

THE ACTIVIST



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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY, JOYOUS AND SAFE 2022!

The end of 2021 is upon us and so it is important that we all remember that at this time of year there are Xmas Parties and other work functions. Whilst it is important that we all begin to relax and get into the Christmas Spirit and enjoy the company of workmates, colleagues etc it is essential that we don't let the good times become nightmares with unintended outcomes.

Please remember that as the year comes to an end it is essential that we are mindful of some of the issues that we all tend to face when it comes to work functions, social media and no alcohol or drugs in the workplace. When you are at a work function you remain connected to the workplace and so the policies of the employer will apply.

Work functions are great times to relax and interact with colleagues but do not take the opportunity to tell your boss, supervisor or colleague just what it is you think of them!

In social media the line between our private lives and work can often become blurred. The Union all too often has to represent members who are called to "meetings" to answer allegations of misconduct arising from social media posts. There is no such

thing as closed groups or confidentiality in social media. Do not put anything in a social media post that you would not pin on a noticeboard at work. All employers have social media policies and many contain provisions that state that any breaches may lead to disciplinary action which may include termination.

The same policy principle applies to Drugs and Alcohol. These policies exist to provide for your safety, your workmates safety and of course the safety of the public. As humans our bodies all operate and behave differently and so when it comes to processing alcohol there is no hard and fast rule of the time between the throttle and the bottle as it were. It is essential that you self-assess your fitness for work following a bit of a bash on the booze or the pipe etc. Remember also that D&A testing is post incident, reasonable cause and random and so you have no control over whether you are subjected

to a test let alone a police roadside check en-route to or from work.

Our best advice is that you don't take the risk and call in sick if you think your unfit for duty.

Finally, if you are called into a meeting to discuss any of the above then do not go in

On behalf of the
Union's President,
National
Management
Committee and Staff
we wish all members
and their families a
happy and joyous
Christmas. We also
wish you a healthy,
safe and prosperous
2022.

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

alone – **ALWAYS TAKE IN A DELEGATE OR A WITNESS TO ANY MEETING WITH THE BOSS.** There is no such thing as a quick informal chat in our experience in these circumstances.

Be safe, be smart and above all else be proud to be RMTU!

UNION OFFICE CLOSURES

The Union's National Office (Wellington) will be closed from 1600hrs 20 December 2021 until 0830hrs 10 January 2022 and the Auckland, Bay of Plenty and Christchurch regional office will close at 1600hrs on 24 December 2021 and open on 10 January 2022.

The **Emergency** "on call" roster for Union Industrial matters for delegates during the closedown period is;

- Todd Valster 25 to 28 December 2021 inclusive on 0274454691
- Rudd Hughes 29 to 31 December 2021 inclusive on 0272464961
- Wayne Butson 1 to 3 January 2022 inclusive on 0274962461
- Dasha Van Silfhout 4 to 6 January 2022 inclusive on 0272203492
- John Kerr 7 to 9 January 2022 inclusive on 0272464941

Todd Valster, Chelsea Nansett, Dasha Van Silfhout, John Kerr and Rudd Hughes return from leave 10 January 2022. Debby Green returns on 12 January 2022, Karen Fletcher returns on 25 January and Wayne Butson on 26 January 2022.

PORT OF NAPIER AVOIDS A MEANINGFUL GENERAL WAGE INCREASE

Napier Ports revenue rose by 9% in the year ended September 2021 to a record \$109.5 million.

In the 2021 Annual Report, CEO Todd Dawson received a base salary increase of

\$28,000 in 2020 and another \$20,000 increase in 2021.

Negotiations for the General Collective which expired in July 2021 have been challenging. We have aligned on lots of key issues but we have put the "big ticket item" to the side until we can resolve all the other claims.

A stop work meeting has been called for Thursday to report back to all of our members on how negotiations are going and seek mandate from the team on potentially issuing strike notification in the new year if the RMTU and PON negotiating teams cannot come to an agreement.

TIMARU PORT STRIKES AVERTED, COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS SETTLED

As the Activist went to press the Timaru Port Branch is in the process of ratifying collective agreements for Quality Marshalling and Prime Port Ltd.

Strike notices had been issued for seven days from 15 December but members agreed to withdraw these after an eleventh hour mediation resulted in improved offers from both employers.

What is disappointing is that we did not secure a Multi Employer Collective Agreement (MECA) at the port, but we were successful in reaching settlements that offset the recent spike in inflation. The difficulties in achieving a MECA demonstrate the weakness of the current industrial relations system enshrined in the Employment Relations Act. In short it promotes and encourages enterprise based bargaining which is something of a left over from the old Employment Contracts Act. Perhaps the long awaited introduction of Fair Pay Agreements will offset this in the future.

KR MECA UPDATE

We have a proposed settlement for the MECA renewal. The bargaining team unanimously recommend the proposed settlement for ratification by members. The headline item for this wage round, in our view, is the real and meaningful flat rate increase to members



hourly rates of \$2.48ph and the 4% increase for 7 months of the second year. There are other very beneficial terms of the proposed settlement which are of benefit to members during the currency of the MECA.

The full documents related to the proposed settlement are viewable on the Union website including this newsletter and a draft MECA. Go to www.rmtunion.org.nz and then "Bargaining" on the home page.

The Proposed Settlement and MECA is subject to ratification by union membership.

The proposed MECA if ratified shall expire 30 June 2023.

The RMTU confirms that the ratification process is the normal individual postal ballot and that unless 33% or more of financial eligible members vote to reject the proposed settlement that it will be deemed to have been ratified by the members.

If you wish to reject the proposed MECA then you need to mark the box "x", add any comment and return the ballot paper in the supplied envelope, so that it is received by Head Office by no later than **1700hrs Friday 11 February 2022.** Late papers will not be counted.

If you wish to accept the proposed MECA you need to destroy the ballot paper.

Your RMTU negotiating team supports the proposed MECA and recommends that the membership supports it by ratification.

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

DUNEDIN RAILWAYS COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT ROLLED OVER

Readers will be aware that Dunedin Railways has not only survived an ill-considered mothballing of its operation but has managed, through the assistance of Dunedin City Council and the Otago Excursion Trains Trust to offer a limited number of trips into the hinterland or up the coast as half day excursions over the summer.

We have managed to maintain enough members to secure our collective agreement and this is in the process of being drafted and ratified as the Activist is published. Of course the future of all tourist passenger services is very uncertain given the continuing COVID19 pandemic but the survival of these iconic train trips, in large part due to the campaign waged by the RMTU and its allies, is encouraging. Members are encouraged to check these out at

www.dunedinrailways.co.nz



THE HALF HAJ

With the best intentions we marched towards a MECA with TDAK and CAF and have had to halt halfway there. However, the RMTU is not abandoning the overall goal of creating a MECA but all parties realized that to complete it within the bargaining framework would mean extending the negotiations far beyond a reasonable length of time. All parties agreed to continue to work towards a MECA over the next year.

This meant that we resumed bargaining separately and were almost immediately given an offer by CAF of 5.5% for the first year and 5% or CPI, whichever is the greater, for the second year. The CAF bargaining team took this to the members and it was overwhelmingly ratified. An excellent result, built on the previous struggles by these members.

This has left us with the TDAK negotiations to deal with. This is a complex set of negotiations because, if it is not settled by the 16th of January, we will no longer be

bargaining with TDAK and will then have to face the new company Auckland One Rail (AOR) at the table. Currently we are at an impasse. The Company has an offer of 4.9% on the table and we are claiming 6.8% and a weekend allowance for the Locomotive Engineers. We are awaiting a final offer from the Company before we go back to the members.

LPC CHIEF EXECUTIVE RESIGNS TO TAKE UP ROLE AT PORTS OF AUCKLAND

The CEO of LPC, Roger Grey, is leaving the port in March after just two years in the role. This does cause some concern as under this leadership management have adopted a far more cooperative and enlightened approach to industrial relations with the unions. This culminated late this year with the signing of a High performance High Engagement Charter by the employer and three of the four unions at the port. The concern now is that momentum will be lost if there is a break in continuity, a point the RMTU Branch was able to make in a meeting with the Board Chair.

The fact our Branch even had this meeting demonstrated the progress made at the port in recent times and it was followed shortly afterwards by the announcement that the one of the more progressive managers at LPC, Kirstie Gardiner, was appointed as acting CEO. This is something to be welcomed as Ms. Gardiner has a track record of being able to resolve issues with the RMTU. We await the appointment of a new permanent CEO with interest.

PORT TARANAKI NEGOTIATIONS 2021 - 2023

Negotiations to renew the PTL CA started back in March. PTL were seeking a number of changes to the Cargo, Wharf Services (Lines etc.) and the Workshops teams. Cargo and Wharf Services have now joined, new Crane Operators positions available and

improved rates for the Crane Operators. The Wharf Services rates were grandfathered in September 2016, we have been trying to close the gap this created. One of the bargaining outcomes was to significantly lift the rates of the Tier 2 Wharf Services members. The draft CA and Terms of Settlement were rejected by members late October and a revised improved offer was tabled by PTL which members ratified early this month. Several delegates did great work closing the gap between PTL and members expectations – Well done.

IXOM ARE READY TO SETTLE

The RMTU have a small membership at Ixom Operations Ltd who deal with Chemicals in sites based at Mount Maunganui and Morrinsville. The Mount Maunganui Collective expired in March 2021 and since then the RMTU have been in discussions with Ixom to agree on a renewal of contract.

Again, Covid has played its part in hindering a settlement but this year the CPI Index has also come into play. Along with many other employees and businesses around the country feeling the pinch financially, so too are our Ixom members.

During the term of the negotiations the CPI has increased from 1.5% in quarter March to 3.3% in quarter June and now at 4.9% in quarter September. The negotiating team have done an excellent job in navigating these increases and we believe we have a settlement that the membership will be happy with.

The Short Term Incentive bonus has been paid last week with the team grateful for not one but two payments this year.

C3 MEMBERS FIGHT OFF FORTNIGHTLY PAY

C3 have offered up several variations this year to different departments and in the majority of these offers C3 have indicated they would like to move away from the

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



current weekly pay to a fortnightly system in July 2022.

This was apparent in the Marshalling Operators variation where C3 asked for the Operators to move to a different roster giving C3 the ability to cover weekends. We successfully fought off the move during that variation.

A variation has also been requested to the Transport section of the General Collective where again the move has been identified. Members have expressed their objection to fortnightly, along with other terms and conditions.

The RMTU, on behalf of its members of the On Board Lashing team are in negotiations with the current Collective expiring May 2021. A claim has been once again put

forward by the Company to address fortnightly pay.

We will continue to express our members concerns around what seems to be a huge change and continue to fight for their interests.

**Please take care of
each other and above
all else – Have a Merry,
Safe and Joyous
Festive Season!**

See you in 2022

