yard.
- Our members in Kawerau are experiencing difficulties with the local rules for ASL's etc as the local rules are not in writing!! To resolve the issue there will be a meeting between the manager and the roster committee to put together the local rules based on the draft section 9 in the ROM which the KIC is working thru.
- The issue of breaches of consultation over changing links for LE's has arisen again, which has disadvantaged one of the LE's and there could be a possibility of that LE applying for a personal grievance if the matter is not resolved in discussions with Te Rapa management.
- Our members at Mission Bush have realised that by manning the Mission Bush depot on their own is an unsafe act. This matter has been raised with KiwiRail management and they do not seem to be taking the matter seriously. So there could be possibility of the members issuing a red card if the matter is not resolved.
- The Mechanical Council's next meeting will be held at the RMTU rooms in Mt Maunganui on the 21st and 22nd of November, which will be of great interest to our members who will be able to meet



the Council members and get to understand how the Council works.

## LOGISTICS OFFICER BARGAINING AT LYTTTELTON PORT

This has been set down for the morning of 14th November. We have been in negotiations for almost a year and after some very hard work by our members and one of the logistics managers have reached agreement in principle on a revised roster that will give LPC the 24 hours a day, seven day a week coverage they have said is so important to them. Members have been very clear what it will take to get this over the line in terms of an adjustment to pay and recognition of the fact that half the members covered by this agreement will be spending half their time at work on night shift. We have communicated this very clearly to LPC and are hopeful that our discussions on the 14th will be constructive.

## NELSON PORT AND PICTON BRANCHES DELEGATE TRAINING

This is scheduled for Thursday 8th November, so may well have occurred by the time you are reading this. Our Nelson Port Branch is doing excellent work organising workers and delegate and active members being trained is one of the best ways to cement this progress. If your Branch has active members or new delegates who would like training, or you have some veterans you would like a refresher and the opportunity to pass on their wisdom, speak with your organiser

and see what we can do for you.

There are a wide variety of courses that we can offer that have approval for Employment Relations Education Leave, which means members are entitled to paid leave to attend a course. The amount of leave is calculated using a formula in the Employment Relations Act and is also in some collective agreements. So, if your branch wants to become more effective consider getting some training.

## EMPLOYMENT RATES AT RECORD HIGH

The present record employment rate of 68.3 percent, matched by the lowest unemployment rate of 3.9 percent in over a decade means better lives for thousands of New Zealanders, Minister of Employment Willie Jackson says.

"There are now over 2.66 million New Zealanders in employment which means that 29,000 more people and families are engaged in earning since the last quarterly results were released", says Willie Jackson.

"The difference this makes to the lives of whanau and communities is significant and should be celebrated, especially as we know that employment has a massive impact on whether our children live in poverty or not.


"This coalition Government's commitment and investment in regional New Zealand is having a major impact on employment, particularly in the Waikato, Otago and Gisborne/Hawkes Bay and I want to highlight the fantastic results in Taranaki, where 4,300 more people are now in employment.

"The underutilisation result for this quarter

### RAIL - TAKING STRESS OFF NORTHLAND ROADS

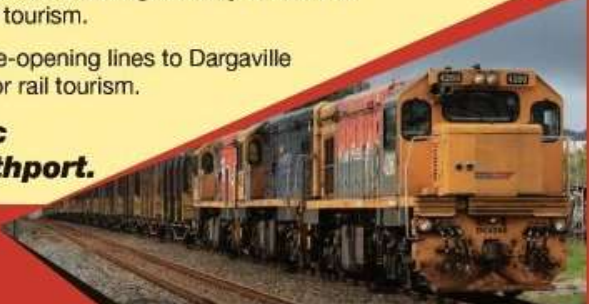
It's time to reconnect Northland's extensive railway network enabling industry to use the safest way to move freight and increase high value rail tourism.

The Rail and Maritime Transport Union fully supports re-opening lines to Dargaville and Otria, reconnecting rail to Kawakawa and Opuia for rail tourism.



**Rail is the Strategic missing link to Northport.**

- Logs • Woodchips
- Dairy • Bulkloads • Tourism
- Large Consignment Freight



has continued the recent downward trend and has fallen further to 11.3 percent. This is an indication that people who want to work, are able to work.

"The reduction in the unemployment rate for Māori to 8.5 percent (down from 9.9 percent) is a further example of our continued focus on improving outcomes for our people and while this is the lowest it has been in over a decade, the work doesn't stop.

"I remain committed to seeing these rates reduce further and part of this will be my ongoing focus on rangatahi who are not earning or learning", says Willie Jackson

Household Labour Force Survey release shows a further reduction in the NEET rates for 15-24 year olds from 10.9 to 10.1 percent. This is a down from the same time last year when our young people not earning or learning were at 11.3 percent.

"The Government is committed to making New Zealand the best place in the world to raise a child and this, in my view, starts with ensuring that real work, and real incomes are available for all New Zealanders. Today's survey release shows we are absolutely on the right track", says Willie Jackson.

## **RTMU/KIWI RAIL (FREIGHT) INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL (KIC)**

KIC 41 is set down for 20-21 November in Wellington. This council is having a makeover with management from the new COO structure attending and some changes in the RMTU team. There are several RMTU Rep vacancies on KIC including the Southern LE Rep, Central Terminals Rep and the Central LE Rep. Due to the link between National Management Committee membership and the RMTU positions on KIC, we need to see what the results of the current and future NMC nominations and ballots are before calling for nominations for the vacant positions on KIC.

The KIC RMTU Reps term is up in 2019 and nominations for all positions will be called for.

At this stage we do not have minutes from KIC 40 but the meeting was summarised in the last Activist newsletter.

## **PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS RALLY AND MARCH ON STRIKE DAY IN CHRISTCHURCH**

NZEI members are meeting at Horncastle Arena on the 14th of November, the day of their strike in Christchurch. The plan is to march from there to Hagley Park via Whiteleigh Avenue, then up to Riccarton Rd via Matipo St ( a fit lot these teachers!).

RMTU members are encouraged to show their support and we are working with KiwiRail to smooth progress at level crossings enroute. The expected time of the marchers reaching the Whiteleigh Avenue level crossing is about 1100 - 1115. The march will be at the Riccarton Road level crossing about 30 minutes later i.e. 1130-1145. It is expected that around 3000 people will be on the march. Get along and join in if you can!

## **TRAINING OF KR LE'S TO OPERATE STEAM LOCOMOTIVE**

KiwiRail have advised the Union that they are wishing to begin discussion on Locomotive Engineer training for operating Steam Locomotives, both firing and driving. We have been seeking this for a longtime after a number of times we have commenced this in the past but have never achieved a sustainable production line There is a lot of interest from KR LE's to be trained. All going well the steam training could start as early as April 2109, or are we being naive yet again? Watch this space!

## **BITS AND BOB'S**

- After an initial problem with full and meaningful consultation the shift of KiwiRail Networks to the Ahuriri freight depot from the Hyderabad road depot is now ontrack and the expected move in date is the 14th December.

