

THE

JUNE 2018

TRANSPORT WORKER

The journal of the RMTU – NZ's largest specialist transport union



**LPC
protest**



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RMTU members told to get real about fatigue and how it affects you – and your work. A special focus is being prepared.

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RMTU members have been involved in a protracted dispute at Port Lyttelton. The story is explained from 'go to woe' in this issue.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Picketing outside Lyttelton Port Company with determination and widespread support.

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Wayne Butson
General secretary
RMTU

Troubling decisions from Labour

WHY is the Labour-led government finding it harder to keep their promise to retain electrification and use electric locomotives on the North Island main trunk (NIMT) than they did in making it? The then transport spokesperson Michael Wood had little, or no, hesitation in writing to the RMTU stating that he had advised KiwiRail that in the event of Labour being elected to government that they would instruct them to desist from their de-electrification plans for the NIMT.

This advice was also released by Labour as part of its electioneering campaign in 2017. Why then has there been a deafening silence on keeping that promise to the RMTU and the nation?

The reality is I don't know and Labour and its coalition partners aren't saying. On your behalf I have spoken and written to ministers with responsibility for transport and state owned enterprises and asked them to immediately instruct KiwiRail to maintain electrification and the electric locomotives.

There has also been a flurry of media activity but still no response from the new government.

The facts remain;

- The 17 electric locomotives are midlife and only require refurbishment. Their useful life has not expired.
- Refurbishing the 17 locomotives is the cheapest and best value option for locomotive power on the NIMT.
- Use of the electric locomotives has a carbon footprint of 4,500 carbon tonnes pa.
- Use of diesel locomotives has a carbon footprint of 21,500 tonnes pa.
- Decommissioning electric locomotives is not consistent with the Government's aim of carbon neutrality by 2050.
- Decommissioning of the electric locomotives is not consistent with the Government's support of regional New Zealand (viz: Taihape and Taumaranui would lose good jobs).

The RMTU believes that a review of the processes that KiwiRail used to (supposedly) justify this strategy should immediately be undertaken.

I well recall an early review that was conducted at the Union's request by Worley Parsons. It had a phrase in it that stated that the KiwiRail work had a clear "bias" in favour of DL (dog and lemon) locomotives.

I have never before seen such clear criticism in an independent review.

It is no wonder to me that they never finalised their report. The report stated that refurbished electric locomotives would have a working life of more than 20 years.

This is in stark contrast to the DL gen 1 locomotives which are approaching 10 years and are, in many views, life expired.

When the Queensland electrics were upgraded they became more powerful and their reliability was greatly improved which is expected as electric locomotives have fewer moving parts and are thus more reliable.

Even at present the electric locomotives are estimated to have a maintenance cost of \$1 per km versus \$2.33 for the DL locomotives (as identified in a select committee report).

We all see, on a daily basis, that global fuel prices are rising fast and so the extra 8,000 litres of diesel that KiwiRail wishes to burn on the NIMT is an ever growing gamble on fuel pricing.

To keep the electric locomotives operating we assess that it will cost a mere \$12m over a three to five year period – a pittance in the crown accounts.

KiwiRail also places great store on its mantra of 'simplify standardise' and say that the electric locomotives introduce greater inventory and complexity.

If they were to strictly adhere to this mantra then they would never have purchased the DL locomotives in the first place. Additionally, who would look to standardise and simplify using these dog and lemon locos as your standard?

Chinese whispers

A rumour around at the moment is that the DL gen 1s are to be refurbished – sent back to China for this work to be done.

The RMTU says very loudly: "Hell no!"

KiwiRail locomotives are disassembled, overhauled and reassembled by Union members here in New Zealand. This is our work and these locomotives must not be allowed to be exported for overhaul to China.

This New Zealand work for New Zealand workers!

Even the asbestos fiasco saw the work done here at Hutt Shops and this is what must occur this time – and without the plane loads of Chinese exploited workers.

Lastly, the good news is that we have now signed the Transdev Auckland and Wellington collective agreements and have reinitiated in Wellington as the newly signed agreement expires 3 July 2018 and Auckland in September 2018.

The Lyttelton CA has also just been signed with a three year term and so we now look to repairing the relationship on a mutually respectful basis.

We initiated bargaining with KiwiRail in May and so we are looking forward to the industrial councils meeting mid June to consider the employers' offer.

In size, the RMTU is a small union but, if you look at what we achieve and do in the course of our business, it is clear that we play way above our weight.

We will continue to grow our capacity, organisation and passion for betterment of our members' conditions and rights – you have my word! 🇳🇿

Essential reading

Sometimes there's simply not sufficient room in this magazine for all the stuff we think you'd like to read. This issue, to accompany the article on page 11 about Labour back-peddling on electrification of the NIMT, is this link to an article from the UK.

Goodbye diesel: what does the phase-out mean for UK rail innovation?

<https://bit.ly/2E1Wldf>

Resignations

Dear Editor,

Please accept my resignation from the RMTU effective 26 March 2018.

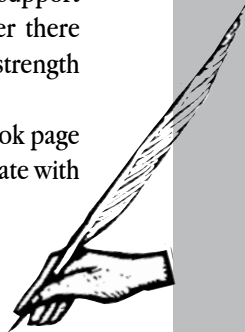
This is not due to any dissatisfaction with the Union or the current situation, rather that my resignation as launch master takes effect on that day and Irene and I pack up our home for our move to Whangarei.

I wish to thank the Union's officials and my fellow members for their support over the past 21 years. When ever there was a need for Union support and strength evident in our present situation.

Please keep me on our Facebook page and email list so I can keep up to date with developments.

In solidarity

Bryan Shankland.



Dear Editor,

It is with regret I tender my resignation from the RMTU having now retired from the employment in KiwiRail.

After 47 years working within the rail family and all the changes that have taken



place during that period of time the only constant that never changed was the on-going care and concern this Union has for it's membership.

It must be said that because the railway in this

country is a Government entity and is used as a political football the umbrella of protection all members enjoy to their wages and working conditions can only be attributed to a strong and healthy union.

I have held a few positions of office at branch level and have never regretted the time spent carrying out these duties. In fact I recommend all members to get more involved in the nuts and bolts of this Union as it offers a big learning curve to the workings of a real trade union.

I have attended a fair share of meetings and conferences with other delegate's around the country and it is very gratify-

ing to meet many like-minded people who have the welfare of the membership and their respective union, at the forefront of their intentions.

I would like to thank the local branch officials both here in Invercargill and in Dunedin for their support, the southern reps on the Kiwi-Rail industrial council, our local industrial officer and all members of the executive and staff at head office.

My thanks to you all for the help you have given me over the years and for imparting your knowledge on many subjects. All the very best for the future. Gavin Mortimore.
Ex loco engineer.

Dear Editor,

After 45 years as a member of the NUR/RMTU I have retired from Dunedin railways. I would like to thank all members of the RMTU for their friendship and support but the time has come for me to resign. I wish all the members of the union all the best for the future. Joe Carson

Dear Editor,

After 46 years working for the railways in New Zealand, I have now retired. Consequently, I wish to tender my resignation from the RMTU.

I have been fortunate in that I did not ever need the direct intervention of the Union during my career.

However, I recognise that the ben-

efits and security that I enjoyed during my employment was due to the work done by the RMTU and its predecessors, in my case the Railway Officers Institute. Therefore, I was grateful

for the presence and facilitation that the Union provided Michael Berry
Member 11103.



Changing attitudes a

H&S experts want to see fatigue treated with care a

TREATING fatigued workers with support and care rather than contempt and blame should be the guiding principals guiding management and unions when safety incidents occur says the RMTU following a recent fatigue-related incident at Lyttelton Port.

"Far too many workers are treated with punitive measures when the real cause of the problem is fatigue," said RMTU general secretary Wayne Butson, "mostly from ill-conceived rosters which don't provide adequate sleep opportunity for workers to recover from shift work and also require workers to sleep during the day which is very difficult for getting quality sleep."

RMTU health and safety organiser, Karen Fletcher, agrees and adds "In workplaces that have a poor safety culture there is a disincentive to report fatigue related incidents. This is because fatigue is treated as a performance issue rather than a safety issue."

The recent LPC fatigue incident was brought to a head when RMTU member, Josh (not his real name), was involved in a near miss following five consecutive night shifts followed by an early morning day shift. All without an adequate break between shifts to recover his sleep pattern.

"Unfortunately, there is a long culture

of workers expected to 'tough it out'," said Fletcher. "Companies put the onus of responsibility on the workers to report when they're unsafe to work due to fatigue. This is unrealistic because impairment-related fatigue is cumulative and once workers are in a state of chronic sleep debt they are no longer able to accurately judge how safe they are to work."

She said that chronic fatigue is likened to being impaired by alcohol and in addition workers can experience uncontrolled micro sleep whilst operating machinery.

A good fatigue management system, she adds, is all about making sure people aren't put in that position in the first place.

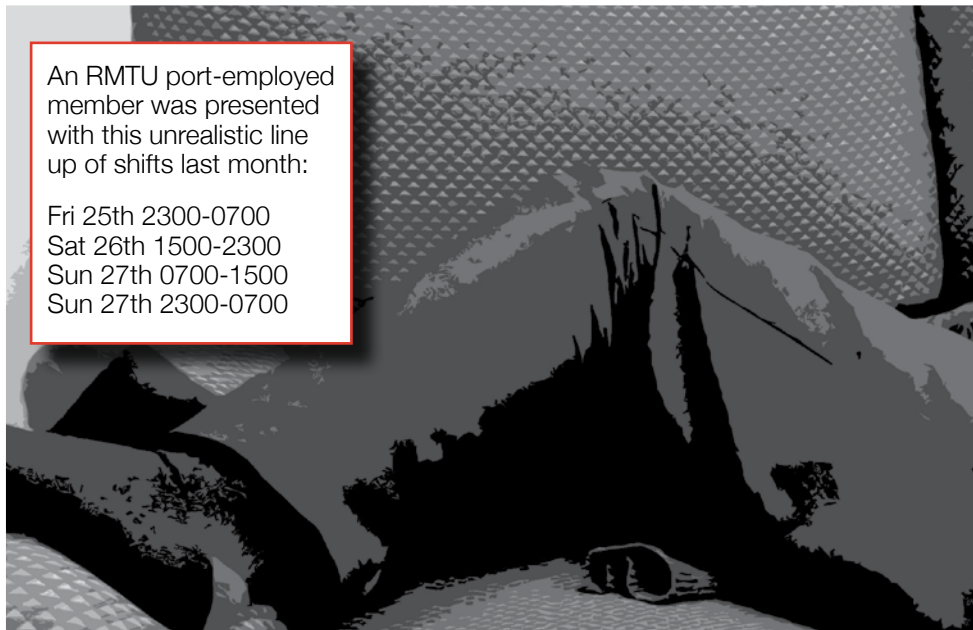
"It's about safe hours of work and two full nights sleep between shifts that allow people to recover and adjust to new shift patterns."

Employers are on notice by Worksafe NZ to manage the risk of fatigue. Worksafe recently prosecuted a tractor company for failing to manage worker fatigue after a tractor driver was killed whilst driving after working 200 hours in two weeks.

<https://bit.ly/2rLdVOW>

An RMTU port-employed member was presented with this unrealistic line up of shifts last month:

Fri 25th 2300-0700
Sat 26th 1500-2300
Sun 27th 0700-1500
Sun 27th 2300-0700



about fatigue at work

and compassion rather than recrimination and contempt.

◀ A good fatigue management system also has a process for non-punitive reporting that thanks workers for reporting fatigue issues rather than punishing them. Fatigue, like any workplace hazard should be managed jointly between the employer and the workers who do the job and face the risk.

"Fatigue safety committees that include worker and management representatives are a good way of monitoring a company's fatigue management system and identifying where fatigue is creating an unacceptable risk to workers safety," said Fletcher.

At KiwiRail, loco engineers have revised their rostering rules to better manage the risk of fatigue. LEs have a limit of four night shifts that has to be followed by a 54 hour break (two nights in bed) before they move to a first (morning) shift which must not start before 9am to provide for a full night's sleep.

"The two-night break also provides time for the person to recover from the cumulative sleep debt and shift their sleep pattern from day sleep to sleeping at night," said Fletcher.

"Clearly, we all have a long way to go before we can truly resolve this problem," said Butson. "However, I believe the will is there to see it through and when we do it could be a beacon for industries nationwide." 🇳🇿

Joint Lyttelton Port Company/ RMTU communiqué

FATIGUE (both physical and mental) are hazards which affect people's ability to work safely. Fatigue causes impairment ranging from slower reaction time to uncontrolled micro-sleeps. In the Port environment fatigue represents a serious safety risk.

The risk of fatigue cannot be eliminated in a 24/7 work environment but it can be minimised to an acceptable and agreed level. LPC's health and wellbeing specialist, LPC has convened a working group of management and union representatives to develop a Fatigue Risk Management System.

Professor Philippa Gander of Massey University's Sleep/Wake Institute has delivered two seminars to the working group to explain how a fatigue risk management system could work at LPC.

Elements of the fatigue risk management system include:

- A fatigue management standard that describes how LPC will manage fatigue related risk;
- A non-punitive fatigue reporting system that encourages workers to report fatigue without negative consequence;
- Updated CAR reports that include fatigue reporting;
- Rostering design that is based on safe rostering principles and provides for adequate sleep opportunity at circadian appropriate times;
- Data collection to identify fatigue 'hot spots' in container terminal, marine, mechanical and coal work areas;
- Identifying the tasks, systems and environmental factors that can cause fatigue;
- Carrying out fatigue risk assessments;
- Mitigating fatigue risks through safe rostering principles and breaks; and
- Developing agreed safety performance indicators to measure how well fatigue is managed.

In addition LPC will implement a Fatigue Safety Action Group (FSAG) for coordinating the fatigue risk management system. This group will review fatigue data such as fatigue reports, arrange risk assessments and recommend fatigue mitigation strategies.

The FSAG will involve worker and management representatives.

Next steps include the completion of the Fatigue Management Standard and the development of terms of reference for the group. 🇳🇿



Auckland's Transdev dispute

IN May 2017 prior to commencing collective bargaining, both the RMTU and the Transdev Auckland (TDAK) management teams completed two days of interest-based bargaining training.

This was supposed to facilitate a less confrontational bargaining process than the usual positional approach.

The main focus of this approach is that it would be based on trust between the two parties.

The TDAK management team committed themselves to this.

Imagine the RMTU's consternation and anger when two days later the company revealed that it had committed to Auckland Transport (AT) the implementation of the so-called security and fare evasion project (aka SaFe project).

There are two main factors to SaFe:

- Aside from the drivers, the removal of all current onboard operational staff including train managers and ticket inspectors. These were Transdev staff and safety critical members of the RMTU. They were to be replaced by transport officers employed directly by Auckland Transport with limited warranted powers and inferior terms and conditions. These powers included directing fare evaders not to board or to leave the trains, directing passengers suspected of not paying their fare to provide name and address, date of birth and telephone numbers; and issuing infringement notices for non-payment. These officers were only to be used on certain services, initially on trains but also on buses and ferries. This, as opposed to the current practice of safety critical operational member of staff on every service.

- The introduction of Driver Door Operations (DDO). To add further insult Transdev and AT had come to an arrangement that if any redundant staff wanting to take up a position of transport officer that it would be on inferior terms and conditions. They would not be entitled to full redundancy but instead would receive a gratuity from AT of 50% of the normal redundancy.



ALL aboard!
Staffed trains
are
safe trains

It was apparent to the RMTU from the start that this would have a dramatic impact on safety for those working on and using the trains.

In principle your Union had no objection to the introduction of transport officers but as an addition to the current train crew not as a replacement, for a number of reasons; The infrastructure on the Auckland rail network is not suitable for DDO; The route is not fenced; There are curved platforms and numerous level crossings; and the culture of the travelling public in Auckland is not one of compliance with the rules and operation of the railway.

The implementation of the SaFe Project was predicated on the NZTA approving the variation of the Transdev safety case to operate the railway. Only if they were satisfied that the proposed measures were as safe – or safer – than the current operating model. The Union's view was that without challenge this would be rubber stamped.

Fortunately for us these changes were proposed at a time when collective bargaining had been initiated. Thus this gave us the

opportunity to more effectively challenge these proposals.

A stop work meeting was held on August 23, 2017 and four resolutions were endorsed for our campaign to keep the trains safe. Those were:

- Keep the RMTU members on the trains maintaining terms and conditions for all members.
- No forced redundancies.
- Build organisation on the job.
- Secure public and political support for rail and railway workers.

The bargaining team became the campaign team and as a result the resolutions tendered in bargaining stated there would be no DDO in the currency of the next collective agreement.

A sustained effort to lobby politicians and community groups followed plus the mobilisation of members around such activities as petitions, demonstrations and industrial action. In other words a full scale publicity and media campaign engaging with TDAK, NZTA and Work Safe NZ focussed on the safety case variation.

One of the main challenges was building organisation amongst our members, so communication was vital. Weekly newsletters were sent out informing members of the latest developments, countering misleading information from both TDAK and AT and encouraging the members to ever greater efforts. We also issued regular media releases countering AT and TDAK claims and, most importantly, we had the effective use of social media as a campaign tool.

Where possible we met with politicians in groups of two and three. We also spoke with and lobbied local councillors. The Union received a letter from the then Labour Party transport spokesman Michael Wood pledging support for the RMTU on its opposition to the SaFe project.

We also lobbied various community, women, and disability groups. Due to the lobbying and the relationships we built the Public Transport Users Association became a vital ally to us having independently

formed the opinion that these proposed changes were wrong. Their support would prove to be a critical factor in resolving the dispute.

We, of course, garnered support from other trade unions.

The RMTU launched an online petition to 'Keep our trains safe' with the current onboard staff. This provided an excellent opportunity to build organisation within our membership.

Obviously some/many members were uneasy about being seen to challenge the management. For this reason we engaged two retired members to assist in gathering signatures from the travelling public at Pukekohe Station. They were there from 0600-0800 and obtained around 120 signatures.

We then posted on our Facebook pages pictures of us at the station getting public support. This had a galvanising effect on our members. Others began to set up stands at numerous stations and it took a short period of time to reach our target of 4,000 signatures.

What was so encouraging was the overwhelming support from the public. With the petition in hand we held a joint rally with First Union, who had their own petition of 6,500 signatures as part of their BUS FAIR campaign against the implementation of PTOM. These were jointly presented to Auckland Transport by councillor Mike Lee outside their head office. The effect of the lobbying and other union actions put enormous pressure on both Auckland Transport and Transdev.

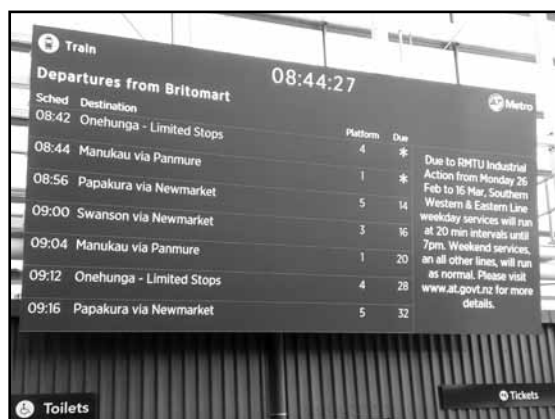
This was the background to which collective bargaining negotiation between Transdev and the RMTU began.

Because of the relationship between the RMTU and management all our negotiations took place with the presence of a mediator.

From the outset the sticking point was our claim for no introduction of driver door operation through the currency of any agreement.

We weren't opposed to exploring different ways of running the passenger services but not in the way that had been put forward as it was not safe. The issue of the operational running of the railway should have been discussed in an industrial council outside of bargaining.

The RMTU, throughout the process, continued to produce weekly newsletters



and held regular report back meetings to keep members fully informed. Management were insistent on the implementation of the SaFe project in all its elements. We were told by their lead advocate that the company didn't believe in working groups because they did not work. As a result of this intransigence bargaining broke down at the end of October. We held a report back meeting and conducted our first ballot for strike action in decades. The result was overwhelmingly in support.

The strike was held on December 8, 2017. Pickets were posted outside all depots in a party atmosphere. Support from the public was overwhelming. They clearly understood our message that the dispute was about ensuring public safety. In tandem with this the Union challenged any alteration to risk assessments by the company to present to the NZTA. Our health and safety representative also presented a comprehensive dossier to the NZTA showing numerous factors that had not been covered or considered by Transdev.

A further round of bargaining was held the week after the strike with Auckland Transport management acting as observer.

We reiterated our willingness for the industrial council to discuss alternative models of operating the railway.

We tried building trust but were again met with a stubborn refusal.

Understanding the need to keep public support we decided that we would take no further industrial action during the Christmas break. We did, though, hold a stop work meeting at Britomart in front of 250 plus members and the result was a unanimous vote of support in the bargaining team and the continued pursuit of our claims.

The change in government meant we were now lobbying politicians who were in ministerial positions with the abil-

ity to change policy and apply direct pressure to Auckland Transport and Transdev.

Millions of dollars in capital expenditure for the upgrade of rolling stock and the purchase of further electric trains was being held up. Despite this Transdev would not move on their position when bargaining broke down resulting in a second ballot for industrial action. The result was for the imposition of an overtime ban.

It was at this time that pressure was again increased on AT and Transdev by building organisation and lobbying. In cooperation with the Public Transport Users Association we carried out a survey of the travelling public around safety on the trains. We used a PTUA-generated questionnaire. The results showed that 92% were opposed to the SaFe project and DDO. The PTUA then announced that it was to hold a public meeting inviting AT and Transdev management along with government ministers.

The overtime ban proved crucial. Transdev were proved to be operating services with less than minimum staffing levels and numerous services were cancelled.

Whilst the overtime ban was in force a further bargaining session took place.

For the first time Auckland Transport gave presentations to the Union around the SaFe project. Transdev also gave a brief outline of their plans for implementing the SaFe project. No concessions were made so the bargaining team refused to lift the ban.

The following day Auckland Transport and Transdev management along with NZCTU and the RMTU general secretary met with Transport Minister Phil Twyford and Minister for Workplace Relations Ian Rees-Galloway.

Following this meeting the foundation for a settlement was made between all parties.

The following week all parties committed to sign up to the High Performance High Engagement process outside of bargaining to find a solution to what was now called 'The Challenging Issue'.

Auckland Transport and Transdev committed to not unilaterally do anything further toward imposing the SaFe project whilst this process was in place.

HPHE has been successfully used in both the aviation and rail industries.

- Andrew Ward

FOR SALE Napier Port

"For sale to the right buyer, in good running order, well maintained, comes with 'good will', several sites (one with sea views), boat access, great fishing/diving spots, over 46 hectares, site two 5.7 hectares, site three 4 hectares, site four 13 hectares, many implement buildings at all sites – a part-owner business opportunity in the beautiful Hawke's Bay."

A subject that is on both Regional and City council agendas around New Zealand currently is port ownership!

Napier Port is nearly in the position of being a potential partial sale. There are several options which have been presented to the Hawke's Bay Regional Council by a (supposed) panel of experts to help ratepayers decide how to fund the \$125 million required to build a new wharf and infrastructure to cope with the region's growth over the next 10 years.

Personally, wharf expansion and regional development are a good thing. However, the pathway to port ownership (or part thereof) by either foreign or domestic investors who see this purely as a venture to line their own pockets, has to be considered

carefully by its owners – the ratepayers and the people of Hawke's Bay.

There is a lot to ponder including the impact on rates. Partial owner/s will certainly want their returns with subsequent financial implications on Council infrastructure, services, regional roads, employment, and more.

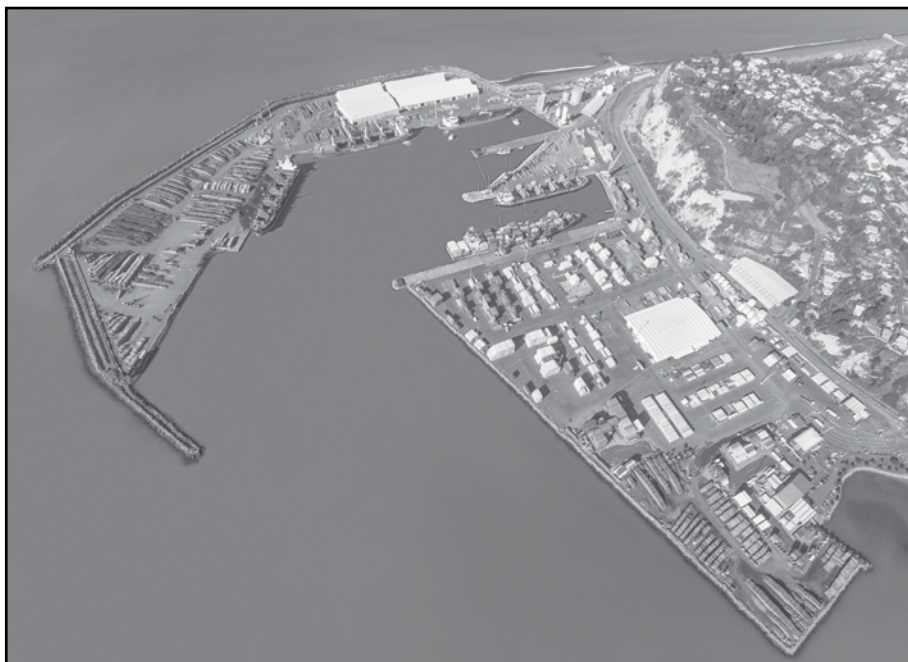
Our Union has already experienced similar battles around Port of Tauranga's partial stake at Timaru.

The people of Hawke's Bay must be kept informed and the process must be transparent. In the latest Regional Council gazette it talked about the rates, water, coast, parks, environment etc. It is perplex-

ing that the important topic of the potential Napier Port Company sell down was not mentioned. Not even a sentence to update the locals on something so critical to their region! Smoke and mirrors does nothing to maintain public support or confidence, instead it creates suspicion around those elected and their motives.

There is plenty of opinion and speculation and like bums, we all have one. In terms of how the sell down should happen and future ownership, whatever options are presented, the ratepayers must have input. We are all stakeholders.

In this scribe's view, a referendum over such an important asset is essential. 🌐



PORTS RETIREMENT PLAN ARE YOU A MEMBER?

The Ports Retirement Plan is open to all port workers.

The plan has an external administrator and contributions are invested with four fund managers.



Ports
Retirement
Plan

Download a copy of the
Product Disclosure Statement:

www.portsretirement.org.nz

NSW loco division conference

I had the opportunity to travel with Todd Valster (RMTU organiser) and Mike Williams (KiwiRail LE and South Island rail National Management Committee) to Sydney for the Rail, Tram and Bus Union's, NSW Locomotive Division Delegate Conference held every 18 months.

The Division represents roughly 3,600 LEs across metro, regional and freight operations within NSW, as well as spanning multiple government and private operators. However, their solidarity as a group of delegates is quite strong regardless of employer.

The conference was over two days with the theme "Stand up, fight back". A range of speakers from the national secretary of the RTBU to experts in employment relations as well as sister unions, such as the RMTU representing New Zealand, the JRU from Japan and ASLEF from the UK. Each of the visiting unions gave a speech on the state of their rail industry and the fights that have been having recently.



By Leighton Mosese

The conclusion gained is that regardless of where in the world you are, we all are in the same boat in terms of the fights we have against our respective employers. Whether it be a campaign on public safety against Driver Only Operations in Auckland, just getting fair pay and conditions in the UK, or fighting against anti-union governments watering down the ability to exercise

industrial action, as they currently have in Australia and the UK.

There were two topics of discussion during the conference that summed up where we are moving to currently as unions.

Firstly, the introduction of automation in industries in Australia, such as the waterfront, and how it affects the pay and conditions of workers, where aspects of their employment are replaced by machines, and how we maintain current terms and conditions.

The second is the fight on pay and conditions and how far the union movement has progressed in the last 80 years. It comes as no surprise to learn that in the 1920s pay and working conditions were extremely poor around the world, workers banded together and fought for better conditions, resulting in workers having a more equal footing in bargaining power against employers.

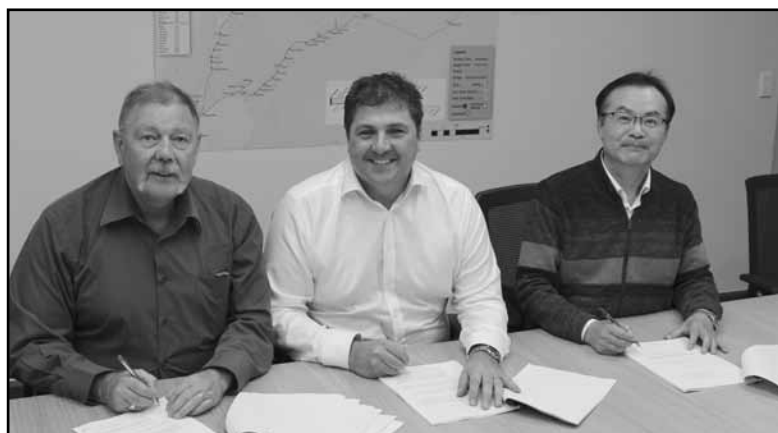
After the 1980s, with deregulation and free market reforms, came aggressive employer tactics in collective bargaining. The past 30 years have seen the balance of power increasingly favour employers, who are also being supported by anti-union legislation, making it all the more harder for unions to extract decent pay and conditions.

The recent change in government in New Zealand will hopefully see the current power imbalance between workers and employers move to a more equal footing. 🌐



International guests assemble with RTBU loco division officials.

Contracts signed



Signing the newly agreed THR MECA for Wellington Metro are (l to r) Wayne Butson, Transdev Wellington managing director Alan Bannister and Hyundai Rotem managing director Sunjoong Kim. The agreement expires 2 July 2018.



(l to r) Wayne Butson and Transdev Auckland managing director Michel Ladrak sign the new CA which expires September 2018.

Minister impressed with HPHE

MINISTER for Workplace Relations, Safety, Immigration and ACC Iain Lees-Galloway visited Palmerston North on 6 April to see the impact of engagement and worker participation in a High Performance High Engagement (HPHE) context.

KiwiRail and the RMTU have been working with consultants hp2 (High Performance Partners Ltd) on this initiative.

The Union has stated a commitment for HPHE so long as there are tangible benefit to members from their participation and engagement.

General secretary Wayne Butson said: "To date it is clear that members are flourishing in the participative and empowering environment that the HPHE methodology provides and I have been greatly impressed when attending briefing session where delegates and members do presentations to dignitaries or senior officials and you can see that they are totally into this thing."



Minister Lees-Galloway said: "The level of engagement from the workforce has been really exciting to see."

The minister said that it was "incredibly important" for management to engage with those on the frontline and that HPHE needed commitment from all parties to succeed. 🌐

HPHE operations upper NI

THIS project kicked off with the HPHE training in March. The issue statement for this project is: "What can we do as One KiwiRail to improve utilisation of our teams and assets in the Golden Triangle in order to enhance safety, operate reliably and meet customer demands?"

The issue statement can evolve over time during the project. Some issues discussed include: booking freight, rosters, deliver/unload, train control, network infrastructure, train plan/roster optimisation and terminal optimisation.



Most of the team at the April meeting in TeRapa.

The UNI team is made up of LE reps, train control rep, planning, rosters, HR and management and meets monthly with a One KiwiRail, One RMTU approach. 🌐

Transdev leave hearing



(l to r) Paul Ashton (KiwiRail), Ben Thompson (Hazel Armstrong Law) and Bill Sweeney (RMTU). Also in attendance was Wayne Butson (RMTU and photographer!)

THE RMTU supported an application to the Employment Relations Authority by a former employee of Transdev Auckland arising from their refusal to pay out accrued leave in his final pay. KiwiRail gave supporting evidence. The Authority member, Vicki Campbell found in favour of the RMTU. Her ruling said payments made on termination for employees who qualify for shift leave, must include an accrued leave payment, proportionate to an employee's underlying entitlement. Transdev Auckland are now paying out all money owed. 🌐

See more in Auckland rail notes p18.

Keep the power on!

Labour back peddling on electrification of NIMT

EARLY in her election campaign Jacinda Ardern called climate change “my generation’s nuclear free moment”.

She recalls her father, then New Zealand’s high commissioner to Niue, talk about visiting local village leaders on Kiribati who showed him where the water sat when they were children and where it was now - lapping squarely around their survival.

“There will always be those who say it’s too difficult. There will be those who say we are too small, and that pollution and climate change are the price of progress,” Ms Ardern said. “They are wrong.”

The RMTU agrees wholeheartedly and urges her and her government to make a stand now, keep one of their campaign promises and reverse KiwiRail’s decision to scrap electrification on the North Island Main Trunk (NIMT) line and the continued use of the electric locos.

Unfortunately, it appears they have, at best, put any decision on hold or even possibly dropped the idea of putting a halt to the scrapping plans of KiwiRail entirely.

This is a major blow for the RMTU which has been urging increasing electrification – not less.

RMTU general secretary Wayne Butson says: “Our confidence in the Labour Party’s ability to bring about environmentally positive changes will be seriously eroded if what is being predicted comes true.

“Research paper after research paper shows the benefit of electrification and if we are to chase that elusive 100% Pure ideal this is one measure that can be taken quickly and easily – and with just one phone call.”

A former Secretary for the Environment and an engineer, Roger Blakely, told National Radio’s Morning Report recently that KiwiRail’s argument that diesels would be cheaper simply didn’t stack up.

He said refurbishing the old electric locomotives would cost around \$12million



An artist's depiction of what a refurbished EF loco could look like.

EF upgrade Vs DL diesel

	EF	DL
Up front capital costs	\$12m	\$37.5m
Maintenance cost/km	\$1	\$2.33
Time in service	2.5 - 3 years	2 years
Carbon footprint/year	4,500 tonnes	21,500 tonnes
Time penalty for 11 hour journey	10 minutes	0 minutes

but buying the eight new diesel locomotives KiwiRail says would be needed would cost \$35m - plus another 20 years would be added to the life of the electric locos.

The current electric locomotives have essentially been 'managed into oblivion', said Butson.

"They have not been overhauled since their arrival in 1988/89. No other locomotive in New Zealand in operation today has been so unloved over so much time."

Never-the-less, he points out that the most recent figures relating to mean distance between failure (MDF) or 'kilometres between breakdown' show that the Electric EF (arrived 1988) has an MDF of 67,996km. This compares favourably with the average of the three generations of Chinese-built DLs of 72,000km.

KiwiRail also points to time delays at Te Rapa and Palmerston North as diesel locos are exchanged for electric.

KiwiRail allocates around 40 minutes for the changeover at each junction but timed

trials show this is accomplished in less than ten minutes.


"If you add to that the time saved by using more powerful and faster electric locomotives the timing is

about equal," said Butson. "No time lost or gained. Their case simply doesn't stack up."

But back to saving our planet and the part – albeit small by worldwide comparison – which KiwiRail and our Government has to play.

Electric locomotives are symbolic of our commitment to a clean, green, zero carbon future. Every rail journey for our goods to a global market is a tick for this undertaking, says Butson.

He says under a diesel regime for the NIMT carbon emissions will go to 30,000 tonnes a year.

"Refurbishing the electric locomotives is a 'no brainer' ," says Butson. "When you weigh their value for money and the low cost to our environment how could you choose any other direction? There is no doubt that the citizens of Kiribati appreciate every little bit of effort going on around the world if, in the end, it saves their country from inundation." 

RMTU WOMEN

Emmajane Craig

What is your Union role and why did you become active?

I'm currently the youth rep/women's rep and I wasn't always pro union. I joined KiwiRail when I was 19 and I had very limited knowledge about what unions do and what their importance is. But I remember reading an article about how Labour unions were created and the history of them. So I started to take more of an interest in what was going on in my workplace and talking to some of the older staff who had dedicated most of their lives to their job. They were very helpful and gave me a run down of some of the history of the RMTU. I thought it would be something worth investing my time into and I slowly became more and more active.

Being apart of collective bargaining! And going on strike. I mean that is something you don't ever really want to happen in your working life but it is definitely something I will remember for the rest of my life as an activist!

What does your job entail?

Passenger operator. My job entails collecting fares, looking after the passengers and helping ensure the smooth running of the services.

Why did you choose this job?

I decided to become a passenger operator because I found that the hours aligned well with also being a student.

What's the best part of your job?

The best part of my job would have to be the people I work with. I don't think you'd find another work place with so many different types of personalities. Also the monthly briefings we have because there is free food - hahaha!

What bugs you about the job?

The only thing that springs to mind is that because we women work in such a male-dominated workplace sometimes co-workers or passengers treat you like a male. I often get referred to as 'mate' or



'bro' or even 'sir' a couple of times (LOL) but outside of work I'm actually quite girly so hearing this can sometimes be annoying.

What advice would you give to your 21 year old self?

What piece of advice would I give to my 21 year old self ??? Hmmmm! Quit your job, put study on hold and travel the world because there is no real order in how you must do 'life'. 🌍

ANZAC Day



Ray Hagenaars with the Hutt Workshop wreath.

Whangarei

GUR Trust volunteer Jade Pearl Simmonds beside the Passchendaele plaque



Petone



Some of the ever-increasing crowd gathering at Petone Railway Station each year.

Resolution achieved – trust lost

HERE at Lyttelton it's impossible to separate the branch notes from the story of the dispute which has been going on since negotiations broke down in March.

Readers of the last issue of The Transport Worker will recall that bargaining was at a crossroads in March and, after balloting, RMTU members issued notice of an overtime ban and then full stoppages.

The fight was over management pressure to introduce changes to hours of work in the container terminal to align the RMTU collective agreement with that of MUNZ. In short, we weren't going to sign up to changes that were potentially unsafe when Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) had no policy in place for managing fatigue.

Other factors were also in play:

- Negotiations had been unnecessarily prolonged by management's insistence on changes elsewhere in the port, notably the roster our mechanical maintenance members work. After months of talks we'd reached a point where we had a roster both sides could live with only then for the employer's advocate to make such a paltry financial offer to members to accept that it was unanimously rejected.

- Another issue was that LPC had agreed to a pay deal with MUNZ in return for changed hours of work for MUNZ members in the container terminal but had rolled out that deal to the relatively few MUNZ members who worked elsewhere in the port and who had not had to accept any changes. These workers work alongside RMTU members. Readers can imagine the effect that had on the mood on the waterfront.

Once we had issued the legally required 14 days notice of strike action we had mediation with LPC. This was a literal waste of time.

Their negotiators kept us waiting for four hours and when they finally came into the room there was no movement whatsoever in their position nor any expression of a willingness to move, despite the RMTU putting up half a dozen options



for settlement.

We later learned that the CEO was on a skiing holiday in the Tyrol while this was going on. At that point members blew a collective fuse.

Our negotiators kept trying.

We withdrew strike notices in the hope that would generate momentum in discussion. LPC responded by illegally locking us out. Clearly appeasement wasn't going to work. Members were furious.

A five day strike followed.

We received threatening letters from LPC about picketing wherein management seemed to think we were going to fight using the tactics of last century.

Our response was to use a range of creative techniques to further unify the members and generate positive publicity for our cause.

We leafleted the leafy neighbourhoods of LPC directors thus bringing the dispute home to the people who were responsible for, but insulated from, it; protests and rallies were organised at Christchurch City Council and Christchurch City Holdings Ltd, the shareholder of LPC; we staged publicity pickets at Lyttelton road and rail tunnels and succeeded in making prime-time TV news; local band The Eastern performed a gig in Lyttelton in our support; and we organised coordinated information pickets outside key transport companies, including Toll and KiwiRail, to highlight the impact on the wider regional economy.

Finally, we welcomed CEO Peter Davie home from his skiing holiday with a sign at the bottom of the road where he lives.

The public reaction was overwhelmingly positive.

The truth about our struggle – that it was about safety and treating people fairly – resonated with the public.

However, management remained intransigent so members instructed officials to hold a further ballot.

This time we issued notice that marine services members – the people responsible for berthing vessels – would be on strike. A lock out notice from LPC immediately followed. The RMTU retaliated by

issuing notice of a five day full strike by all members. Taking these together the port was facing closure for ten days.

People took notice.

Regardless of whether they were pro-union or pro-management the overwhelming feeling was that this dispute had to be sorted.

The RMTU calculated management could resolve the conflict for under \$200,000 yet the impact on the regional economy was going to be in the tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars once issues like reputational damage had been factored in.

Time ticked by and minds became more focused.

Senior management finally spoke directly with the RMTU for the first time since negotiations commenced last July.

An agreement 'in principle' was struck: Lock out and strike notices were withdrawn.

At the time of writing we have concluded a lengthy process sorting out the fine print on the terms of settlement. By the time you read this we will have either ratified the deal or members will have rejected it.

There are a number of reasons why the ratification vote could go either way.

The RMTU went into this bargaining with three objectives:

- real wage growth;
- no clawbacks; and
- building organisation.

We achieved all three quite early in the dispute.

However, 'mission creep' kicked in: ►

Members, quite justifiably, looked at other workers on the waterfront and demanded parity with them. Management's arrogance and intransigence had fuelled members' anger. One boss actually went on the record accusing the RMTU of using safety as a smokescreen for our industrial agenda. This, from a man who walks past the memorial to the last worker killed on the waterfront every morning. Finally we have a container terminal manager who is on a witch hunt and disciplining, and in some cases dismissing, workers while ignoring a host of systemic failings, the most notable of which is the lack of a working fatigue management policy.

The lack of co-ordination at LPC means the current industrial relations manager is marginalised, often being told of management decisions by the RMTU.

For the same reason we don't think the good work being achieved by the health and safety managers will make a positive difference.

It's fair to say that trust between the RMTU and LPC management is at a low we haven't seen for many, many years.

It will be a long time before it is restored. 🇳🇿

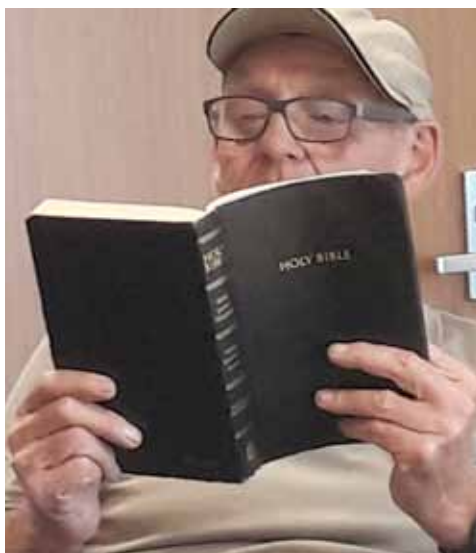


Families, friends and supportive unions joined the strikers from LPC in their quest for fairer terms and conditions.



During the strike action CEO Peter Davies was skiing over seas. We greeted his return





Engineering students awarded scholarships

TWO eighteen-year-old students with a passion for engineering have been awarded Ernest William File scholarships for 2018.

Hannah Hudson (Christchurch) and Anton Rufer (Tirau) (both pictured right) have been awarded \$2,000 each towards their first year of study at the University of Canterbury. The scholarship supports the sons and daughters of members of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) in their first year of a degree at a New Zealand university.

Hannah was dux at Cashmere High School (2017) where she studied physics, geography, calculus, chemistry and mathematics. She also completed 60 points towards a degree at the University of Canterbury as part of its STAR programme, including two papers on Antarctica.

She is now studying towards a Bachelor of Engineering, majoring in natural resources engineering.



"I have always been fascinated with how the world works," says Hannah. "Natural resources engineering allows me to combine this interest with my passion for problem solving and the natural environment."

Hannah has also been involved as a competitor, coach and evaluator with Future Problem Solving New Zealand, winning the international title for her division in 2016.

She has spoken at many large public events since she was 14 years old, including TEDx Christchurch.

Also studying engineering at the University of Canterbury is Anton Rufer, who

is majoring in mechatronics or software engineering.

"Engineering is a subject I have been passionate about from a young age," he said. "I enjoy being creative and solving problems, so I aim to get a job that involves these aspects of my personality and puts my study of engineering into practice, as well as some hands-on work and a bit of a challenge."

Anton is also a keen sportsman, particularly in rowing and football.

The Ernest William File Scholarship was established in 1978 by members of the New Zealand Locomotive Engineers' Association as a tribute to Ernest William File, the retiring general secretary at the time. The scholarship was adopted and expanded by the RMTU and extended to all members.

The scholarship is administered by Universities New Zealand . More information is available at <https://bit.ly/2k5uy30>

\$1,500 AD&D

All members of RMTU are now covered by a \$1,500 Accidental Death & Dismemberment Benefit, including \$500 spouse coverage and a further \$500 coverage on dependent children. This is an automatic membership benefit of belonging to the RMTU.

Members also have the option to increase their coverage an additional \$10,000 which costs just \$2 for the first year. Please reply on line at ailnz.co.nz/request to have an AIL representative deliver your certificate of coverage and explain the additional insurance coverage available. This is very important to you and your family.

Please note: To qualify for the \$10,000 of additional ADB coverage, an AIL representative must visit you, obtain an enrollment form and collect premium for the first year. You may renew annually thereafter for \$5.



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A.M. Best, one of the oldest and most respected insurance ratings companies, has rated American Income Life as A+ (Superior) for overall Financial Strength (as of 6/15).

Union's backing wins ACC case

IT'S thanks to the Union and its care and concern for members that has Fraser Langbein on the way to full recovery with ACC now paying.

Two years ago Palmerston North KiwiRail structures gangster, Fraser and a mate were out hunting when the quad bike was steered into a rather large, but hidden, rock. The sudden stop tipped Fraser off and down a cliff followed by the quad itself which crushed his arm and wrist.

The most serious damage was to his wrist which needed specialist attention. It appears that Fraser was born with an extended ulna (forearm bone) and the weight of the quad pushed it into and through his wrist. However, ACC, claiming it was a prior



Post op Fraser now has to recover.

condition, were not prepared to pay and Fraser, anxious to get back to work, paid for the op himself.

"I thought I would try and contest that later. Meanwhile, I needed to get back to work," he said.

Pain continued and he returned to the orthopaedic surgeon who said that a new technique may solve the problem.

Again ACC refused to pay so Fraser

spoke to RMTU general secretary Wayne Butson about his problem.

"Wayne told me to give him all the paperwork I had and he'd talk to Hazel Armstrong Law," said Fraser. "I did all that and they came back quickly saying they would take my case."

Long story short, ACC came up with the money just before the scheduled operation.

"I thank my union membership and that the Union is there behind us all the way," he said. "Far too many workers are simply unaware that the union is there to assist – and especially in times of crisis."

When the Transport Worker spoke to Fraser mid-May he had just had his plaster removed and faced a further four weeks of recuperation and physio before returning to work – albeit to lighter duties. 🇳🇿



Picket ban

*Josh Meyer
Timaru
points to the
BS no picketing
sign at
Port Timaru.*

CAPTION COMPETITION



The winner of the last issue's competition to find appropriate words to describe RMTU health and safety organiser Karen Fletcher testing SCSR breathing is:

Brent Falaniko

"Initiated in 1914 KiwiRail gas mask trials for tunnels finally comes to an end."

Well done Brent!

AROUND THE BRANCHES

AUCKLAND RAIL

AUCKLAND METRO survived the March madness only to have the wheels fall off in May. And I mean the wheels actually came off when EMU 279 derailed in the Britomart Tunnel (May 9). Luckily there were no injuries but it blocked platforms one and two for two days and caused major disruption to Auckland commuters. It is looking like poor rail is

the likely cause and with TAIC and NZTA both investigating, the answer will be found.

The North Island main trunk line between Papakura and Pukekohe is to be electrified by 2020 (the gap between NIMT electrification and the Auckland network is narrowing). AT have ordered 15 more EMUs. At this point there is no sign of the third mainline between Westfield and Wiri.

The City Rail link is progressing with

the cut and cover work but still no word on who has got the contract to bore the tunnel nor build a new station at Mount Eden and associated fly overs to link up with the Western Line.

Wage round time is coming around again for Kiwi Rail and Transdev Auckland. This is probably a good time to raise the issue of regional pay rates. It is not only the cost of living in Auckland but the time we sit in traffic getting to and from work. A trip that normally takes 20 minutes can

increase to 90 minutes during peak traffic and peak traffic starts earlier and lasts longer – and that is without any accidents. And now government and local government are going to introduce a fuel tax for the Auckland region.

In July 2017, a complaint was lodged by Christine Towers, and acted on by Ben Thompson from Hazel Armstrong Law.

Christine challenged that people who were employed by Transdev Auckland prior to 23/3/18 were not paid correctly on termination of their employment and that Transdev Auckland failed to pay the full entitlement of pro rata shift and long service leave.

After mediation failed, this complaint was taken to the Employment Relations Authority. The Authority member Vicki

Campbell found in favour of the RMTU. Her ruling said payments made on termination for employees who qualify for shift leave, must include an accrued leave payment, proportionate to an employee's underlying entitlement.

Transdev Auckland are now paying out all money owed. 🌐

NORTHLAND RAIL

It is great to see some long overdue spending on the North Auckland Line with turnouts being refurbished, crossings upgraded, joints welded, concrete sleepers on tight curves, ballast discharged and new wooden bridge piles – a rarity from the normal hand-me-downs.

The membership joined the huge turnout on ANZAC day morning with an invite by the local RSA to honour fallen railway workers. The boys did themselves proud and made a unique memorial piece for the solemn occasion (see photo).

On the local politics front we see the old boys' network at the Northland Regional Council (NRC) still very sour that the Tories got kicked to the curb spoiling their blind cheer-leading for road over rail. Late last month NRC Chairman Bill Shepherd put out this fabricated diatribe in his monthly report:

"Other modes of transport are clearly important to Northland as well, however, no other mode of transport can effectively take the place of the 98% of our heavy transport that goes by road and the 100% of our tourist and light transport that also goes by road. For example, it would take a massive investment in rail (several billion dollars) to multiply the goods transported by rail by five times and still rail would be providing less than 10% of our transport solutions."

Shepherd was backed up by NRC transport committee chair John Bain. Who exactly do these clowns purport to represent? Certainly not pro rail members of the public or numerous other Northlanders wanting a truly integrated transport strategy.

Bain's consistent churlish attacks on the new government, demanding a gold plated, four lane highway south of Whangarei are rapidly becoming boorish, and is disrespectful to the wider community of Northland.

Many, like those in the far north, suffer roads that are more comparable to goat tracks. They will be heartened by the new government which has axed National's roads of significance in favour of increases in funding for regional roads which were long under funded and neglected by the previous government.

It also appears the NRC chair, along with the region's mayors, were also gullible to former Transport and Economic Development minister Simon Bridges' 'pork barrel politics', something Northlanders were used to after Bridges' 10 bridges for Northland electioneering stunt during the 2015 North-



land by-election.

It will be very interesting to see the final draft of the NRC 10 year transport plan and whether this time a proper integrated transport strategy is adopted.

If not, citizens get an opportunity at next year's local body election to vote for representatives who are in tune with the whole community.

Northland branch's Alby Barr reminded councillors before they go into the 10 year transport plan deliberations: "You've

already got one foot in the grave with an unpalatable proposal of an average 29% rates' increase. If you want to dig a deeper hole then a NO rail option will be the final nail in your coffins. Your burials will be made easy. I will be happy to read out your eulogies."

Suffice to say, some of them will suddenly find a spine they never thought they had against the old men's club.

Brothers and sisters we trust you will all enjoy the change of (political) season. 🌐

WAIKATO RAIL

WE had small but enthusiastic turnout for Workers' Memorial Day, at the Te Rapa memorial, and the RMTU flag was flown at half-mast for the day.

The next Just and Fair Culture training day for Waikato will be held in early August.

The Waikato/Bay of Plenty local industrial council met on April 30 at Mt Maunganui and the following issues were discussed: The provision of torches (which are being purchased), improve the supply for PPE, servicing training is to be amped up, the work on the Te Rapa sand tower is continu-


ing, the cab air tightness of DLs are being worked on, the Huntly yard lights are to be improved, the

shift of Kinlieth from the Mt Maunganui branch to the Te Rapa branch was agreed as a good move, the anticipated arrival of the new Te Rapa branch manager who has a lot of rail experience in the UK, improving the operation of the D&A policy to ensure that everyone knows how it works, improve the role of H&S reps in accident investigations and ensure Waikato H&S reps receive the appropriate training, weed spraying from Te Rapa to Mission Bush is to be completed asap, the poor radio reception in the Te Rapa yard is being worked on and the Te

Rapa rosters and manning levels are still being worked on by the roster committee of Mike Fleck, Graeme Ducker and Steve Peacock.

The I&E members are working through a number of remits for this year's collective agreement negotiations based on relativities and increased responsibilities and re working the flexi worker clause as it seems to be very confusing.

There is an increased number of renovations at the CT site, a new smoko room and a new office for the CT operations leader.

We held the Toll Networks claims meeting on May 17 with six claims being put forward by the Hamilton members. 

BAY OF PLENTY RAIL

DUE to the high number of Bay issues which have been raised, an informal local industrial council meeting was held to work through them. Those items included the stopping issue in Kawerau which we thought had been resolved, with the appointment of a permanent stopper which was returning to


the status quo. However, we have been advised that if the stopper leaves, that position will not be replaced as 'stopping is part of normal duties'.

This means if the matter is not resolved at KIC to the satisfaction of our members in Kawerau then a dispute will be raised with KiwiRail.

The 'stopping rate' and AS link at Murupara have been resolved to the members'

satisfaction.

KiwiRail has agreed that they need to respond a lot quicker when there are staff shortages to ensure that the Kawerau yard can be worked safely. We resolved the issue of stop shortages as there was confusion as to who ordered the stops!

The Sulphur Point roster saga continues with a meeting of the roster committee of Dean Smith and John Swindells with management to be set up in an attempt to resolve it once and for all. 

BAY OF PLENTY PORT

THE C3 truck driver's collective agreement (CA) negotiations are moving along as C3 have supplied a draft agreement for negotiation. A bargaining meeting is being planned with delegates John Carmine and Paul Johnson-Lee.

The C3 lasher's CA negotiations are moving along with a draft terms of settlement on the table. The delegates involved are Chuck Atkins and Sonny Mahia.

The C3 logs tier 3A variation is still unresolved, but there is a planned meeting on May 1 with the following delegates attending a Delegates One training course at the Mount, Simon Naylor Port of Tauranga, Kurt Spencer and Bevan Peacock, both Ixom, Dallas Tamati, Jason Kuka, Neil Donaldson, Chuck Atkins, Sonny Mahia,

Christina Walker, Joe MaGuinness and Paul Johnson-Lee from C3. All are keen to attend

the next training course.

We have finally initialled the POTL/RMTU CA, and it has been sent to the parties for signing.


The Ixom Morrinsville CA is up for re negotiation on August 1 and we are waiting for Kurt Spencer, our lead delegate, to return from his duck shooting holiday so that we can hold a claims meeting.

The Champion CA expires on July 31 and the bargaining delegates Gary Cluitt and Corey Power are looking forward to the renegotiations.

The branch is actively involved with the Tauranga Moana methyl bromide action group which is attempting to eliminate the use of the substance in the port. It is proving a hard slog as there are many

different components to the debate, councils, forest owners, Genera, the Port of Tauranga, Worksafe NZ and of course the arrangements New Zealand has with the destination countries such as India, China, Japan and South Korea, who all have different log requirements. The group will agitate towards a solution.

Paul Kleiss and Gordon Laing, have recently retired. Paul was a linesman with 40 years' service, and Gordon an electrician with 35+ years' service. All the best to you both for your retirement.

On May 9, after a long battle with cancer, Lawrence Fougere [Fudge] passed away peacefully at his home in Tauranga. Fudge was a popular member of the RMTU at Quality Marshalling where he worked as a yardy and lately in security at the Port of Tauranga. Fudge will sadly be missed by his workmates. 

NAPIER RAIL

WELL isn't the year flying by? In April, the annual inspectors' conference was held in Masterton over three days. There was a very good turnout from both South and North Island inspectors. The conference covered changes to detailed inspection which comes into effect in 2019.

Training/succession planning and manning levels in structures gangs were also talked about.

As to an update on what is happening in the Napier area: Structures gangs from Napier, Taumarunui and Tauranga have

been re-sleeping four bridges north of Napier on the Wairoa line over the past month. It's been awesome to have other KiwiRail gangs come and help with the work. Also we have been busy on the upgrade of bridge 216 at Awatoto on the Palmerston North/Gisborne line (PNGL) with two new walkways, replacement of running beams and 100% re sleeper which will be on going until June some time.

The heavy track gang from Palmerston North has been working from Wairoa south putting in new turnouts with composite sleepers. Meanwhile the signals team has been busy doing level crossing/safe road upgrades and recertifications north of

Napier.

Closer to home progress is being made on the new workshops at the freight yard at Ahuriri and it won't be long before we will be shifting from Hydraband Road.

Napier RMTU branch welcomes Fungi Chawasarira to Napier track gang also Tylar Pearson to the Dannevirke track gang.

Freight on the PNGL has been constant with large log trains and regular freight using the track.

Our local branch AGM is coming up in August. Wage negotiations between RMTU and KiwiRail – interesting and fun times ahead

All in all an extremely busy start to the year. In unity and solidarity. Be safe 'til next time. 🇳🇿

HUTT WORKSHOPS

HELLO to all as we prepare to round off this financial year and get on with new projects for FY19. It continues to be a busy year with locos, wagons, passenger bogie sets and other 'unplanned work' that suddenly becomes important requiring our attention. Not to mention infrastructure upgrades to buildings to get them up to some percentage of the building code.

Industrially, all has been rather quiet now that the HPHE culture has been taught to most management and staff and allowed to filter across the site. However, there was an incident earlier this year with our network services members reaching the end of their already stretched tethers.

This arose due to very sub-standard under-foot/wheel conditions in an outside storage area which resulted in the mighty Red Card being pulled. This brought a very abrupt halt to the madness and frustration

and a number of parties to the table to nut out a plan to address the issues at hand. We colloquially called this the 'Row 10 incident' which was the result of a breakdown in both documented and communicated information. The required meeting involved local management, Hutt HSAT, the RMTU, KiwiRail property and the facilities management contractor. A three stage plan to rectify things was subsequently produced, agreed to, ratified, communicated and executed (see photos of Row 10). Never underestimate the power of a united front to address any serious issues or acts of wrong doing!

As indicated last issue, the board of directors (plus other dignitaries) visited the site in February to gain a first-hand appreciation of the site and the need for some serious investment to keep not just us, but the railway operation, operating.

There were a number of short presentations to, and questions asked by, the Board to gain a clear understanding of the journey so far and the request for some capital investment. As it turns out we, and in fact several parts of rolling stock and asset

services, were given some 'petty cash' to carry on with some much smaller but important projects in the interim whilst we await the outcome of the Boards' financial deliberations.

We hope to get some serious money to address our biggest business liability – the wheel-set operation where the team has been nursing some seriously worn out and life-expired asset for several years now. We also hope that the news will be forthcoming this financial year and not the next!

The Hotworks project appears to be in some hot water. A large order to our



preferred supplier for a specific grade of (flame-resistant) overalls for welders seems to have gone up in smoke as we were supplied with sub-standard PPE, or at least something that was less than what we ordered. As we submitted these notes for publishing, a number of guilty parties were seen scorching a path towards the hills after they were unable to cover their backsides with sufficient protection that would withstand a robust audit. I hope some measure of accountability is forthcoming as we're talking about some serious coin here under the auspices of health and safety. Mismanagement of funds always has a downstream negative impact on the rank and file staff and we all have an interest in ensuring that all monies are well-spent.

Another question over accountability is who the heck is meant to distribute the minutes from the MCC meetings? We have not seen any from the last few. We know

they were held but where's the documentation?

Both ANZAC Day at Petone Railway Station and Workers' Memorial Day at Hutt were well attended and thanks to delegates Ray Hagenaaars and Slade Pilcher for stepping up in the absence of the branch secretary and chairman.

The staff survey results are out with the data breakdown scheduled for dissemination after the closing date for these notes. Whilst we haven't been given a copy of the latter, indications are that we've scored pretty well and there appears to be a direct correlation between results and those areas of the company where HPHE has been introduced and put into play. This bodes well for the future as KiwiRail continues with this sort of investment in its people.

To round off, the MECA is up for renewal and details have just been published



in Issue 4 of The Activist. A dates and rates rollover seems to be preferred. What are your thoughts? Talk to your delegate.

Until next time, be safe and look out for your mates. 🇳🇿

WELLINGTON PORT

KIA ORA and greetings from the windy city. The deconstruction and rebuild of the container terminal and other parts of the port is in full swing. Extensive damage suffered as a result of the 2016 Kaikoura earthquake has necessitated the demolition of a number of cargo sheds and buildings around the port. The container wharf, which suffered major damage and subsidence is in the process of being demolished with a full rebuild over the next few years. Our colleagues in Lytleton will full know what this is like.

The port security centre is as ever very busy, coping with the many contractors onsite as a result of the earthquake. This on top of the continuing growth in containers, logging trucks and logging shunts and the many car transporters entering and exiting the gates in a timely fashion. A truly stressful job which has seen our security people stretched to the limit at times.

The shift from straddle carriers to reach stackers has kept the lads busy in the workshop. The port has purchased seven new Hyster reach stackers to compliment the straddles until such time as a decision is made as to how the terminal will work in the



Workshop manager, Tim Gresham (l) and John Smith.

future ie: straddles vs RTGs and bombcarts.

Long serving member John (Smithy) Smith from the maintenance team has hung



up his overalls and entered into retirement. John started his career with port back in the early 70s, took a break and returned to the UK for a spell only to once again return to the then Wellington Harbour Board as a rigger. A diligent worker Smithy would always keep a check on the various crane wires about the port with his 20 litre tub of grease in hand. A great guy who will be sorely missed by his workmates. The branch wishes you all the best in your retirement 'Smithy'.

October 2017 saw the commencement of our combined union's collective negotiations. With a new manager heading the Centreport negotiating team, it was an unknown to the combined unions as to how the talks would pan out in the upcoming weeks/months. Fortunately this manager took an entirely new approach. With new ideas and a real positive manner on how he thought things would progress. A refreshing change from previous contract negotiations.

Based on the union claims to have real wage growth, recognition for shift work, skills recognition, hours of work/life balance, fatigue management, and fairness across the differing work groups in the cargo section, the employer came back with

what become known as the 'Transformed workforce model'. Essentially a combination of the current cargo handlers and the empty depot drivers into a single pool of workers. All current P24s would be offered the choice of becoming a P40 (unheard of in this scribe's opinion and possibly a 1st for a NZ port) a fixed/flexi roster to minimise fatigue and to have a better work/life balance and extensive resources put into

training and upskilling the cargo handlers. Recruitment of a further 8 to 10 cargo handlers and maximising the use of the cargo handlers to minimise the use of 3rd party contract labour. A ratification meeting was held on March 20 where the CA was passed with a majority vote.

Be safe out there and watch your mates' backs 🇳🇿



MARLBOROUGH PORT

ON January 12 the staff at Port Marlborough said goodbye to Larry Patterson after 41 years of service. At his farewell we had present one ex harbour master, one ex wharfinger, four harbour engineers, 10 past harbour

workers, four chief executives, one pilot boat master and many family and friends.

Larry joined the MHB on the 14/08/1977 (and the Harbour Workers Union) as a tradesman mechanic and has been a key member of the Port's workshop team ever since, undertaking general engineering

construction and maintenance work. Larry says his job at the port has enabled him to support his family in their education and sporting interests. Both Larry's sons have been accomplished rowers, one is a member of a NZ rowing team. Larry says "it's been great, there are a million things that we've done, changes to the ferry terminal, link spans, long arm and so on for all the different ferries. It's never been boring."

He will continue to enjoy getting a plan and building something, he says. Evidence of his love of a good project: Larry built himself a light plane about ten years ago and has a second about half finished.

"It's a good reward and enjoyable to feel like you've achieved something when you've finished a project. Even today I go for a fly over Havelock and it's hard to believe what it is now from what it once was. The company has done something amazing over the 40 years."

Enjoy your retirement our brother. 🇳🇿



Larry Patterson (seated centre) surrounded by the workshop team.

NELSON PORT

WE have hit the busy season now with fruit in full swing. With two container services now calling on Saturday, Maersk taking all of Sunday



Hayden Stamp, batchman.

and log ships busier than ever, the pressure is on to have a roster in place for cargo handlers. With the push in place for a fatigue management system it is a well-known fact that the number one control for the hazard of fatigue is an effective roster and organisation of labour.

Port Nelson are endeavouring to enter the 21st century by instituting labour allocation software as the job is now too big for the archaic manual system we have used in the past to allocate labour. While progress is glacial at best we are coming from a long way back. To be fair, at the time of writing this report, labour allocation is probably at the worst it has ever been. It is not too much to ask that we have more than 24 hours' notice of when we are working so workers can organise their lives. We still struggle with a mainly casual labour force to staff a business that operates 24/7.

Other areas of the Port continue to be busy with Quay Connect dealing with the majority of bottles and wine for the Marlbor-



Matt McKay operating the mobile crane.

ough region. Quay Pack continue producing Flexi Tanks and loading containers with timber and MDF.

The security department are busier than ever dealing with a number of entrances to the port and transporting crew and maintaining the number of card checks to satisfy Maritime NZ.

Sickness, accident and death



The New Zealand Locomotive Engineers' Sickness, Accident and Death Benefit Fund

In the last 10 years 230 locomotive engineers had to retire due to medical reasons. They received a total payout of \$4,737,097 from the above Fund. LEs who didn't belong to the Fund and who were forced to retire did not receive anything.

You could be next to miss out!

For as little as \$219 a year your future – or those of your next of kin – could be better assured.

Contact:

Debby Green, PO Box 813,
Wellington
Telephone: (04) 499-2066
Fax: (04) 471-0896
debby.green@rmtunion.org.nz

**Attention LEs
Join this Fund now for
your own peace of mind**

R&D often now have trucks queued out the gate and space in the container terminal is at a premium.


Log volumes surge ahead as mature forests are harvested in the region and we seem to have vessels queued up in the bay waiting to come in most weeks.

Still, the Port continues to grow as Lowe Street is acquired from the Council and Quay Connect will be brought inside the fence. The newly acquired straddle lifter will then transport containers to and from

this facility.

The slip way remediation project and associated reclamation is almost complete and will expand the log yard storage by a significant factor.

There is talk of the acquisition of new Leibherr mobile harbour cranes. This is long overdue as our old LHM400s are well past their use by date and starting to cost a bundle to run. There is still a proposal to finish the refurb of the main wharf so we can use the whole thing.

So we continue to be busy with Union issues and with plenty of work. 



CANTERBURY RAIL

BUSY times at the Canterbury branch. Let's start with the most important matter – health and safety. We've made huge progress on the implementation of the introduction of compressed air breathing apparatus for locomotive engineers operating in the Otira Tunnel and by the time you read this the issue should be resolved. It has been a lengthy process and there have been a few challenges along the way, some requiring determined advocacy on the part of the RMTU representatives involved from both Canterbury and West Coast branches. It's unfair to single out individuals as it's been a team effort and one that has been supported by national office. Well done to all – this is a fine example of how we fight for the living.

Which leads us nicely into reporting on the very good attendance we had at Workers' Memorial Day this year: a fitting way to mourn the dead and reaffirm our resolve to be relentless in our struggle for the living. It was great to have so many active and retired

members from both our branch and the Lyttelton Port branch turn out in poor weather

and it was also very good to see such a strong presence from management. A big thank you to everyone who helped the day go smoothly - including signals, operations and train control who organised the trains to halt and the bells to sound at the crossing near the memorial gardens. Those bells are the equivalent of the Last Post at our

ceremony and are very moving.

The RMTU's dispute at Lyttelton Port has had a huge impact on the economy of the region and nowhere has this been more evident than on the railway. The Port branch organised a very successful publicity picket at the Heathcote end of the Lyttelton rail tunnel and all trains stopped. This generated a great deal of media coverage but the dignified and disciplined way our members organised the picket meant safety was not compromised and the message that got out to the public was a positive one. A big thank you to everyone involved for keeping calm and supporting our RMTU brothers and sisters at the port.

Of course, one impact of not being able to take secondary strike action under New Zealand's repressive anti-strike legislation was that we could not legally stop work and prevent the railing of freight diverted to and from Port Chalmers and Timaru port during the Lyttelton strike and lockout. This meant the dispute dragged on for longer than necessary. If rail had stopped in support of the port workers we are sure the employer would have been compelled to settle very quickly. As it happened,



Peter Dalton, fitter team leader from servicing (l) and Luke James.

◀ KiwiRail made a lot of money moving goods up and down the Main South Line!

The RMTU KiwiRail members in the service centre have settled into their new abode at Ensors Road where there is plenty of parking and space. A good job as they have been busy dealing with the impact of the port strike.

Over at Toll veteran delegate Tony Dreaver is stepping down and handing the reins over to Malcolm Ross who did his delegate training in March, just in time for the commencement of the Toll wage round. Thank you Tony for the immense amount of work you have put in over the years with a succession of challenges including two wage rounds, several major earthquakes, and more changes of management than

we care to remember. Yet, you remained cool-headed through it all. Big shoes to fill for Malcolm but we know that he's up to the job.

In network services we have been grinding through the usual individual and collective issues. One challenge is the growing crisis in attracting suitable new staff. We are going to be in big trouble very soon if KiwiRail don't improve their ability to recruit the right people efficiently and smoothly. There has been good work done on this through an HPHE project our branch secretary has been involved in but it's clear that if something tangible doesn't happen to how we recruit very soon, there is a risk this work could be wasted.

On that theme we've had a string of

people retire: Wayne Solomon, Neil Bryant from loco and Ed Foster-Lynam from mechanical. This represents a huge amount of institutional knowledge going out the door. We simply have to get on top of this if rail is to make the most of the opportunities that will come our way under a Government that is committed to making rail a key player in our transport infrastructure.

Finally, and on a positive note, it looks like the passenger service to Picton could be back on stream sooner rather than later. Our scribe hears 22 October is the target date, hopefully in time to make the most of next tourist season!

Stay safe as and stick together as winter and wage talks get underway! 🌐

WEST COAST RAIL

AN eventful few months here on the Coast as is usual. We recently had a full train shut down to enable some major works to be done including the Aicken's Crossing upgrade; replacing a damaged door on the Otira Tunnel; and replacing ballast guards on bridge 48 Midland Line. A great team effort by all involved to get the work done in some very challenging weather conditions in the 36 hour window provided. This demonstrates the commitment and skill of our networks members in keeping the railway in good condition while

working safely.

Safety has very much been top of the agenda in the Otira Tunnel and we've been working with the Canterbury branch and KiwiRail to ensure that Worksafe's directives around the introduction of compressed air breathing apparatus (CABA) for locomotive engineers working in the tunnel is complied with. At the time of writing we think we're there. Another great team effort by the RMTU.

On Saturday April 28 Workers Memorial Day was commemorated in conjunction with May Day celebrations in Blackball. A great turnout of different unions and poli-

ticians meant the public were treated to a day of speeches, plays, songs and debates. It was enlightening to hear so much positivity for workers coming from the politicians who attended – Poto Williams Labour MP for Christchurch East in particular.

Very timely in view of the dispute between our fellow members and Lyttelton Port. Our branch was proud to make a modest donation to their strike fund.

Now with winter bearing down it's a timely reminder to take care out in the field. We work in some of the most difficult terrain in the world for a railway, so we have to be world class on safety. 🌐

TIMARU RAIL

TIMARU PORT has been – and is – a hive of activity on both the business and industrial fronts.

The RMTU's dispute with Lyttelton Port meant a great deal of freight was redirected to Timaru and our members at Quality Marshalling (QM) fell foul of New Zealand's vicious anti-strike legislation when they spoke of taking secondary action in support of our brothers and sisters up the coast. The exchange between delegates and management remained amicable but it was made very clear that the full weight of the law

would be used against us if we took action. It's about time the playing field was levelled. LPC

illegally locked out our comrades yet we can't legally take action in their support. That stinks.

The volume of freight coming across the wharf went up, as did the amount being moved by rail. The impact of the action was plain to see.

Then there was a fire on the Dong Won 701 which rapidly deteriorated. The tug Te Maru was committed to helping control the event and could not be released for shipping. To make matters worse there were heavy swells which did not improve for

some time. When things did settle down the Maersk container vessel was brought in using a single tug but two bulk vessels had to wait for the support of two tugs.

All very exciting but the kind of excitement we could do without. At least no-one was hurt.

We've just initiated bargaining for the renewal of the RMTU-QM collective agreement and at the time of writing are preparing claims. Fatigue management and rostering is likely to be a top priority after the work we did at last year's RMTU Ports Forum. We will keep you posted and hopefully have a result by the next edition of the branch notes. 🌐

OAMARU RAIL

SIGNALS maintainer David Duncan hard at work at Oamaru track depot. David is a member of a very select group of RMTU members who live and work in Oamaru, employed by KiwiRail networks and operations and Toll, the jewel of the South.

Oamaru is one of the most isolated towns in New Zealand if Air New Zealand is to be believed and it's the railway that gives the lie to this. The railway is maintained and operated by dedicated RMTU members and is the lifeline that connects Oamaru with Dunedin and Timaru.

David and his partner have just bought a house in Oamaru



and he is looking forward to playing his part in KiwiRail.

OTAGO RAIL

BUSY times in the Otago rail branch with Dunedin railways involved in the rebuild of SA/SD class carriages previously operated by Transdev Auckland for the company Antipodean Explorer NZ. They intend to introduce them as a luxury tourist train journey throughout New Zealand. In April, 16 carriages arrived at Dunedin for conversion to sleepers, restaurant, lounge and baggage cars, with another 15 to follow. This means that Hillside Workshops are now back in business as the perfect site to store and work on such conversions – and the extra employment that will create.

Following the retirement of Dunedin Railways CEO Murray Bond, the new CEO Craig Osborne has arrived to take up the reins. He was, in a previous life, CFO for Real Journeys, but that's not as bad as it seems as Craig has the intention of expanding Dunedin's railway business by introducing new services and creating more job opportunities for members and meet the increasing swell of tourist numbers coming our way.

Joe Carson, guard at Dunedin Railways has put himself out to pasture by retiring after 47 years service to the various forms of New Zealand railways, and to Dunedin railways with which he has been associated from the beginning. Joe has always been a stalwart of the union movement. His last train was to Middlemarch and he had his own carriage attached, full of workmates, friends and well wishers along for his final trip. All the best Joe.

Lyall Kelpie, train manager at Dunedin is

retiring as delegate after some six years in the position and will hand over the baton at the next AGM in July. He says he will continue to support the new delegate and the union until then. You've done great work Lyall and your combination of steely resolve and gentlemanly good manners has made you a formidable advocate for our union and its members. We really appreciate all the effort and time you've put in.

On the track side of KiwiRail, things are a bit of a challenge. Staffing issues exist throughout network services in New Zealand and particularly in Otago. Historically network services was normally targeted when restructures came around as this is, and has been, an easy fix for past managers to save on expenditure when the pinch came on. The result of this is a loss of experienced staff (especially after the last round of redundancies). In Otago, and if the word going around the traps is on the money, in many other areas of KiwiRail, there is a severe shortage of staff in this side of the business. We have a ganger being in charge of himself, and a heavy maintenance crew with a ganger and one staff member. Vacancies are not being filled, and more and more staff are hurting themselves at work leading to further pressure on staffing. The injuries may be a direct result of under staffing, stress at having to complete large job tasks that have been set with small staff numbers, and just the general stress of having to work long and hard to cover for the lack of people.

So how have we come to this stage? Redundancies have happened and while that

is in the past we're all prisoners of history. It seems that some managers are blaming our recruitment people and the processes required to recruit new staff, and our recruitment people are blaming managers for not being pro-active and pushing harder for more staff! Part of the problem seems to be even after passing the high standard required to start at KiwiRail we seem to sometimes recruit the wrong person for the wrong job. Also we miss out on possible candidates because we take too long to actually employ people. And by the time we have informed them that they have a job offer with KiwiRail they have moved on to another employer. Usually when somebody applies for a job they are interested in the job but are not going to wait around for months to find out if their application is successful or not.

What is the solution? Well maybe the people on the interview panel could consist of the manager in charge of the gang where extra staff is needed. The ganger in charge of that particular gang (rather than someone working in an office and not really at the coalface) and someone from recruitment. A happy trio that can make a decision relatively quickly on two or three possible candidates. Drug and alcohol test should be required on that day. The security checks should happen quickly and we should be on our way to employing a new staff member. Oh yes, one more thing, perhaps offering a more attractive starting rate would go a long way in today's employment environment. Too easy? Maybe, but it would be a start. 🌐

PORT CHALMERS

WITH the retirement of Geoff Plunket, and the new CEO taking over the helm, there has been quite a lot going on with the management structure within Port Otago in the last few months.

The first to jump ship was the general manager warehousing. He has been replaced by the planning and control manager moving over to take that slot, and the company recruiting from outside for that position. By the sounds of it they are getting an individual who is willing to listen to staff.

Next to go was general manager commercial. Recruiting is still in progress by the sound of it. The next to throw the towel in was general manager human resources and taking with her the plant services manager. Stepping up to the plate for the HR spot is the HR advisor and the mechanical supervisor has moved up to the plant services manager's seat.

Coming down the ladder a bit we have the Southfreight depot manager, retiring, and the depot supervisor of container services being promoted to depot manager of Port Otago container services and also being made responsible for both port and town depots. The name change for Southfreight Ltd is Port Otago City Depot, with the manager being replaced by a supervisor.

The terminal operations manager's position has been removed and in its place two new manager positions have been created: ship operations manager and yard operations manager.

So as you see from above there may have been quite a shake up by the CEO. The new broom and all that.

Projects that are currently being worked on are, Project Orange and a roster project for the terminal team.

Project Orange is a PPE (high visibility clothing) project that will kit out all staff with fit-for-purpose clothing to include shirts, trousers, polar fleece, overalls, wet

weather coat and trousers. With a roll out of other items specific to work area items, down the track. This project is before the board of directors as I scribe this. The supplier has been picked and all clothing items are off the shelf for quick supply. Research has been done on the laundry of the items and it looks like the overalls will be dry cleaned as opposed to washing.

The rostering project on the other hand is hitting a few brick walls by the sound of it and we are unsure how far down the track it is. Would be great to get a plan together for terminal staff and get away from having to phone in at 3pm each day to find out your next shift.

Had a problem with one of the company side loaders going on fire, so now they have all been fitted out with fire suppressing equipment. The operator of the side loader had to jump off the side of the machine, and is now at home on ACC after his trip and fall activity.

The daylight hours may be shorter now, but we are still the sunny south. No frosts to talk of yet. 🌞

SOUTHLAND RAIL

CONGRATULATIONS to former branch chair Gavin Mortimore on reaching retirement after 47 years service in rail. Mort has been a stalwart supporter and active member of the RMTU and was our general secretary's best man at his wedding. Mort, we want to give you a heartfelt thanks and to wish you a long, happy and healthy retirement. We know you won't be a stranger and we look forward to keeping you entertained with stories of how the railway survives without you.

In other news, Invercargill LEs have asked for the company to provide the detail around an A level, at risk shift, 2035-0635. So far we have discovered that the timetable was written for double headed DXs pulling 2000t.

The reality is DFT DC combo is somewhat less powerful and slower. We've also found out that there have been no provision made for the reduced horse power of the notch six limit on the DCs which happens in the summer to prevent track side fires.

The DCs are prone to sparking track side vegetation. All these calculations are included into

making up the footplate time which determines the length of a shift which is already at the maximum of 10 hrs. Our suspicion is that we are in excess of that time and it won't stand up to scrutiny. We have more information on this on the way.

Moral of the story? Don't leave it up to the employer to set the parameters which impacts on your health and safety. Challenge everything.

There was a rumour of running some coal out of Nightcaps to Bluff but the latest is it's not going ahead. Rail's price is no cheaper than road. Good news is that we will be continuing to carry coal ex Nightcaps to Clendebaye through our traditional off season

There is the usual drama around rostering. The roster centre doesn't seem to understand that rostered time off is the goal for at-risk shifts, not bust time.

We are taking a keen interest in the Philpita Gander report on fatigue and encour-

age everyone involved in shift work to read this document and introduce it to the boss.

On the staffing front we have had an LE team leader appointed. The previous one only retired 18 months ago. Talk about pulling hens' teeth!

Fonterra at Edendale is now down to about five million litres a day. On March 27 the Dunedin yard gang turned up to start work on the loop. They started from 4R Edendale to the old water tank. (Yes, there is still one at Edendale and it is for sale. It dates back to 1901 – that's almost older than Mort). They started work on walkways then they disappeared after two weeks.

We know network services are short staffed and this is an example of the practical impact of that.

The concrete sleepers are here but not going anywhere. There are no new rails to replace the old for the loop so you guessed it, the old rail is going back in. As for road one, it has four broken rails, all patched up. The eight point turn down the south end has now been replaced. It is now only a three point turn.

Stay safe and stay warm! 🌞



Workers' Memorial Day

Around the country workers gathered at memorial sites to remember dead (and injured) colleagues who arrived at work but didn't return home. This issue we focus on two of those services: Dunedin and Hawke's Bay.



Napier Port

IN Napier this year we observed WMD on Friday April 27. On this day 13 years ago, when we lost Corben Frickleton in an incident while tying up a vessel on Four Wharf. Corben's dad, Ted and his wife Suzanne attended.

A very successful turn out on a sun-filled Hawke's Bay day. A large contingent of RMTU members turned out plus folk from MUNZ, ETU, the local press and Napier Port management – three of whom spoke including the new CEO.

There were many speakers throughout, all sharing their thoughts and stories and bringing a tear to the eye over the loss of workmates and whanau.

A big thanks to our industrial chaplain, Marty Rochford as MC. 🌐



(l to r) Life member, Tim Spence, Dunedin yard delegate and RCO Russell Storey, Pat Tutty, Brian McKay and Davie Kearns.



Dunedin

ONLY about 25 people came to the service this year - a poor turnout considering the day has been fought for by union members worldwide. It is relevant to making our workplaces safe so we need to address this. However, a Dunedin City Councillor suggested workplace accidents and deaths could be blamed

on the Kiwi bloke's attitude of carrying on with a task regardless of safety concerns. Another person noted that workers know their industries best and will take care of their own health and safety if the threat of industrial action is real. In countries where the right to strike hasn't been removed by law, the accident/death rate at work is a fraction (1/4) of what it is in New Zealand. Take note New Zealand Labour Party! 🌐

