

THE *TRANSPORT* *WORKER* JUN 2023

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

Pass the
jump
leads -
please!



5 SAFEGUARD AWARDS

The RMTU has put forward two worthy contestants for this award including (1) Nandor Mraz.

9 UNION VALUES

New RMTU South Island organiser, Andy Woolhouse has solid union credentials. He is welcomed by members.

16 DISINFORMATION

Disinformation, myths and lies were tackled at a special seminar for workers to show them how to counter them.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Howard Phillips (l) handing the leads to Richard Gibbons with Jen Sinclair looking to prove jump starting a locomotive at a remote depot can be done! It is helpful when an LE has a mechanical background.

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Todd Valster
General secretary
RMTU

Election progress

WELCOME to the second issue for 2023 of our great magazine. Since the last issue, I have been elected as the RMTU general secretary. The ballot was counted on April 17. Thank you to all those who took the time to vote – whether for me or not. Voter participation is very important and will be a key factor in the general election in October.

Also I am happy to report Aubrey Wilkinson continues to be our president. He was elected unopposed. Thank you Aubrey for continuing to show such strong leadership of our Union and beyond.

By the time this magazine goes to print the nominations for National Management Committee (NMC) members will have closed and ballots will be issued for any of the contested positions.

Once the NMC elections are done, there will be a call for KiwiRail industrial council reps followed by the RMTU women's committee.

Government support for Rail

Some highlights for Rail from the May Budget include some of the investment outcomes being realised, like the new purpose-built train control centre in Wallaceville, Upper Hutt and the Hillside rebuild.

Long may this Government support continue – and that managed decline becomes history.

Safeguard awards

Several of our members have been nominated for Safeguard awards with one of them becoming a finalist. Well done to all three. We are very proud of you all. Making a stand on health and safety is key to our roles in the transport industry.

Ship inspections

A serious incident at Port Nelson has highlighted the need for ship inspection processes to be significantly improved. An article in this issue explores the incident and the issue.

New staff members and woman profile

We have profiles on Andy Woolhouse, our new South Island organiser and Matt Tait, our new HQ receptionist/admin assistant plus words about Rebecca Hauck who features in our women's profile.

My Life as a Locomotive Engineer

One of our retired locomotive engineers, Kevin Tasker, has written and published a book – 'My Life As A Locomotive Engineer'. Kevin had a 55 year career in rail including through those difficult times in the 1980s and 90s. This is a great book which I am sure will resonate to many readers.

Rail Safety Week

This year's rail safety week poster and theme is featured on page 12. Please take note.

Excellent article on disinformation

Disinformation was once a feature of the Cold War but now with increasing use of social media, disinformation is being used as a tool to manipulate the masses. This is a timely read.

Branch notes

Only eight branches sent in their notes for this issue. Napier Port and Rail branch notes feature shocking photos of the cyclone and the devastation it caused.

Workers' Memorial Day 2023

On the back cover we have several Workers' Memorial Day events. It was heart-warming to see our past president, Jim Kelly, recognised with a plaque at the WMD site in Dunedin.

RMTU port and women forums

These forums will take place in Wellington from July 18 – 20. The first two days will be focussed on the ports forum with the women's forum being on July 20.

Kiwi Rail bargaining - 2023

The KR MECA expires at the end of June. We sent though the initiation of bargaining notice to KiwiRail at the start of May.

Remits from most rail branches have been sent through the national office. KiwiRail have informed us that due to the unavailability of key people, we may not be able to have the first bargaining session until late July. They have also stated a late start will not affect any backdating. The next step for the RMTU will be to bring all of the industrial council reps together to review and prioritise the Union's claims.

I hope you enjoy this edition of The Transport Worker.

Kia kaha – stay safe! 🌍

Resignation

Dear Editor,

I wish to submit my resignation from our Union due to my retirement from Port Marlborough New Zealand Ltd.

May I take this opportunity to thank sincerely all our hard working people, from the department and delegates to the general secretary.

Since joining the New Zealand Harbour Board Employee's Union in 1981, the work that many people over the years have done on our behalf to insure our work conditions are fair and safe, has been excellent.

I wish all my brothers and sisters all the best for the future.

Kia kaha.

Pat Ivamy

Dear Editor,

I wish to resign from RMTU effective immediately.

I am moving to a different role after many months of rehab on ACC.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved with taking the lines role at PNL and moving it towards being a well rewarded job after languishing for quite a while.

Thanks for all your advocacy and keep up the good work.

Many thanks,
Duncan Fyfe.

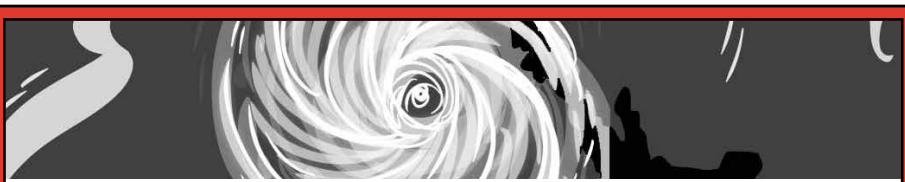
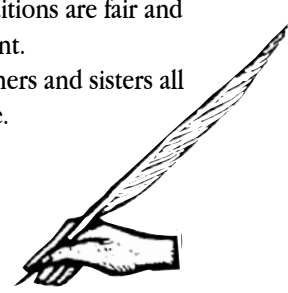
Dear Editor,

I am writing to formally resign as a member of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union as I have accepted the role as supply chain manager at Hyundai Rotem Company starting on March 27, 2023.

I would like to thank the RMTU organisers and administration for all the support and guidance I have received. The integrity of the RMTU and its ongoing commitment is truly appreciated throughout Hyundai Rotem Company union members.

Again, thank you and I look forward to continue working with the RMTU again in the near future.

Kind regards,
Jonte Sage.



WEATHER VICTIMS: HEALTH WARNING

THE distress caused by the cyclones around New Zealand will also be affecting our members and their whanau – both financially and emotionally – as they struggle to come to terms with changed work conditions.

Symptoms of mental distress caused by trauma and stress include strain on relationships, increased risky behaviour, substance abuse, burn out, social isolation, socially withdrawing from friends, avoidance, decline in physical health, loss of motivation, lack of concentration, a decreased sense of self esteem, and increase in aggravation. Recognising the signs of distress can help you or someone you know get the help they need to feel better sooner.

It's good to start the conversation, listen, ask questions, show your support and empathy and let them know you're concerned.

Encourage people to speak to their GP, or use the employers wellness provider EAP, or contact phone based support services such as the 'need to talk line' Free call or text 1731. 🌍

Positive Budget for rail

LAST month Labour presented its 2023 Budget which contained and consolidated considerable gains for Rail showing a continued commitment to this essential industry so important to our members' direct welfare and future.

The total allocation to Rail of \$569.2 million is nearly 12 percent of KiwiRail's new operating spending.

KiwiRail chief executive, Peter Reidy, was quick off the mark singing this Government's praises and supplying words to be published.

\$9.1 billion committed

"The Government has now committed more than \$9.1 billion of funding to KiwiRail since 2018 – \$6.3 billion to improve the existing network and for new infrastructure projects, and \$2.8 billion to support the renewal of KiwiRail's rolling stock, ferries and mechanical depots," he said in an letter to RMTU general secretary Todd Valster who responded by adding: "There's no doubt now where our votes must go in October if we value our industry and an environmentally secure future for our children."

Reidy said the Company continues to be grateful for the support and are already

Reidy's top three budget items

- \$359.2 million for the fifth year of the Rail Network Investment Programme funding a previous commitment but also looking forward three years.
- Up to \$200 million for support the Hawkes Bay and Northland rail rebuilds.
- \$10 million to take further rail electrification in the North Island to a detailed design and business-cased stage, and paving the way for major decisions within this decade.

investing to replace DX and some DC locomotives, wagons and upgrades to facilities.

"As you know, we've already bought 57 low-emission locomotives, due to begin arriving in early 2024; 16 zero-emission light shunt locomotives already in service; we are in the market for heavier, low-emission shunts; and we are in the process of replacing 1300 wagons. Upgrade work at Hutt Workshops, construction of the new

South Island Mechanical Hub at Waltham and the revitalisation of Dunedin's Hillside Workshops are all progressing well."

"Next year we expect to begin moving our people from Strathallan and Cumberland Streets to Hillside and begin assembling around 1,500 wagons at the iconic site, which will create skilled jobs," he said but also warned:

"It's important to note that, like previous Budgets, this latest investment is for specific and agreed purposes. It's not a top up to meet growing cost pressures, and we need to keep managing spending carefully."

Crucial building blocks

He adds: "These are the crucial building blocks which will enable more freight to be moved on rail, reduce transport emissions and underpin KiwiRail's strategy for commercial growth and self-sustainability."

"There's no doubt," said Valster, "that with a Government showing so much commitment to our industry, our lives and our futures that we should be doing all we can to ensure they are returned to Government in October." 🇳🇿

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.



Download a copy of the Product Disclosure Statement from our website:
www.portsretirement.org.nz

Issuer: Ports Retirement Trustee Limited

RMTU's nominations for the Safeguard Awards

THE Union is proud to nominate our RMTU health and safety reps to the annual Safeguard Awards under the Representative category.

The Award acknowledges the vital role health and safety reps play in advocating for safer and healthier work. Being a worker representative requires a passionate belief that all workers have the right to work in an environment where the employer puts the workers' safety and welfare before productivity.

Challenging unsafe systems of work requires grit and courage and also a good understanding of the rights of workers under the Health and Safety at Work Act, including the legal duties of the employer to provide a safe workplace. The role of the H&S rep also involves technical aspects such as being involved in risk assessment and incident investigation. H&S reps are legally entitled to training to learn the functions.

The winners of the Safeguard Awards are announced in late June at a gala dinner in Auckland. Below is a summary of the nominations. Good luck!

Nandor Mraz

RMTU Safeguard Award nominees for the Representative Award:

Nandor Mraz is a mechanical engineer, at KiwiRail's Otahuhu mechanical depot – one of the biggest rail depots in the North Island. They maintain and repair the DL class of locomotives. Nandor is an elected health and safety rep, and a member of the health and safety committee as well as being an RMTU delegate.

Originally from Hungary, Nandor was trained in working in a confined space as part of his mechanical engineering training. When he came to work at KiwiRail he was concerned that the radiator tunnel had not been identified as a confined space and therefore didn't have the correct mitigations in place.

The door to the entrance of the radiator tunnel is very narrow – only 800x1350 mm



– and does not fully open because of a fixed handrail. There is one way in and one way out. It would be very difficult to evacuate in an emergency situation.

Once inside tasks include welding and grinding and unblocking drain pipes. Some tasks require the mechanical engineers to be inside the radiator tunnel for up to five hours working alone. He reported the risk

to his manager.

After completing health and safety rep training, Nandor learnt HSRs can issue recommendations to the company to address health and safety concerns.

He wrote to KiwiRail recommending the DL radiator room be assessed to see if it met the definition of a confined space, and if so, recommended the company work with

Tony King and Tangiwai Haney

RMTU Safeguard Award nominees for the Representative Award.

Tony King and Tangiwai Haney (nominated jointly) for their work highlighting fume exposure in the Remutaka Tunnel.

Tony and Tangiwai are train managers who work for Transdev Wellington onboard the Wairarapa passenger train. The train travels through the 8.9km long Remutaka Tunnel. Tony is also a member of the Lower North Island Tunnel Focus group.

Operating the train in the tunnel is challenging as there are many hazards including diesel exhaust emissions. Air quality monitoring results indicate that on some occasions nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) concentrations can be elevated inside the passenger trains. NO₂ is produced by diesel engines and is toxic to humans. Exposures over short periods can aggravate respiratory diseases, particularly asthma, leading to respiratory symptoms (such as coughing, wheezing or difficulty breathing). Longer exposures of NO₂ may contribute to asthma and increase susceptibility to respiratory infections. Train crews expressed concern they were becoming sensitised to diesel fume (even at low concentrations) from regular daily exposure.

In June 2022 Tony and Tangiwai were concerned about the number of gas alarms and health effects on staff. Staff said they



were getting higher than normal gas readings, and some staff were feeling unwell from the effects of the fumes.

With the support of their Union a petition was launched to urge Transdev to engage with the health and safety reps and the Union regarding the fume issues. The petition received a lot of support from both passenger operations and mechanical staff who maintain the locos.

In positive news, KRG announced that

Remutaka tunnel will be fitted with gas monitoring equipment inside the tunnel to identify the level of fume such as those from diesel motors.

The information will inform the safety mitigations for operating in the tunnel.

The Union continues to advocate for the installation of a forced and fixed ventilation system to purge the tunnel of gas. 🇳🇿

the mechanical engineering team to put in place mitigations such as gas monitoring equipment and emergency procedures. Due to a lack of satisfactory progress, he issued a PIN (provisional improvement notice) and sought the assistance of Worksafe NZ who visited the site and asked to see exposure monitoring results.

The external occupational hygienists assessed the radiator tunnel and confirmed there was a risk of exposure to inhalable and respirable particulates and heat. Testing identified the ventilation system used during 'hot work' was not fit for purpose, and the area should be treated a confined space.

Since then, the company has finished the risk assessment. The safety mitigations identified include engineering controls to reduce the need to access the radiator tunnel; the introduction of temperature and gas testing equipment; a permit to work system; a second person (spotter) training; the development of task related job safety plans, and, finally, a rescue plan.

The Union believes Nandor's activism prompted KiwiRail to employ a dedicated confined space advisor and develop a companywide confined space standard. It should be noted Nandor's advocacy is all the more impressive considering English is not his first language. 🇳🇿



The grim little tunnel Nandor was required to work in.

Handrail failure results in 10m fall

Nelson stevedore suffers serious injuries from 10m fall on container ship



STEVEDORE member Anthony Genet is feeling lucky to have survived a 10 metre fall from the deck of the container ship, the Maersk Nansha, after a corroded handrail gave

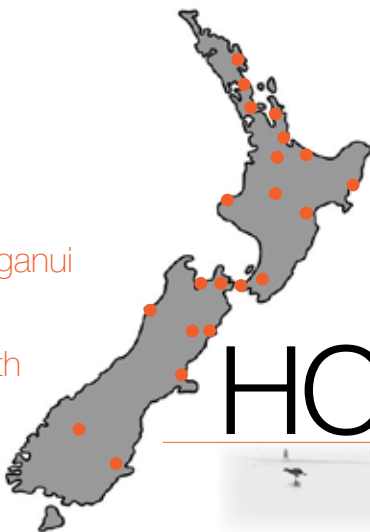
way causing him to fall into the sea at Port Nelson.

The incident occurred on January 16 at 1.35am whilst Genet was working as a 'spotter' to help land containers onto the

deck of the Nansha.

Incredibly, after the fall, Genet was able to swim to the surface. Genet credits his ability to remain calm helped him to swim the long distance to the water's surface. He

Auckland
Christchurch
Dunedin
Gisborne
Greytown
Hanmer
Kaikoura
Mount Maunganui
Napier
Nelson
New Plymouth
Ohope
Orewa
Paihia
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HOLIDAYS



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then swam approximately 200 metres in the dark to the wharf piles and rocks and made it to the smoko room to raise the alarm.

Maritime NZ are investigating and Port Nelson are also conducting their own investigation. They told the union they can't make any public comment whilst the investigation is ongoing but introduced new safety measure immediately following the incident and are committed to supporting Genet and the other stevedores.

The incident highlights the deep systemic issues with ship inspections and how ship deficiencies, such as corroded guardrails, are identified and dealt with.

The Maersk Nansha operates as a coastal shipping vessel and was known to be in poor shape by the staff who worked on it. The handrail which gave way was corroded to a point where it was visibly leaning outwards.

In October 2022 (three months prior to the incident), the Nansha was inspected by Maritime NZ as part of the Port State Control (PSC) inspection which highlighted 43 deficiencies including corrosion in the engine room, alarms and lights not working, blocked scuppers, generators leaking oil and more. Maritime NZ detained the vessel for 12 days and notified the flag state to remedy the deficiencies.

What is a PSC inspection?

Port states, including NZ, inspect foreign ships visiting their port to check the condition of the ships and their equipment plus whether they are staffed and operated



Anthony Genet

in compliance with international conventions. The PSC inspections are undertaken using an agreed international framework. Maritime NZ carries out the PSC inspections.

The RMTU discovered the PSC inspection check sheet did not include an inspection of guardrails. The inspection checklist is dominated by the ship's accommodation area, including the engine room, gangways, lifeboats and bridge, and to a lesser extent the cargo handling areas such as guard rails and lashing equipment. The Union raised this with Maritime NZ and requested the inspection list be amended to include cargo handling areas. They said the inspections follow an agreed international framework (in other words it's not our checklist). They wrote to the Union stating: "when conduct-

ing an inspection it is not possible to consider every element of every convention . . . This would mean halting the supply chain and bringing the international shipping industry to a standstill".

However, in follow up correspondence with the Union Maritime NZ said they want to make it easier for our port members to notify them about unsafe ships. They are developing such a communication system but in the interim they asked the RMTU to send through any concerns or issues identified on ships to Clyde Fernandes (manager of the maritime inspections team) on: clyde.fernandes@maritimenz.govt.nz or 027 533 3239.

Port workers in the industry have told the RMTU that NZ is known for accepting ships other countries, such as the United States, would not accept on safety grounds. The process for ship inspections needs to considerably strengthened. The Union has been told that due to competition amongst the ports, if one port turns away a ship another will likely take it.

The lack of consistent standards is an urgent issue to be addressed and where ships are unsafe workers should use their right to refuse unsafe work and red card it. The Union will back you.

The RMTU is working with the industry to address the process for ship inspections in the approved code of practice for loading and unloading cargo (ACOP). The ACOP is being written currently and is based on the Australian ACOP for stevedoring. A draft ACOP will go to members for consultation later this year. 🌐



WHERE ARE YOU?

When problems arise we may need to contact you in a hurry.

Please check we have your correct address and contact details.

<http://bit.ly/exmEyl>

or

04-499-2066

Union values dominate

New SI organiser come with solid union credentials

ANDY WOOLHOUSE (pictured right), the recently appointed RMTU South Island organiser, began his career as an aircraft mechanic for the Ministry of Defence in England. From there he worked his way from an apprenticeship through the qualifications and beyond before "spreading his technical wings" to enter the private sector with Britannia Airways in Luton.

Whilst with Britannia he was asked to join a team servicing planes for a new airline. Readers may recall it: Freedom Air. It flew between New Zealand and Australia often to lesser known international airports like Palmerston North and Invercargill.

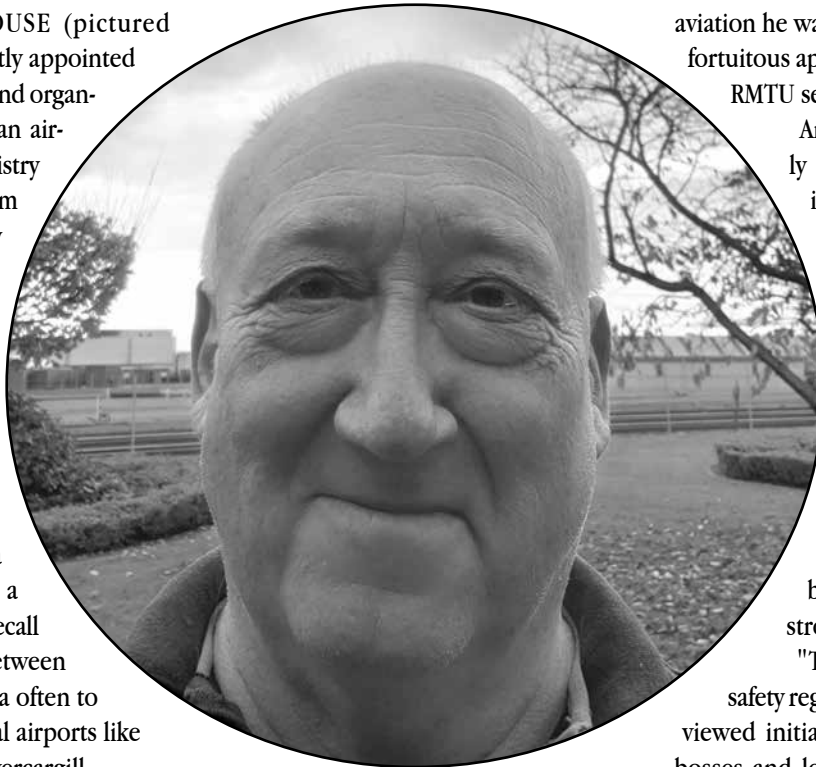
"The big difference between being a mechanic for Freedom Air and other airlines was that we were required to travel with the plane to and from New Zealand," he said.

Despite the itinerant nature of his new employment he was able to bring his wife on the journey and between them they enjoyed the experience in New Zealand so much they decided to stay.

"We loved it here," he said "and when an opportunity arose in 2003 in the hanger at Christchurch I applied and succeeded."

Not long afterwards they found a home in Oxford just half an hour west of the airport and, now, handily close to Christchurch rail and Lyttelton port.

At work he took a keen interest in union affairs as part of the EPMU and later, for E Tu.



aviation he was ready for a change and the fortuitous appearance of this job with the RMTU seemed ideally coincidental.

And so far it has been "extremely challenging, interesting and incredibly busy".

"I'm thoroughly enjoying it," he said, "and straight into bargaining at the Lyttelton Port Company."

The RMTU's focus on health and safety was another significant reason he chose to apply for this job. He was very impressed by the Union's attitude and strong stance.

"The advent of health and safety regulations, although frequently viewed initially with disdain from some bosses and leaders, is a wonderful thing and has made such a difference to workers' lives," he says. "I'm pleased to see attitudes have changed."

To begin with he plans to thoroughly explore "his patch" and make himself known and familiar.

So far response from colleagues has been positive and encouraging which augurs well for the upcoming bargaining rounds which he expects will keep them all busy.

Should members give him sufficient spare time they would likely find him restoring a couple of Landrovers - one of which is one piece - or among a variety of other mechanical restoration projects, and his latest passion, bee keeping. 🐝

"It was around that time E Tu was established with the merger of three unions and I served on its executive until this job appeared at the RMTU."

His concern for the welfare of his fellow workers rapidly moved him up and around the ranks of unionisms with stints as South Island vice president, to the executive and as an organiser.

While he has swapped unions he retains the ethos which drives unionism.

"We all work for the same legislation, such as the Health and Safety Act," he says. "It's all about the empowerment of the workers. There are subtle difference in structure but nothing material."

While there was no abiding reason to leave E Tu, after 40 years focussed on

New to RMTU head office

FROM solving our air force's mechanical problems to administering one of New Zealand's most influential unions is quite a leap for a 21 year old from Palmerston North but Matt

Tait is taking it all in his stride.

New role

Matt is the RMTU's newly-appointed office manager taking the position vacated by Alejandra early this year.

Originally from Palmerston North, Matt decided to join the Air Forces as a mechanic - influenced no doubt by his father who was a career officer in the New Zealand Army.

It was as a soldier that his father was

◀ posted to Missouri for two years with Matt and the rest of the family followed along. "My dad was posted to one of the US army bases, Fort Leonard Wood, where he helped train American soldiers detect and dispose of landmines."

American accent?

Meanwhile Matt attended elementary school and managed to pick up an American accent which he claims to "still have".

It took two years to get his Air Force application accepted and only 18 months to discover the truth behind the rumours regarding disappointing work conditions and decided to quit from the base in Blenheim and seek employment in Wellington - and especially in office administration.

He recalls that a lot of the work he performed in the Air Force was office-based and the thought of continuing that in civilian life held no concerns.

"I was told when I entered service that 80% of my work would be admin and so it was," he said. "Everything you do to an aircraft must be logged carefully as so many lives depend on your accuracy. It all has to



be traceable because if it goes wrong a lot of people can die." In fact he is undaunted by the tech he has found in the office and is finding it easier to overcome than the Air Force technology.

Used to curve balls

He figured the admin he would encounter at the RMTU wouldn't be too different or difficult to overcome as he was given so many curved balls at the Air Force

At the moment organising for the Ports Forums is his next challenge followed by a few ballots.

So far he is definitely enjoying working for the Union and living in Wellington which he says "is a big bonus. Plenty to do and see!" And its proximity to Ruapehu is definitely a bonus as skiing is high on his list of interests.

However, he hasn't totally given up the idea of aero mechanics and is hoping some day to pick up the training again some day in the civilian sector - but that's a long way off, he says. 🇳🇿

\$10,000 ADB

All members of the Rail and Maritime Transport Union 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 Rail and Maritime Transport Union. **Members also have the option to increase their coverage an additional \$10,000 which costs just \$2 for the first year.**

To have an AIL representative deliver your certificate of coverage and explain additional insurance coverage available:

Reply online: ailnz.co.nz/request
 Reply by email: **Email your name, address and contact number to pr@ailnz.co.nz**

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 for \$5. A.M. Best, one of the oldest and most respected insurance ratings companies, has rated American Income Life as A (Excellent) for overall Financial Strength (as of 7/20).



iPhone users – open the camera and point it at the code. Android users please download QR & Barcode Scanner from the Play Store



After 48 years, it is time for Marokii (Kingi) Tereu to retire. He arrived in NZ from Aitutaki as a teenager and has worked through the various Tranzlinks. We were even treated to a song from Kingi at his farewell.



With 50 years each of train control Murray Hudson (left) and Paul Greene with Todd Valster between. The pair had stories to tell of adventures in the Hutt Valley and Wellington and at various North Island stations and depots.



115 years celebrated at the Wellington Terminal. (l to r) James Steadman, 40 years, Warwick Burdan 40 years, Steve Brabender, 25 years and Ivan Simpson 10 years.

Recollections of a life in rail

FROM his earliest childhood memory Kevin Tasker had wanted to be a steam locomotive driver.

He started at the Napier locomotive depot in 1960 where he considers himself fortunate to have worked seven wonderful years with and in charge of steam locomotives mainly between Wairoa and Woodville before their fires were extinguished in June 1967.

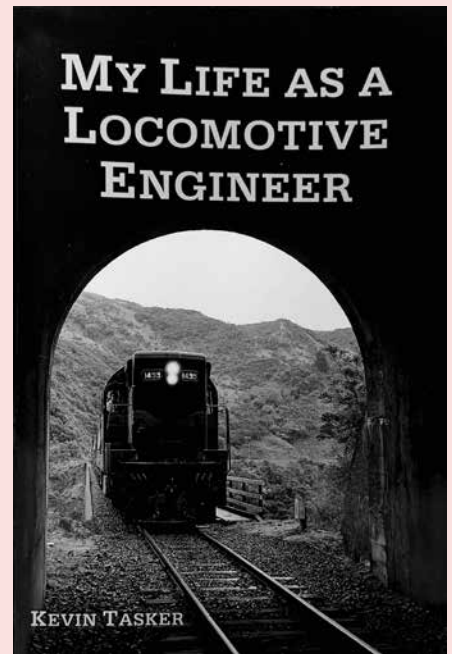
Following moves through C and B rosters, Kevin finally moved to the top roster in 1986, running hot-shot freighter and passenger rail in the Hawkes Bay aboard DA, DC, DF and DX class locos.

While diesel railways were the backbone of his employment, he opted to also certify as a fireman and driver for steam excursions.

This personal history also covers the interesting and bizarre moments – and the momentous changes of a lifetime – in one industry, including breakdowns, restructuring, single-man operations, fighting to stay awake, speed restrictions, track incidents, depot closures, the decline of the Gisborne line and heading towards retirement.

"I wanted to write about how we coped through the brutal negatives and ceaseless changes of the 1980s and 1990s," he told *The Transport Worker*. "And being involved in the Union during those challenging times and to know exactly where I am coming from."

His 55 year career spans an exciting and interesting period of New Zealand rail. 🚂



My life as a locomotive engineer by Kevin Tasker **AVAILABLE NOW.** Payment through VISA or MASTERCARD
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THE MAN

THE LEGEND

AND HIS HORSE...

Some say he resides deep in the Rimutakas. Others swear he's from the Fiordland rainforests. Whatever the truth, very soon, he'll be appearing at a rail crossing near you.

Saddle up, people.

Rail Safety Week | 7-14 August

TrackSAFE
Foundation

KiwiRail



New rail safety poster

THE RMTU is pleased to support Rail Safety Week from August 7 to 13.


This year's campaign aims to change the public's behaviour at level crossings by targeting complacent motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.

The campaign aims to highlight people who only take a quick glance, at best, rather than actually stopping and looking left and right.

In August, New Zealanders will meet a cool new rail safety hero – and his horse.

The character is designed to be memorable and, by using a bit of humour, will encourage people to take a good, hard look left and right before crossing.

Getting people to look both ways is a simple message, but an important one.

Look out for ways you can support the campaign in August. 

Good morning! Wellington



Another glorious greeting to a fine Wellington day.



The Otira team trying to hide – (l to r) Rob Thompson, Chris McGee, Brady Pabelcheck, Jared Hibbs, Andy Woolhouse, Nick Dempsey and Ben Gooding. Photo taken after HPHE meeting in regards to the petrol allowances.

RMTU WOMEN

The RMTU fully supports equal opportunities for women and men

Rebecca Hauck

Rebecca Hauck, KiwiRail rail operator (shunter) Otepoti Dunedin.

IN 2019 I was voted in as RMTU National Management Committee women's rep and since then I have learned so much about the union movement – and I am still learning everyday.

I have been to some amazing places and have met some outstanding people, especially women. The friendships will be lifelong.

Speaking of friendships, the RMTU Women's Council has come a long way, seeing how there never used to be a Women's Council.

We have women from around Aotearoa New Zealand in rail and on the ports who are on the Women's Council.

Camaraderie

The networking, camaraderie and the way goals were achieved in the last year was absolutely fantastic. I couldn't have asked for a better group of women to be on the council.

Let's be honest, networking is one of our super powers.

Having women in different roles and occupations brings together a wide range of knowledge and skills which are priceless to planning and organising conferences, women's session's, awareness around mental health, International Women's Day, Pink Shirt Day – just to name a few.

Unions are like a team or a club. Their main purpose is to get workers organised so they can look after and promote the interests of the union and its members. The Union supports employees in the workplace by acting as an advocate for them collectively.

You can also think of unions as com-



Rebecca Hauck (front and centre)

"Unions are like a team or a club. Their main purpose is to get workers organised so they can look after and promote the interests of the union and its members."


munities of workers, working together to secure jobs, improve terms and conditions of employment and achieve a better quality of life for workers.

Collective action, worker engagement and participation, social justice, fairness, equity and worker safety and wellbeing and solidarity could be classed as what you

expect from joining a team or a club.

Having played rugby for about 15 years, all of these values come to mind, on and off the field. In rugby – or any team sport – we are stronger together.

The same definitely applies to being a part of the mighty RMTU.

TOGETHER – UNION IS POWER 



Delegate training

Delegate training at Hutt Workshops included an impromptu tour of the extensive workplace.

AN important part of the RMTU is our branch structure. Having solid branches with dedicated and passionate executive committees and hard-working delegates is critical. The key to being a good delegate is knowledge, some of which is built up doing the hard yards. But an important part of this is delegate training.

Delegate training has had its challenges in recent times with Covid and changes at national office, but the central region has officially restarted delegate training with the first group of

delegates attending training at the Hutt Workshops in Lower Hutt. A great time was had by all and the delegates picked up plenty of information from their trainer and each other.

Myles Carter kindly offered the delegates a whirlwind tour of the facility which the delegates found interesting but perhaps a little long maybe more of a hurricane than a whirl wind.

If you need delegate training be proactive and contact your local organiser to arrange it. 🌐

Solidarity



National Office staff supporting the PPTA during one of the recent teacher strikes in Wellington.

The disinformation pandemic

Community, connectedness, tolerance and democracy - all at stake in this deadly game of untruths

THE modern world is changing rapidly and our post-Covid society is grappling with a new pandemic. We live in the information age and it is unfortunate that while knowledge can be a tool to uplift people and provide them with learning and education it can also be twisted to mislead and create distrust.

This was a hot topic at the recent CTU organisers' conference with excellent key note speakers and some great information.

The misuse of information is now prevalent in political campaigns and is a proven tool of the far right on the political spectrum to sow seeds of mistrust and disunity and to divide and manipulate the population.

The chosen tool of the disrupter is usually social media.



Kate Hannah (L) is a cultural historian of science and technology. Her research interests include gender, 'race', eugenics, colonization and white supremacy in historic and contemporary science and technology cultures and subcultures. Hannah is the director of The Disinformation Project since its inception in early 2020. In her work with The Project, she identified how COVID-19 disinformation was linked to online or physical harm, dissenting or fringe views related to a number of conspiratorial narratives, and hateful or violent expression.

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. Locomotive Engineers 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 Locomotive Engineers
Join this Fund now for
your own peace of mind

Research shows that around 40% of news items on Facebook are, in fact, incorrect. And these messages are repeated over and over again. It is accepted that once an individual has seen something seven times, they believe it to be true.

The question is, how do we recognise it and what can we do to protect ourselves?

Recognise the forms

It is important to understand the different forms, how to recognise them and how to cope with them.

First there is misinformation. This is information which is false, but the person disseminating it believes it to be true.

Next, we have disinformation, information which is false and the person disseminating it knows it to be so. It is a deliberate, intentional lie and points to people being actively disinformed by malicious acts.

Finally there is malinformation, or information which stems from the truth but is often exaggerated in such a way as to mislead and cause potential harm.

Why does this matter to us as unionists?

All three types – misinformation, disinformation and malinformation – will continue to be levelled at progressive organisations in an attempt to take control of the narrative and continue radical deregulation of the labour market.

Misinformation isn't confined to social media. We are constantly bombarded with it to the point we now need to always be vetting the information we receive to check its validity.

Low income and marginalised communities are at more risk from misinformation.

The question is how do we recognise misinformation? What identifies it over legitimate information?

There are a few key questions to ask:

- * Does it provoke an emotional response?
- * Does it make a bold statement on an emotional issue?
- * Is it an extraordinary claim?
- * Does it have clickbait?
- * Does it have topical information that is within context?
- * Does it use small pieces of valid information that are exaggerated or distorted?
- * Has it already spread virally on unvetted or loosely vetted platforms?

There are a number of key factors to

consider when identifying misinformation:

- * Look for out of place design elements such as unprofessional logos, colours, spacing and animated GIFs.

- * Verify domain names to ensure they match the organisation. The domain name may have typos or use a different top-level domain (TLD) such as .net or .org.

- * Check the organisation has its contact information listed, a physical address and/or an about-us page.

- * Perform a WHOIS lookup on the domain to see who owns it and verify it belongs to a trustworthy organisation. WHOIS is a database of domain names and has details about the owner of the domain, when the domain was registered and when it expires.

- * Conduct a reverse image search to ensure images are not copied from a legitimate website or organisation.

We are led to a point where we need to look at information through a series of classification lenses.

Lens 1:

Is it reputable?

Who did the information come from?

Are those pushing the theory reputable in their field?

Do their qualifications relate to their theory?

Is the site reputable?

Is it cited often?

Lens 2:

Is it accurate?

Is it accurate to draw the conclusions?

Is the way the information is being put in front of you consistent with the source of the information?

Lens 3:

Is it timely?

Is what they are saying based on the most recent research?

Are they drawing conclusions from different and outdated research to suit their theory?

Is it accountable?

Do you know who they are or who they work for?

Are there accountability measures in place?

Will there be consequences for them if the information they are providing is false?

Who are the spreaders of misinforma-

tion?

There are a variety of groups and individuals who indulge in the practice from organised state and non-state groups and actors through to unorganised actors, opportunists, disruptive libertarians and digital stalkers.

The question now becomes how we counter misinformation in our work places.

As a union we need values-based messaging and the use of a story-based strategy which will highlight our shared values.

We need to acknowledge position and struggles of other people and speak in terms everyone can understand and are relevant and memorable.

We need to steer clear of myth-busting and opposing false arguments. Don't lead with facts, data and numbers. Don't go on about consequences nor highlight peoples qualifications, positions and credentials. And try not to use moralising language or sheet misinformation back to an identity (anti-vaxxer etc.)

However, before you start digging a fall out shelter and declaring you are going to cut yourself off from the internet and never watch the news again, feel reassured there are people out there waging the war against disinformation.

We will no doubt see a lot of this during the upcoming national elections this year.

Sweeping statements, like the civil service being bloated and we need to sack half of them. So who will we sack? Nurses, there must be too many of them? No? What about teachers, must be too many of them? No? Is it the Police, maybe there are too many Police officers? No?

So just who are these civil servants filling their pockets at the tax payer's expense?

The truth is they can't be defined and probably don't exist.

The freedom fighters out there are the NZCTU's Misinformation Task Force who are establishing counter misleading information.

The Disinformation Project is a group established to study disinformation. They can be found here:

<https://thedisinfoproject.org/>.

But the biggest group of freedom fighters we have are YOU – the workers of this country. Those who stand up for decent pay and conditions.

You deserve to hear the TRUTH. 

NAPIER PORT

Cyclone Gabrielle a disaster of epic proportions for rail and port



Cyclone Gabrielle shows its ominous presence over Napier

Kia ora katoa.

NOT sure where to start! I guess this will be my last editorial for the magazine. After 20 years of scribing the Napier Port story lines it is time to pass the pen (aka: key board) to someone with a tad more youth and probably not so boring!

Anyway, more to the point, let's focus on Cyclone Gabrielle. The after affects down the East Coast of the North Island are devastating.

We all know the ultimate price for some, especially in the rural areas around Napier, where lives were lost. A section of Napier Port became a morgue area for the Army. Even to date we are not really sure what the death toll was in total.

Meanwhile, there is also two metres of silt in areas which has not yet, or may never be, disturbed. It is very concerning to say the least. Some of our members will never return to their homes, others may rebuild if allowed.

The impact on business and industry will be ongoing for some years in this scribe's view. The cost will be astronomical – billions. Some apple orchards you can still only see the tops of the trees also buried in silt and slash.

Ultimately, this has led to key players within Hawkes Bay industry signalling staff

lay-offs, both in the primary and secondary sectors. Ravensdown sending out a signal this week.

At Napier Port all the casuals were discharged by the end of April – normally peak season, Certainly indicative of the crisis we face.

Redeployment across the port is underway.

With no rail connections expected for quite some time, our members associated with rail cargo are assisting in other areas where work can be found.

The Pan Pack mill was shrouded under 1.5 metres of silt so there is very little pulp or timber coming through for packing at the port from this key supplier and port user. Normally responsible for around 35% of the ports business.

A road bridge utilizing contracted trucks is being set up to get Winstone pulp from the rail yard in Hastings to the port. Members are being used to work in Hastings to unload the wagons to curtain sider trucks which is great in keeping staff gainfully employed.

The bottom line however is that there will be further unwanted outcomes to deal with in the coming months as the port company starts belt tightening.

The signals are already visible in terms

of the dreaded 'R' word. No one wants it, but it may come to be when all other avenues become exhausted and the company's ability to maintain staff levels becomes too costly.

Hopefully, there will be a timely process to sort out how this may take place and we trust other options, such as leave-without-pay, and redeployment outside of Napier Port will assist in keeping staff paid through this harsh period. A case of watch this space.

I appreciate this is not the best of moments to sign out on. It looks like we are in difficult times. However, there is only one way to go once we are back on our feet, and that is onward and upward. Maybe a bit of a cliché © but it is relevant.

There is a note in this edition of the magazine in reference to the generosity of our Union and donors toward the koha provided by the branches. A shout out to Port of Lyttleton and Port of Tauranga branches especially and a big THANK YOU on behalf of the RMTU Hawkes Bay branch members – ports and rail.

Nga mihi, I kotahitanga.

(Editor: Greetings Hawke's Bay scribe and many thanks for all your hard work producing notes for this magazine. We wish you well.) 🌐

NAPIER RAIL

Lines opening slowly after storm damage



Cyclone Gabrielle caused significant damage to Rail infrastructure. Bridge 217 (pictured above) on the Palmerston North/Gisborne Line was washed away.

ON behalf of your brothers and sisters of the RMT Union, both Napier Rail and Napier Port branches, we wish to thank you for your very generous donations toward assisting those who were displaced as a consequence of Cyclone Gabrielle.

The financial support from throughout New Zealand has been AWESOME. Thank you so much!

Congratulations to Todd Valster on your election result for general secretary which you won convincingly.

We've had a successful turn out from our Napier branch and Network Services with our claims and remits. Well done to

everyone on the team.

HPHE meetings have taken place in Wellington with our CEO and stakeholders, with a range of topics which are being improved and worked on.

The rebuild has started with getting the Palmerston North-Gisborne line (PNGL) open to Hastings with three retaining walls constructed, an a culvert south of Hastings.

A large amount of work is still going on at Ormondville Vaiduct and track crews did an extensive amount of work in the Hastings Yard getting it to code. Freight trains are now running to Hastings day and night to the new CT site for freight.

Meanwhile bridge 217 at Awatoto, just

south of Napier, (see photo at right). Three piers were swept away in the cyclone and the bridge suffered significant damage. Debris has now been cleared away and steel pile casing have arrived from South Island ready to begin recreating new piles for the new bridge.

North of Napier, on the Wairoa line, several inspection teams are surveying the line and developing reports needed to undertake detailed assessments. The areas are extremely difficult to access and they report there have been 514 sites inspected with 323 damaged sites recorded.

Nga mihi.

Stay safe. 🌍

WELLINGTON RAIL

Long-term fix mooted for Remutaka Tunnel exhaust fumes

A very warm welcome to the many new faces around the Wellington Railway Station. We have lots of new members in almost every occupation group covered by our MECA. The list includes eight locomotive engineer trainees, new train managers, passenger operators, rail operators, and the newly created position of customer experience officers. There are still gaps to be filled though, which has put pressure on existing staff and causing services to be run with carriages 'locked up' and still some bus-replaced.

News of funding for new multi modal units to replace the ageing rolling stock on the Wairarapa and Manawatu services is very welcome. It will also allow for increased services and add to capacity on the Hutt Valley and Kapiti lines. This long awaited decision is great news for Wellington and regional rail. It is hoped this will lead to further orders for similar rolling stock for a nationwide regional network. We wish!

There is also news of low emission locos for Wellington and the prospect of more to come.

Gas emissions in the Remutaka Tunnel have been the cause of problems for crews

who regularly have to travel through the tunnel. Increased train consists and more log traffic has caused exhaust fumes, at times, to reach dangerous gas build-up levels. Some staff have had to have medical treatment as a result. On board monitoring and KR have now come to the party by placing monitors in the tunnel which is hoped will prevent our members being harmed. The long term fix is to have a proper exhaust extraction system which is believed will cost in the vicinity of \$15m, and is likely to be some time away.

TDW (TransDev Wellington) has begun consultation with delegates after a long pause. This is welcomed by the branch but delegates report they still have some reservations about whether 'the big day out' format as touted by the company is the most effective way of meeting. All committees and senior delegates meet for a one day combined meet. The proof will be in what is achieved. We are hopeful of better outcomes for members.

Payroll is still a matter of concern for TDW staff. Delegates and TDW management are meeting with staff after each pay day to help members check pay. There are

still a disturbingly high number of under and over payments. To their credit, TDW have acknowledged and apologised for the situation. We await a promised upgrade and review of the payroll system. A number of errors were identified, largely by the diligence and persistence of some of our eagle-eyed members and delegates. TDW are obviously trying to curry favour with staff - they duplicated the Union and welfare society deductions recently. We welcome the good intentions!

By the time this goes to press, the well publicised saga about EMA 80 will have disappeared from the news cycle. The whole sorry saga raises the broader issue of how passenger rail operates in New Zealand, particularly in Auckland and Wellington. If we try to back the truck up, there are three hands on the wheel. One hand is the national rail operator which is doing its best to manage a freight network, which until recently has been in managed decline. We have local bodies playing with a train set. The Metro rail operators are both foreign owned and naturally are focussed on maximising profits for their shareholders. 🌐

See cover and centre for more photos.

Hyundai Rotem meeting



A recent site meeting for members to raise issues at the Hyundai Rotem Depot. A strong message from members – full backdating for next wage round!

MARLBOROUGH PORT

Big changes begin in Picton ready for new ferries

CHANGE is in the air in Picton with the construction of a temporary ferry terminal, proposed changes for the rail yard and the prospect of new ferries.

Picton is facing a few years of change and turmoil as demolition and construction becomes the order of the day providing

extra challenges for our members and testing their temperaments.

We predict a testing time ahead for both port, rail and Interislander members.

The RMTU has initiated bargaining with Port Marlborough and set dates for negotiations in early June.

Meanwhile, Port Marlborough and the

RMTU are also using HPHE to work through rostering issues to deal with increased work loads around the Interislander project.

The RMTU continues to engage with the Port around such issues as line handling and changes to the drug and alcohol policy. 🌐

HUTT SHOPS

HPHE seminar hits all the right notes with everyone

WE commence these notes with an acknowledgement of the HPHE 2.0 hui held in Wellington and attended by all the industrial councils (aka consultative committees) including representatives from the other maritime unions in late March.

This was an intense two days with educational workshops and sharing knowledge and experiences, including Company-confidential information which kept us all focussed on the significant challenges ahead.

At the end a number of potential council-specific HPHE initiatives were identified and will be pursued in the individual council forums. CEO Peter Reidy was in attendance and in full support of this initiative. He took copious notes (no doubt to follow-up with accountable parties in the fullness of time!). For us, the MCC (Mechanical Consultative Council) is due to meet at the end of May with three staff representing Hutt.

Our MCC continues to work quite well under the co-leadership of Ben Taylor (KR) and Allan Addison-Saipe (RMTU). Most issues are addressed within a reasonable timeframe although some topics such as staff training and pay equity are extensive by their very nature as we navigate along our evolutionary path.

It is fair to say all members of the joint team are committed to making things better for all. One of the many (Working Party) initiatives is the drafting of a generic team leader. At the time of writing, this had been put out to all RSAS staff via a consultation document for discussion and comment.

Site upgrades continue with the west wall of Plant 1 and removal of redundant tracks plus more security cameras for safety and security. Repairs and maintenance have continued apace although I hear the budget is nearly expended so we may have to coast towards the end of the financial year in this regard.

We also have our network cousins attending to our traverser pit and the two aprons flanking it along with others attending to the storage roads adjacent mechanical inventory.

In early May we convened the required special meeting to discuss remits for the 2023 MECA wage round. The topics/claims ranged from pay rises through to leave alterations, making better use of the coverage clause, and consideration of additional allowances to name but a few. No doubt we'll hear how things progress once the wage round deliberations get into full swing.

ANZAC Day and Workers' Memorial Day were well attended with wreaths laid and speeches made to remind us of those who have gone before us and made the ultimate sacrifice. We must remain ever vigilant of our surroundings and ensure we take safety seriously, each day, every



(above) Leanne Lunny and Rob Gordon laying a wreath on behalf of KiwiRail on WMD and (below) Mobammed Guled and Indie Cabral on behalf of the Hutt Staff.



◀ day – no exceptions.

Recent events have seen KiwiRail in the news. The CEO's email of May 15 aptly summed up how we are empowered to function as staff. If something is not right, call a halt and ensure safety is not compromised before proceeding any further. Not only does the RMTU back its members to the hilt on safety matters, the chief executive reiterates it: . . . "I want all of us to always put safety first".

That is a powerful message and we must not shy away from doing what is right.

On the subject of safety, we're eagerly awaiting the outcome(s) of the 2022 Safety Perception Survey and our safety roadmap into the future. It is starting to drag on now and those of us who are somewhat impatient are getting a little toey (although on the plus side, our site TRIFR (Total Recordable Injury Frequency Rate) appears to be gently trending downwards and that's a good thing).

A recent comment from one of our people expressed concern about how some members are letting the side down when they rent a Welfare holiday home. Some members are finding previous users have left things in a less than satisfactory condition.

Whilst we all now pay a cleaning fee, it goes nowhere near the cost (and time) to clean up after somebody who has treated the holiday homes like a 1-star hostel. We all have a part to play in the continuing upkeep of these wonderful facilities. Please comply with the reasonable rules and requests of the Welfare Trust so we can all enjoy the facilities.

Training and seminars continue with

an injury management programme for supervisory staff where they will learn the rules of the game and achieve a level of consistency – an aspect which has begun to slip in recent times. Remember, the programme is there to safeguard both parties in a managed return to full duties irrespective of whether you were injured at work or at home. Compliance-related training continues despite the significant difficulties in getting people and facilitators together against a backdrop of a high workload and staff availability.

Our mechanical inventory upgrade has moved to an additional facility in nearby Seaview. Concrete has been poured to provide a structurally stable work environment. This has been a long time coming and we hope to see some company-wide reporting (and photos!) on progress in due course.

Other reporting we hope to receive is the update to apparent restructuring at senior management level. We note that former CFO Rod Lay has disappeared from the system and Craig Rice is the acting CFO, along with former GGM Andrew Norton making a return to the fold and appointed to GGM chief people and communications officer.

Whilst tweaks and changes are necessary in a dynamic business, a courtesy update detailing the reasons why would be appreciated.

The company cannot honour its commitment to "encouraging employee participation in the business" unless staff know how the company is structured and who's who in the zoo. Older staff who have monitored the organisation in its various guises will know a good from bad structure if it is

made known to them.

If a company has a poor structure, it will be hard for the staff to achieve the desired outcomes. Fragmentation is not ideal and we have to be satisfied we're set-up to function as expected.

Our silos and complex matrix arrangement is an impediment to success. I note from our intranet we appear to have something like 5395 staff (and contractors?) on the payroll. It would be great to see how they're meant to interwork; so much for the 1980s fear that technology would displace people. We seem to keep on growing!

Recent training has given an insight into the injury management process and how it is supposed to work. It was pleasing to hear that the branch chair was leading from the front in this regard and confirmed Hutt is reasonably pro-active in its approach and execution of the process – with some minor exceptions.

Recent interviews have seen eight (8) new apprentice slots filled. We at Hutt have always been a great training ground in the technical aspects of the mechanical engineering industry and we hope to continue with this tradition for years to come.

A team leader meeting has been called to discuss the future workload during these busy times and the proposed changes to several reporting lines to support the change. A couple of immediate benefits will be to flatten out the headcount under each production manager and realign functional groups to their internal customers. Hopefully it will be another win-win for us all.

Until next time, take care, think safe and be safe out there. 🌐

NELSON PORT

New roster is bedding in with positive feedback

A lot on the go here in Nelson! After many months of engagement between workers and management, Port Nelson (PNL) started their availability roster trial on May 1. This is a three month process with leniency and flexibility expected from both sides as we attempt to get a working roster in place as soon as possible. Two weeks in and we have received some positive feedback along with some expected shortfalls that will be

addressed along the way. We are moving in the right direction towards a better life/work balance!

Monthly consultative meetings between management and the union have resumed to tackle any concerns which may affect our membership. This is vital to keep our finger on the pulse and hold the Port accountable for the hard-fought gains we have achieved.

This year sees members from C3 and Port Nelson renegotiate their collective

agreements. C3 are up first and we have already had a successful remits' meeting and are eager to get the ball rolling and set the tone for the branch. Skilled labour in our industry is at a shortage with better pay and conditions needed to retain and attract staff. Employers will soon find that average deals are not going to get across the table!

Port Nelson branch has a busy year ahead and we are excited and ready for the challenge! Union power! 🌐

CANTERBURY RAIL

Concern about uptick in crime around the yards. Caution urged

THE South Island welcomes our new organiser, Andy Woolhouse. Andy will be around meeting and greeting so make sure you welcome him.

Canterbury region seems to be under a crime spree at present with KiwiRail depots being targeted on an almost weekly basis.

The main concern is that RMTU members might end up confronting these criminals in a depot or another location while they are in the act of their crime spree

bringing danger to one of our members.


We seem to be having trouble getting the attention of the police and head office at KiwiRail regarding all the incident. We advise caution.

There has been a large increase of new staff in our region which is excellent.

All seem to want to join the RMTU and I believe they have done so by ticking the box on their contracts saying they wish to be a member. Many believe that the tick

is enough and they immediately become members by doing so

However, we need to point out they still need to fill in the RMTU sign up forms to complete their membership.

The RMTU will then send them a welcome pack introducing them to the Union, outlining its rules and procedures. If you need help to fill out the form, see your local delegate or contact the branch secretary. 

TIMARU PORT

Significant interest from C3 staff to join Union


CONGRATULATIONS to Aubrey Wilkinson being re-elected as our national president and also to Todd Valster confirmed as our general secretary. With proven leadership from both of these two we all know we are in good hands.

The Timaru Port branch chair and secretary met with the new South Island organiser Andy Woolhouse on his way through town. We are planning to welcome him into our workplace in the upcoming

months and look forward to working with him.

We are gaining momentum in getting a collective agreement in motion for the stevedoring company C3, who work on the container vessels. Several of their employees have mentioned that they wish to join our branch and we are more than happy to represent them in the future. Welcoming everyone is important to a functional branch and Union membership always pays off!

Recently our Workers' Memorial Day was attended by a few members laying a wreath to commemorate worker fatalities in our industry. The local newspaper took photos and an article was published to give some insight to the community in Timaru. It is good to see ongoing support for this.

The best way for us all to make ground in employment conditions and pay advances is to attend events, speak up if you have issues and finally, promotion of safe work behaviours. Stay safe comrades. 

OTAGO RAIL

Negotiations around the corner and fatigue a big issue

KIA ORA from Otepoti Dunedin and the Otago rail branch of the mighty RMTU!

Negotiations and bargaining are in the air for KiwiRail, Toll and Dunedin Railways. At our last paid stop work branch meeting we had a great turn out from the members. Engagement around the remits and getting them in on time was much appreciated.

Staff shortages are still a major issue in Dunedin, especially in Operations. Our members are doing some big hours helping the company out.

There is also a significant focus on fatigue from the front line and saying 'no' to overtime when that inevitable call comes from rosters. Workmates looking after each other, and reassuring one another that it's OK, to just say 'NO'. We all have the right

to go home in one piece at the end of our work day, to our families, friends and pets. Fatigue can come in many forms, and listening to your body and looking after yourself is key in the line of work that our members do on a daily basis.


A timely reminder of just that, was Workers Memorial Day on April 28. Unions Otago, RMTU, MUNZ (Maritime Union New Zealand), NZNO (Nurses Union) PSA (Teachers Union) and NZPFU Fire Fighters Union all showed up on the day at the Market Reserve in Dunedin where this year a new plaque was placed on to the Otago Workers Memorial, in remembrance of former RMTU president Jim Kelly. Jim was a massive advocate for safety in the workplace, a staunch ex Hillside, and a great workmate. The respect and solidarity shown

from other unions and their words were extremely humbling and warming. And yet we still have more work to do.

Speaking of work, and the workload our new South Island organiser, Andy Woolhouse, will have on his plate, I think he may need a few side dishes to catch the overflow.

Andy has recently visited operations, the CT site, Toll, mechanical, networks and Dunedin Railways. He attended the Tuesday Toolbox at the Networks/Infrastructure building and had a warm welcome from all. The membership are happy to have an organiser on board ramping up to a bargaining year. Welcome to the whanau Andy, you're going to fit in perfectly.

Stay safe out there comrades!!

I kotahitanga – In unity! 

Workers' Memorial Day

WELLINGTON

- behind Te Papa at the memorial stone



CHRISTCHURCH

- where a tree was planted in memory of those workers who had died.



DUNEDIN

at Market Reserve

