

THE *Transport Worker*

DECEMBER 2013

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



**Supporting Labour
to the 2014 election**



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The first of Auckland's new commuter units are unveiled.

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The battle continues to save the Capital Connection - between Palmerston North and Wellington.

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Two young Palmerston North LEs get their steam ticket heading a new wave of enthusiasts.

COVER PHOTO

Labour leader, David Cunliffe, is flanked by RMTU attendees Aubrey Wilkinson, Wayne Butson and Dave Marden at the Party conference. See stories pages 4-6.

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Wayne Butson
General secretary
RMTU

Sad times for NZ workers

AS the end of 2013 approaches I, like most of us, undertake a bit of reflection (some call it navel gazing). One thing that stands out for me is the changing violent nature of our weather. I do not recall seeing as much destruction wrought upon New Zealand by weather systems as we have had this year and so scattered geographically. I have been told of expenditure on much needed rail service vehicle upgrades being placed on hold to free up cash to fix storm damage, like the Opihi Bridge. Our national rail network has been hammered this year but at what cost? Is rail and its recovery different to other national transport modes?

By way of example, when a state highway is damaged the taxpayer wades in and funding for repairs is assured from crown accounts. If a port is damaged its restoration is assured by its owner (majority owner in the case of Tauranga) which in all cases is a statutory council. A similar situation exists for airports.

Not so rail. An illustration of this imbalance is the Napier to Gisborne line which was heavily damaged in a storm. A lot of money was needed to undertake repairs. KiwiRail studied the revenue stream of the line and decided that repairing it 'was not commercial'. Why wasn't the assessment done on a basis of national or regional interest? Why was it done purely on a commercial assessment? Is any such 'commercial' consideration given before a highway is restored? I think not.

This is a fundamental imbalance and illustrates the lack of a level playing field between our transport modes and has been an issue since corporatisation of rail in 1987.

Paying a fair share of costs

Until this imbalance is put right it will always prove a challenge for a national rail operator to provide and maintain its own infrastructure in competition to a road transport industry that uses and abuses a national roading system at marginal pricing. Studies show clearly that the road transport industry does not pay its fair share of roading cost. Repairing a pothole on the Desert Road with cement is not for your average ute or car but for the longer, heavier trucks operating there.

Whilst I am on that topic, can anyone tell me which roads the longer heavier trucks are permitted to travel on? I see them everywhere these days, even destroying the curbing in Lower Hutt as they traverse roundabouts clearly not designed to accommodate them.

If rail freight is to compete fairly with road transport a way must be found to have the rail infrastructure funded out of the crown accounts while each wagon, locomotive and train is charged a fair price for its use. This returns the risk and

decision making back to where it belongs, with the crown. It is the crown which should be responsible for making any long term decisions relating to transport infrastructure with the consideration being founded on national or regional interests and not the commercial exigencies of the minute. If this methodology was in place then the Hawkes Bay Regional Council's desire to re-open and retain the Napier/Gisborne line would be greatly simplified and a key piece of regional infrastructure would be retained rather than mothballed by a board made up of National Party cronies who simply want to brighten the books so KiwiRail can be once again sold to the highest bidder.

Now that Solid Energy is in the discard pile I am sure that the Dipton farmer's son will be leaving no stone unturned in his quest to sell off other assets. The best way of preventing that from transpiring is to make sure you cast your vote in the Assets Sales referendum. Make sure you vote.

This is the last issue of The Transport Worker for 2013 and it is another issue jam packed with our Union happenings. 2013 has been election year for all Union positions except mine. Aubrey Wilkinson, a crane driver at Sulphur Point employed by Port of Tauranga, was returned for another two year term as national president and Howard Phillips, a mechanical engineer with KiwiRail in Wellington, as vice president. This provides strong and wise experience at the top of our Union.

RMTU elections

All the KiwiRail industrial councils have been through the electoral meat grinder and we have many new faces. Our appreciation and thanks to those who either stepped aside or were replaced at the ballot box. In either case you have done a sometimes thankless but necessary job with the best interests of your fellow workers at the forefront of your mind. A sincere and hearty thanks to you all. This Union would not be what it is without the tireless and passionate work of the rank and file elected delegates.

This is also the first year where we haven't held our annual conference following the decision in 2012 to institute a biennial format. Instead, we have held a national ports forum and I thank all delegates to the forum for their participation and lively input.

Next year will be yet another busy one for us all. There will be the challenge of helping a worker-friendly Labour-led Government in the national elections. Is there really anyone out there who thinks that retaining this current Government is going to be good for us all? The National-led Government has major amendments to the Employment Relations Act they wish to implement into law which will have very real negative effects on working men and women.

The rail industry MECA expires 30 June 2014 and I am unsure what NZRC and KiwiRail will have in store for us, especially under any newly amended labour law. What we can be sure of though is that they will have issues, concerns and changes they want to achieve in the wage round and many of them will be at the expense of our members and in the name of increased profitability, flexibility and productivity.

There are many faces to these three evils of necessity for a business but there are few that we have not stared down in the past, and, despite what the John Key-led Government's Employment Relations Act changes may be, I know that where there is unity, solidarity and strength of purpose we shall prevail.

The first up challenge though will be for us all to get through the Christmas/New year holiday period unscathed. So please, all of you who are either having a break or are working to keep the place operating, make sure you are around to share a happy, healthy and, hopefully prosperous 2014. Merry Christmas everyone! 🍷

Morningside incident

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank the RMTU for their support with the Police investigation concerning the above incident.

Neville Kesby

Track inspector

KiwiRail.

Resignation

Dear Editor,

Just to let you know that I have resigned from Kiwi Rail effective from October 19, 2013 and will also need to resign from the Union effective from 19.9.13.

I would just like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for your support and the many benefits I have received over many years as a Union member.

Simon Stichbury

Palmerston North.

Dear Editor

On December 20, 2013 I am retiring and so wish to tender my resignation from the Union. Having done 40 years plus, I wish to thank the Union for acting on my behalf and wish everybody the best. Keep up the good work.

Lindsay Marshall.

Delegate's day success

Dear Editor,

I had the pleasure of attending a very successful RMTU Wellington branch delegate's day in October. This, in part, was to breathe life into the branch.

Varied presentations, light-hearted group activities and draws for spot prizes made for an interesting and enjoyable day.

The presentation by lawyer Geoff Davenport was interesting. He outlined delegate's rights and where they are to be found in statute and the CEC. He also gave good advice in regard to e-mail communication. In the past I have been involved with other organisations who struggled to rejuvenate their branches as part of their structure. Branches were seen as something from a past period. It is hoped that branches can be effective and relevant to the members. As one delegate put it: the union structure needs turning on its head so that the grassroots are at the top. The members need to feel that they are an integral part of the structure and not just consumers of union services.

Telai Sefesi and the executive are to be congratulated for a day that was well organised and run. The fact that it didn't cost the branch anything is due to entrepreneurship and negotiating skills of Tee and the executive who gained considerable sponsorship to fund the day. Well done!

Kenny Barclay

RMTU delegate.



LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 2013



Aubrey Wilkinson, Wayne Butson and Dave Marden with Labour Party leader David Cunliffe.

THE RMTU is one of six unions affiliated to the Labour Party, along with the EPMU, SFWU, MUNZ, DWU and Meat Workers' unions. At this year's party conference in Christchurch the RMTU delegates were national president Aubrey Wilkinson, general secretary Wayne Butson, NMC reps Andy Kelly, Dave Marden and observers LPC branch secretary Libi Carr and South Island organiser John Kerr.

The Union movement's relationship with the Labour Party goes back to 1916, when resistance to conscription was the catalyst for its formation. At the time the cry was 'no conscription of manpower without a conscription of capital'. Of course, there were other reasons for the creation of a party that purported to represent the interests of the working class and these related to the failure of the global wave of strikes that broke out in 1913 to destroy capitalism and the subsequent enthusiasm with which workers went to war against one another in 1914.

With varying degrees of success, social democratic parties were formed across the developed world to try and manage capitalism and blunt its impact on workers. There was talk of a so called parliamentary road to socialism, although just how much former

revolutionaries like Michael Savage, Harry Holland and Peter Fraser believed in this is questionable.

One hundred years on from the Great Strike of 1913 and a matter of months after a leadership election where the rhetoric of socialism was heard for the first time in two decades, it was interesting to see how the party is facing up to the challenge of getting elected. The phenomena of large numbers of people who don't bother voting is not exclusive to New Zealand, there is a growing proportion of the electorate in many countries who are disenchanted with mainstream politics. Labour believes that if it can mobilise as little as a quarter of the 800,000 registered voters who didn't turn out last time to vote for the Party in 2014 then National's days in government are over.

Accordingly, much of the conference's efforts were directed towards next year's general election. The policy platform, a high level document that is said to encapsulate the Party's values was debated and endorsed and the new leader David Cunliffe made a couple of announcements around a government owned insurance company, KiwiAssure, and building 10,000 homes in Christchurch. There will be more to come

in the months ahead. For the unions, Cunliffe is saying what we want to hear on abolishing the anti-worker amendments to the Employment Relations Act that National has introduced since 2008 with more at the select committee stage currently. He's also making sympathetic noises about the plans that the CTU have for extending workers' bargaining power with industry-wide agreements, something that would make a real and meaningful difference to the wage setting mechanism if it could be made to work.

Cunliffe is doing more than paying lip service to workers though, he knows his election to the leadership is largely thanks to his backing from the unions and industrial relations policy has to be a priority for any incoming Labour led government.

The other feature of the conference was the number of new delegates, reflecting the explosion in party membership this year. The doubling of membership in the last 12 months should translate into a strong activist base that can be used to get the vote out next year providing the Party rolls out policies that are sufficiently attractive.

Cunliffe is a confident and charismatic speaker, he appears to have dialled down some of the socialist rhetoric of the leadership election, perhaps in the hope of



"RMTU standing up for Labour."

Andy Kelly SI ports.



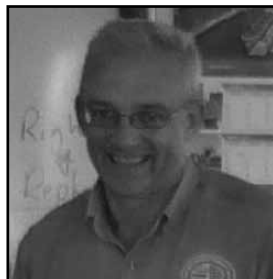
"The best Labour Party conference for me so far. I am looking forward to the change of Government next year."

Aubrey Wilkinson president.



"A first time attendee and an experience not to be forgotten."

Dave Marden, NI ports.



"It was good to catch up with old comrades who are working to defeat the National Government."

John Kerr, SI organiser.



"The RMTU rocked the Conference. We conquered the Conference and we will conquer the Tories next year."

Libi Carr Lyttelton branch secretary.



Wayne Butson general secretary.

"There is a renewed energy within Labour and therefore new hope for the country and the workers."

CTU's challenge to the Labour party

CTU president Helen Kelly began her speech to the Labour party conference in Christchurch saying "not only will we get a change of government next year" but that the new Government "will move the country to the place where it should be".

Specifically, she talked about what the union movement saw as challenges for the future for working people starting with the CTU's recent campaigns on Forestry Safety, the Living Wage, Fairness at work and the campaign on insecure work.

"They are all interconnected and are reflective of a country where work, for growing numbers of workers, now takes such an exploitative form, it is playing a negative role in the economic and social development of our community."

She highlighted as an example the plight of forestry workers saying the person killed four months previously was the eighth this year.

"Charles Finlay got home at 6pm the night before he was killed, and was up again the next morning at 3am to meet his normal start time

of 4am. Charles was dead by 5.30am in the middle of the winter, in the middle of the country, in the middle of the night and on a dark unlit site. He regularly worked between 55 and 60 hours in a five day week and up to 64 hours when he worked a Saturday. Some days he also drove more than an hour each way," said Kelly. "Charles was on \$16 an hour after 27 years in the bush. His employer was a contractor to Hancocks Forests – the biggest forest owner in New Zealand."

Typically, she said, the 300 contractors in the industry are squeezed by the nine big forest owners including being allocated work too late to make a safety plan and facing increasing productivity pressures, reduced payments and no security of provision of work to allow them to invest adequately.

She stressed that he was a victim of a deregulated labour market and the industry's poor health and safety record where the workforce is scared to raise concerns even though the near daily discussions among themselves was of corners being cut, productivity pressures and numerous near misses.

"The changes to employment law now going through Parliament," said Kelly, "would even remove their right to a tea break and are being promoted by the Minister of Labour, Simon Bridges, as necessary to rebalance the power between workers, like Charles, and his employer because according to the Minister, the current law apparently overly favours workers."

She said the CTU wants an industrial relations system which considers carefully the role of work in a healthy, robust and resilient society.

"The current changes proposed by Government will have very serious con-

"According to the Minister of Labour, the current law apparently overly favours workers." Yeah right!

Report continued

appealing to the so-called political centre. It remains to be seen if he can do this and inspire the people who didn't vote last election to tick the Labour box next year.

The mood of the conference was positive. There is a feeling that this is a party that is ready for government. There only remains the small matter of getting elected. 🇳🇿

sequences for many NZ workers who do collectively negotiate. The reality is that those rights have long been denied workers like Charles who worked for most of his shortened working life in a situation that was able to exploit him at will, in every such way including, in the end, costing his life.”

She went on to challenge the NZLP to the sort of relationship the CTU was seeking.

“We want a different form of relationship between our two movements based on our shared outlook of sustainable development and a fair society, and on agreed expectations of what good modern Government looks like and what it does – and what a modern union movement looks like and what it does.”

She said the current government is “out of touch with working people”.

“Workers have been shocked at what is proposed (in the changes to legislation) and they get what it all means,” she said. “They are leafleting, marching in a mask parade, handing out cups of tea in the square, visiting Government MPs (some for the first time) and organising rallies.”


She said the first question they ask her is: Why would the Government do this to us?

“My view is because they are living in the past and fear the future – they want us to live in fear rather than hope . . . They are trying to create a collapse in confidence of workers that stops us defending ourselves and makes us apologetic for wanting rights and decent pay.”

She outlined four immediate CTU goals:

- To stop the law.
- A vision for an alternative law.
- To ensure communities understand this is a political decision being made by the Government against their interests and the interests of their families.
- To run a campaign up to the next election ensuring workers understand that their vote is critical and they should exercise it.

They must understand, she says, that they need to vote for “political parties which respect the contribution they make to the NZ economy and who have solutions in their policy that will genuinely deliver to them useable, robust and sustainable employment laws that secure their economic futures and those of their families.

“We need a new vision that Kiwis can aspire to. It’s not a cut it, drill it, pollute it, close it and impoverish it vision – it’s not one where most Kiwis are seen as the problem with a small rich group seen as the solution. But one that recognises the best of human nature and the concept that our individual happiness is dependent on each other’s rights and needs as much as our own. It is the only sustainable model for long term well-being and it is the point that differentiates the labour movement in both its wings from the Parties that form the current Government.” 

What we're not being told about the TPPA

THE Transpacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) currently under negotiation between New Zealand, the US and nine other countries, is much more than a trade agreement.

Trade is only a small part of it.

The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions and many other organisations and individuals are concerned it will stop future New Zealand governments from doing things that are in the interests of working people and most New Zealanders.

Because the negotiations are being conducted in secret, what we know about the TPPA comes from leaked documents and detective work. This is not acceptable. We live in a democracy, which means we have the right to know what is done in our name and to have a say.

From what we know so far, if the negotiations are completed it will become much harder for the New Zealand government to look after our environment, promote health, protect workers and consumers, and promote the public interest:


- Most restrictions on foreign investment will be frozen and rolled back even further.
- Big overseas companies will be able to sue the New Zealand government for millions in damages in secretive offshore tribunals, claiming that new laws and regulations (for example, a ban on fracking, smoking control laws, or a cap on electricity prices) have seriously undermined the value of their investments.
- Medicines will become more expensive as big pharmaceutical companies gain more influence over PHARMAC, and restrictions are placed on generic medicines.
- Copyright laws will be toughened and more harshly enforced, restricting internet freedom and access to information, costing libraries, schools, and businesses, and stifling innovation.
- Parallel importing will be banned, meaning that New Zealanders, especially the poor, will have to pay far more for all sorts of ordinary products.
- Foreign banks, insurance companies and money traders will gain more powers to challenge laws designed to prevent another financial crisis; and overseas property dealers could contest moves to burst the property bubble, such as a capital gains tax.

Similar agreements the US has signed impose policies that New Zealand voters have repeatedly voted down and would oppose if they had the choice.

Basically the TPPA proposal is an extension of an existing agreement between New Zealand, Singapore, Chile and Brunei. So far the US, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Peru, Vietnam and Malaysia have joined the negotiations while Japan and Thailand show interest.

The US wants it to be completed by the end of 2013.

Most of the TPPA covers areas like foreign investment rules, empowering foreign companies to sue our government, opening our services to competition, our right to regulate, pharmaceutical costs, intellectual property rights, and preventing use of government procurement to help local firms.

The big trade interest for New Zealand is agriculture – getting more dairy and other products into the US. But powerful US interests oppose that and what little we get will have to be paid for. 

Read more at:

<http://www.itsourfuture.org.nz/>

Murray Webster

3/10/1947 to 12/9/2013

MURRAY passed away on September 12 aged 65 years. At the time he was a track and projects engineer in the Christchurch regional manager's office.

He began his rail service in 1966 completing his 47th year at the time of his death.

He began his rail career as an engineering cadet in Greymouth for NZ Government Railways stepping in his father's footsteps – also a career rail man.

He assisted in line restoration work after the Inangahua earthquake in 1968 and shortly afterwards was granted a period of extended leave to travel and work overseas.

He returned to NZR and recommenced work in the Christchurch district engineer's office where he carried out a wide range of track and civil engineering and project works.

He received a commendation for his work on the Middleton marshalling and freight yard redesign and rebuild circa 1995.

Other works of note in which Murray played a key role included: the track warrant loop extensions on the MNL, the original Lyttelton balloon coal loop, the Midland line coal loop extensions, numerous siding projects including recent projects at Westland Milk at Rolleston, and the Fonterra siding at Darfield.

Murray also played a key support role for all staff as a technical resource and the "go to" person for track technical matters. 🚂



Laurence (Laurie) John Shaw Zanders

29/12/1917 to 4/9/2013

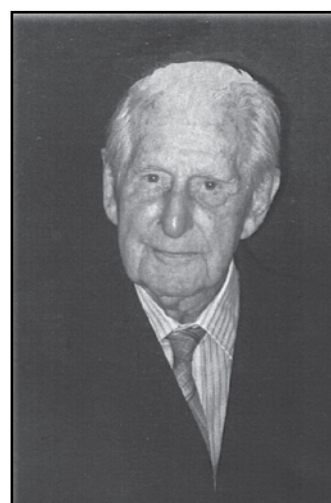
LAURIE was born in Kawhia and commenced his NZR service on April 25, 1937 at the locomotive depot at Frankton Junction. Apart from a stint spent at Palmerston North and Paeroa (where he passed his second grade locomotive engineers examinations) Laurie returned to Frankton where he later gained his first grade and railcar tickets.

Laurie officially retired in May 1977 as staff instructor at the CME office Wellington Headquarters at Te Rapa where he remained for a further six months assisting staff training Wellington in marking examination papers.

In November 1977 Laurie joined the Frankton branch of the NZR Superannuitants Association (renamed the Waikato/Thames Valley in 1996) where, for 16 years he served as branch treasurer followed by 10 years as its honorary auditor, a position he only relinquished in July last year. Truly a remarkable achievement for someone in his 95th year. On the 4/7/1991, in recognition and appreciation of a long and meritorious service to the Association, Laurie was awarded a Life Membership.

A large gathering of friends and former workmates attended his service on Tuesday September 10 which was conducted by his daughter Gloria at the Church of St Clairs, Tuhikarama Rd, Hamilton. At the conclusion of the service a guard of honour was formed by present and past railway employees.

To the Zanders family the branch extends its sincere condolences. 🚂



ARE YOU A MEMBER?

NZ Harbours Superannuation and KiwiSaver Schemes



The NZ Harbours Superannuation Scheme is open to all port workers.

The NZ Harbours KiwiSaver Scheme is open to port workers, Rail & Maritime Transport Union members and their families.



The Schemes have an external administrator and contributions are invested by four top-rated fund managers.

Download a copy of an Investment Statement and Application Form at:

www.harbourssuper.org.nz



Bill protest

RECENTLY a delegation from the RMTU submitted to the Transport and Industrial Relations Select Committee in opposition to the changes contained in the Government's Employment Relations Bill.

The Bill is full of changes designed to undermine workers' ability to collectively bargain. These include (but are certainly not limited to) allowing employers to walk away from the negotiating table without concluding a collective agreement.

Wayne Butson explained to the Committee how the ability of the RMTU to collectively bargain on its members' behalf has benefitted those members and their



The RMTU parliamentary line-up (l to r) Telai Sefesi, Karen Fletcher, Mani Raumati, Ben Thompson (HA Law) and Wayne Butson.

families significantly. Ben Thompson urged the Committee to recognise the link between collective bargaining and workplace health and safety, and that if this Government wishes to substantiate

its rhetoric about keeping workers safe it will abandon its attacks on collective bargaining.

The Select Committee is yet to report back after hearing submissions. 🇳🇿

Halloween help



Wellington branch member Mel Te Pou dressed up for Halloween and raised \$6000 for child cancer.

Righting wrongs



Adam Harrison (r) handing over the cash raised by colleagues to NZR Staff Welfare Trust manager Chris Ball.

Where the %### are you?

Did you get that important notice from the Union last month? Last year? Any time? If you haven't had any mail from RMTU head office then you had better tell us where you've moved to. Check your address by:

- talking to your branch chair who has a list of local members and their details;
- going to the Union website and updating your details — <http://bit.ly/exmEYL>
- phoning 04-499-2066;
- faxing 04-471-0896;
- giving us your e-mail to save on postage.

RECENTLY, a part time member who went to full time in Tranz Metro was not entered into the NZR Staff Welfare Trust — normally an automatic procedure. It was accepted that the KiwiRail pay office had made the error. They were approached to make good the error and to arrange payment of three months contributions so the member would not be disadvantaged. There were no issues with the Trust who were willing to allow a retrospective backdating arrangement. Management initially agreed to make the payment but later reneged after speaking with the pay office. So local delegate Adam Harrison arranged a collection for this member's backdated welfare subscription. Pictured is Adam Harrison handing over the cash raised to the Trust manager Chris Ball. Strangely, KiwiRail did decide to pay the subscription without any advice to the RMTU but we were contacted by the Trust and were able to pick up the cash and then give it to the member in need. Thanks go to Adam and his colleagues for supporting a member in need and the Trust. 🇳🇿

Local concerns raised at PN



A meeting for all Palmerston North branch mechanical members was arranged mid-October to discuss a recent investigation report that had been done following a depot protection breach and for members to raise/discuss areas of concern within this sector. Consistency – or lack of – was a clear concern raised. It was important for everyone to have their say. All issues were recorded and plans for improvements put in place.

Some of the interim solutions included:

- Members to be made aware of what incidents trigger investigations, D&A testing and the fair treatment process;
- Non servicing staff will not repair locomotives in 2 road (main servicing road). To be reviewed when protection issues are resolved;
- Non servicing staff to contact servicing via radio for any movement required;
- A map of the depot to be displayed

with colour coding and a key which clearly shows what protection/authorities and communication are required all in any area to be added to the site safety plan;

- A single document that relates to depot work and includes the safety requirements for protection in all areas;
- Investigate the use of road specific lollipops (non 2 road) with tags for each member working on the road as opposed to tags on reversers/throttles;
- Investigate the use of magnetic signage on locomotives being worked on. For example, men at work, do not move locomotive, do not start locomotive;
- Design a tool to assist in using the de-railer without injury;



- Accept that multiple levels of protection are required and those levels must be used.

No one could remember the last time all of the groups within PLM mechanical had met so it has been decided to programme a meeting every 4-6 weeks until matters are resolved.

As part of rejuvenating the sectors within the RMTU Palmerston North branch a BBQ for the mechanical members was put on by the branch prior to the meeting. Thanks Tim and the team. 🌐

RMTU NMC 2013-2015



Following the National Management Committee (NMC) elections in 2013 the line up is (l to r standing) Howard Phillips (central core rail and vice president), Dave Marden (North Island ports), Wayne Butson (general secretary), Andy Kelly (South Island ports), Mike Williams (Southern core rail) and (l to r sitting) Aubrey Wilkinson (president), Barry Simpkins (Northern core rail) and Bill Sweeney (general rep). The officers of NMC are elected for a two year term with the general secretary being a four year term.

New records at City Depot

THE weekly Lyttleton Port Company (LPC) newsletter The Portal (6/11/13) reported a record number of gated containers for October – an amazing 14,810 of them.

The article further stated that the new record was achieved by the hard work and extra hours by the team at City Depot.

This speaks highly of the calibre of worker there considering the shoddy way they have been treated of late particularly regarding their terms and conditions.

Despite helping to create huge profits for the LPC, our members at City Depot/Inland Port are on a minimum of \$6 less per hour than their fellow

workers over at Port Lyttelton.

Workers there do the same work as their brothers and sisters over the hill but LPC absolutely refuses to provide them with many of the provisions of the collective agreement even though they qualify to be signees of the agreement.


Instead, LPC offers the minimum it can get away with.

Meanwhile, the CEO of LPC, Peter Davie, for the second year in a row has accepted a \$600,000 bonus making him a million dollar man two years running.

Is this William Blum's trickle-down theory at work?

The RMTU won its case at the Employment Relations Authority that the Inland

Port/City Depot workers are entitled to be part of the collective agreement. LPC has appealed that decision and we now await the outcome from the Employment Court hearing to see if we can win again.

The RMTU and its members are after justice and fair play. LPC appears to be only interested in lining its own pockets. 



Canterbury 'super do'

FOR over 50 years the Canterbury branch have organised and run a function for their retired members on the first Sunday of November. Entry is free to retired railway men and women from all sectors of the service. The branch funds this by running raffles through the year and at the hall on the day.

KiwiRail management also contribute some funds to help make the day enjoyable for those present. Those who are not retired pay a modest entrance fee.

This year we had several travel over from Australia with two presently employed by companies within the Pilbara, Western Australia. Many old tales were retold with much laughter and camaraderie and the odd de-railment is had!

Many of those attending have been retired in excess of 35-40 years and the oldest present was 95.

Each retired member was acknowledged personally by way of a roll call. This is a must attend for many and already plans are being laid for next years event. 🚂



*Above
(l to r) Gordon Verduin, Alf Johnson, Bill Morgan, Harry Henderson all 90 plus in age.*



(l to r) Russell Thompson LE Middleton, Scotty ret guard, Sparky Dey ret LE Greymouth.

Protest over Fiji's latest constitution



IN September Fiji's Commodore Bainimarama Government imposed a constitution on the country without any input from the people there.

The action and its affect on worker rights attracted a small protest at the Fiji Embassy including (pictured above)

(l to r) Mel Te Pou (RMTU), Telai-Afitu Sefesi (RMTU/NZCTU), Sai Lealea (SDL consultancy), Peter Conway (NZCTU) and Julia Harrison (RMTU).

In January 2013, the Fijian government scrapped their draft constitution drawn up by an independent commission led by

Australian professor Yash Ghai who told Australia Network's Newline programme that the new constitution is seriously flawed.

The new document replaces the 1997 constitution that was set aside by the military regime four years ago. 🚂

International Transport Workers' Federation

Urban Transport Committee Meeting

Tokyo, 30 September to 2 October 2013

By Bill Sweeney, NMC

WITH great pleasure I was invited to this conference representing the RMTU. There were 35 countries represented including 105 delegates from around the world.

There were two special items:

(i) Murder of Ponciano Infante, president of an independent union of Jeepney drivers in the Philippines on 3 September 2012, who were protesting over the rise in petrol prices. He was gunned down in his home by two masked men and no one has been held to account for this.

(ii) The Pacific Beach Hotel in Honolulu, Hawaii, dispute over wages and conditions was resolved with the assistance of the Japanese transport unions (ITF affiliates), who got in behind the workers. This was achieved by persuading the Japanese, who comprise 80% of the guests, not to stay at this hotel. As a result a favourable outcome was realised for the workers who now have safe and secure jobs and are getting paid fair and reasonable wages.

Other discussion topics included:

- **Deregulation and liberalisation of public transport systems:** This means lowering the standards of health and safety, lower wages for employees, less secure employment, the dropping of non-profitable transport networks, and reduced frequency and quality of service delivery to the wider public. This transfers into a wealth and power imbalance from the many to the few.
- **Multi-national companies:** The ITF recognises this as a global trend whereby governments, both central and local, are giving away their transport network responsibilities to allow corporate 'non-responsibility' to run transport networks therefore not providing a service to both local communities and the

country as a whole. This allows urban transport to be operated as a profit-orientated non-service based provider. This comes at a cost to the workers and the communities in which they live and work. Multi-nationals are primarily focused on achieving larger dividends for their shareholders which is inconsistent with communities' best interests and in turn defeats the purpose and objectives of an efficient public transport system for the local people. As such, this is not a sustainable pathway moving forward into the foreseeable future.

- **Campaign to promote public transport:** With increasing urbanisation around the world and with the third world gaining financial independence along with the peak oil prices, public transport is set to be in for an enormous growth over the next two decades. It is the ITF's objective to organise workers in public transport to be able to have their say and have some control over their working conditions.

- **Health and safety:** Dr June Fisher spoke about H&S for urban transport workers. Dr Fisher has been studying urban transport workers in the San Francisco area, USA, for more than 30 years. Her longitudinal-based study of urban transport workers, primarily bus drivers, shows that these workers have much higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, cancers and gastric-based disorders than any other workers in their respective age groups. The frequency and degree of violence in everyday working life for urban transport workers was identified as much more pronounced and therefore was identified as a significantly more stressful workplace environment than compared to other industries. Violence includes physical, emotional and psychological based traumas. As a result, the evidence stemming from Dr Fisher's study suggests that the urban transport worker's environment is a causal factor for the higher incidence of heart disease, diabetes, cancers and


gastric-based disorders.

In most circumstances, when urban transport workers are ill, their employer takes no responsibility for their care and generally aims to terminate their employment.

Another important observation she made is that the employer will always talk about how great and how much money they are investing in upgrading transport networks as far as infrastructure (buses, trains, ferries), however they never discuss the welfare of their staff. Only after there is a serious adverse event (ie an accident) will the employer then implement improved safety systems for the benefit of the travelling public. In most situations, the employer places the complete onus on the employee for workplace accidents in a reactive-compliance-based manner rather than a proactive and co-operative workplace safety based manner.

Dr Fisher also emphasises that unions are actively obstructed from the workplace by employers as far as health and safety is concerned and change needs to be effected to enhance the wellbeing of employees. This will have a positive overall outcome for all stakeholders in that it reduces the risk to public safety, reduces the incidence of illness of urban transport workers, reduces health based costs to the employer and establishes a stronger and more effective employer-employee working relationship.

Notices of motion:

- (i) KPTU: ITF support for the Korean subway workers to stop work over poor pay and conditions on the Seoul rail metro network – PASSED
- (ii) RMT: The retention of guards on the London overground services – PASSED
- (iii) RMT: Urban transport sector funding cuts – PASSED
- (iv) JRU: Disaster crisis management – PASSED
- (v) JRU: Achieving a nuclear free peaceful society – DEFERRED (until 43rd ITF congress in Sofia 2014) 

Spanish trains unveiled

THE Spanish built EMUs were unveiled at a ceremony held at the Wiri depot on September 12.

In what was a rather formal affair Auckland Mayor Len Brown brought down the curtain with the help of his train mad grandson to give Auckland their first view of this wonderful train.

RMTU reps who have been part of the project, were in attendance to see their hard work now visible to us all. They were very quickly able to point out a few missing bolts that most people probably missed.

These are very impressive trains where passengers are able to move freely and safely between the three carriages with their open design.

Train managers will have a much clearer view of where people are on their train and access for both wheelchairs and parents with prams is simple and practical, with plenty of room for bikes being stowed out of the way.

These trains will really change rail transport in Auckland and go a long way to easing the congestion on the roads.

There have been concerns that these EMUs were going to be used in driver only mode but after meeting with Transdev, the



Bill Sweeney (Transdev LE), Scott Evans (CAF), Bernie Henare, Chris Harmon (KiwiRail LE), William Els (Transdev manager) and Isaac Broome (Transdev LE).

RMTU has been assured that there is no plan to have these trains operating without a train manager and that the driver only mode has been turned off on the simulators.

Driver training is due to begin closer to the time that they will enter service. At the moment, capability testing for certification is on-going with operational testing to commence once certified. 🌐



Bill Sweeney tests out the simulator.



Aubrey Wilkinson catches up with Judy Mann Taieri Gorge railway member.



Members at a very well attended Lyttelton Port branch AGM listening in horror to the general secretary advising them of the Port Company's fully supportive submission to the Industrial Relations Select Committee considering the National-led Government's proposed amendments to the Employment Relations Act.

Workers' memorial for Invercargill

THE Southland branch, led by chair Gavin Mortimore, has been working hard to get a permanent memorial in place at the Invercargill City Council offices in time for next year's Workers' Memorial Day. Gavin approached the local CTU-affiliated unions and got their support before seeking the view of Tim Shadbolt and the council. Mr Shadbolt was very supportive, and once the local body elections were out of the way in October, the project began to gain momentum. We now have a location and mock up of what the memorial will look like. Sounds simple, but navigating your way through local government bureaucracy takes time and patience and Gavin has demonstrated both. We look forward to having photos of the ceremony in Invercargill at the new memorial at next year's WMD. Well done Southland Branch for your efforts to date. 🌐



This memorial is in remembrance
of the 6,000 workers internationally
who die every day as a result of
workplace accidents and/or workplace illnesses.

Pray for the Dead and Fight for the Living.



The Southland Branch of the NZ Council of Trade Unions



Southland track gang

AT the sharp end, and despite all the controversy in infrastructure and engineering, it's members like these who keep the track safe and in good repair. Sometimes we question whether management fully understand that without the goodwill, pride and dedication of these workers there wouldn't be a railway. 🌐



Different styles but the same message: it's notice boards like these that keep members informed and provoke discussion and debate. Well done to the Canterbury Rail and West Coast branches for not just keeping the faith but spreading it.

Don't like unions?

Fine. Then give us back . . .
your weekends, overtime pay, child
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collective bargaining, the forty hour
workweek . . .

and all the other protections gained to
workers standing up for your rights!

Delegate training: Auckland/Christchurch



Karen Fletcher (organiser) talks to delegates in Auckland.



THREE delegate training courses were held in Auckland across October. It was a good opportunity for newer delegates to meet with their experienced counterparts. When asked about why they became delegates there was certainly a common thread of wanting to help their work mates, to keep the boss honest, to make sure everyone gets a fair go and is treated with respect. An overall understanding of the strength in numbers is understood to be the key to our success.

With a large number of newer delegates, the organising cycle, understanding the role of the delegate, organising and bargaining and representation were the topics covered along with a session on health and safety. Delegates really enjoyed being able to put faces to the names for both John Kerr (SI organiser) and Karen Fletcher (H&S organiser) and hear of wider issues the RMTU is involved in across the country. There were some that came back from leave or were on RDOs so they could attend. The time and commitment all delegates give is



invaluable for the RMTU to stay stronger together, thank you. Overall this training was a roaring success with very positive feedback received, with a strong desire for further training in the not too distant future. 🌐

Why I became a delegate



John Healy, Inland Port

JOHN HEALY, RMTU delegate and H&S delegate at the Lyttelton Port Inland Port/City Depot has worked in hospitality, dairy farming, timber, at Watties, and now at LPC as a cargo handler operating the large Hyster forklifts.

John has always been involved in his union wherever there was one in the workplace.

When asked why he became a delegate John said, "I just did, there is always something that needs to be said or done. I've always been involved in the union and I guess I've just gotten more involved".

Of his role as a H&S delegate John is passionate about making the place he and his colleagues work as safe as possible.

"There's always something that can be done to improve H&S and we have to speak up", he says.

John is on the H&S committee at Inland Port along with fellow RMTU member Simon Gillard who works as a container controller there. Simon is equally passionate about H&S and both men are keen to undertake RMTU H&S training scheduled for early 2014. 🌐

EDUCATION



Wellington successful

By Vaughan Davidson

UNDERSTANDING what we can do for each other and standing together to fight for our work rights, were one of many topics that I found when Wellington branch delegates came together on Wednesday October 2, 2013.

A world full of misunderstanding and of misled people falling into the trap of working hard and sometimes even working themselves to the bone just to make ends meet because they think “if I just put my head down, work hard and do what I’m told from my bosses, I’ll have job security and my family will have food on the table to eat”. They do not know that they can say “No” to bullying from workmates and management.

I know this because I was one of those workers. I thought I knew my rights at work, and that was to keep my lips closed and say ‘yes’ to every shift that the company ask me to do – or even stay an hour or two late without pay.

I found that a lot of people misunderstood the concept of union and union delegates. Yes, unions fight for your rights at work and yes, delegates stand shoulder to shoulder with you if you want them to, but workers (and yes, I used to be one of those workers) have this misconception that unions don’t really do much.





n region holds delegate day

The old saying goes: You don't know what goes on behind closed doors, comes to mind. These union delegates are people who work right next to you, have the same rights as you and I, but they have a bit more knowledge – well a lot more when it comes to our rights at work. And supporting them are other delegates in different departments, different outlets and different areas within the company to help you find your voice and stand up for your rights.

We press 'play' but don't press 'pause'. Progress marches on with the veil over our eyes as we turn our backs to the cause. No law is going to change us, we have to change ourselves and learn that fellow workers need to band together.

The issue is human rights for everybody. There is no difference. When everyone else is comfortable and you remain voiceless and silent means your human rights are being stolen. There will be no freedom until we are equal and damn right, I support that.

This training was a great team building day, getting to know what we can do and who

we can lean on for support during a time of need. Thanks to Glen our RCO in Tranz Metro who brought light to some topics that I had no idea about. This is what I mean by delegates working together to find solutions for you. It's not just one union delegate working for you but all union delegates.

Thanks to KiwiRail, AIL and UCU for funding, and also to Telai Sefesi, Gary Innes, Jenny Griffin, Mel Te Pou, Julia Harrison, Ka'isa Beech, Wayne Butson and those who made it a great day of understanding about what we can do for our fellow workmates. 🌐



Capital Connection's potential

Michael Nicholson

NATIONAL and its road centric NZTA won't support the Capital Connection (CC) and they want the train to be discontinued. It is not just this one train that concerns them but the potential for a network of trains on this route which they don't want. A full passenger rail network from Palmerston North to Wellington would provide a real alternative for the region to their gold plated 'Roads of National Significance' and compromise the already unfavourable cost-benefit for these roads. Government puppets at KiwiRail have been instructed to exit the train with no political fallout for National and the train will stop very soon after the next elections, if National wins.

Local National MP Nathan Guy is taking credit for the CC's current continued operation at the same time as dragging up some old National Party mantra, "use it or lose it", a catch phrase often used by governments of the 1960s and 70s when exiting provincial railcar and other rail services.

Meanwhile, KiwiRail are subtly sowing the seed of failure through various media statements. Their plan to grow passenger numbers includes drastically increasing fares and running the service down.

One passenger wrote: "Clearly the Government is keen to run the CC into the ground. It is cancellation by stealth, making the service incrementally uncomfortable and thereby decreasing revenue. There are valid reasons for subsidising this train servicing the Otaki area, the minister needs to

rethink this strangulation strategy designed to kill off the CC".

If National wins the next election a 2014-15 cancellation date for this train service is almost certain.

Potential exists to grow this route but

expansion and integration will greatly enhance the lifestyle for all living in the southern quarter of the island.

Labour transport spokesperson Ian Lees-Galloway did an excellent job of raising its profile saying "...they have effectively




the only way is to improve the product through a choice of departure times and connecting options.

Both regional councils have shown willingness to financially support the service if central Government contribute too.

Ideally the service would be linked with the Masterton – Wellington rail corridor, running a regional rail network from Masterton to Wellington to Palmerston North, thereby standardising rolling stock, sharing staff and integrating timetables for efficiency.

Aside from regional economic benefits,

made its retention an election issue. The CC can be saved for good by electing a Government that values public transport and takes more than just congestion into account when determining what projects to support".

The NZ Green Party has a specific rail section in their transport policy under which includes development of a national long-distance rail passenger strategy to ensure rail-based services become available as aviation costs rise due to climate change and the end of cheap oil. 

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Cap and badge worn proudly for 48 years

BROTHER BOX – aka Les – retired in July this year after 48 years in rail – almost exclusively in Dunedin.

At age 15 he left school, jumped the garden fence, and joined his father on the railways having long dreamt of doing so.

“I’d always wanted to drive an engine,” he said. “As long ago as I can remember. My father was a track ganger and we lived right next to the track. I joined up and was made a junior labourer when I turned 16.”

He has never wanted anything else since and looks back today at a career full of achievement and satisfaction – and still with a lingering longing.

He says he has worn his cap and badge proudly – and every day he worked – since the day he received them.

“They’ll go in the coffin with me,” he jests, though one suspects there might be a grain of truth in the statement.

Truth is that Les might just still be working if the rigours of vibrating locos hadn’t affected him so painfully through nerve damage.

Vibrations start at your feet

“Forty years of being shaken took its toll,” he said when discussing Whole Body Vibration syndrome. “The locos are old and even if they’re not moving the vibrations are severe. The vibrations start at your feet and work their way up your body. It’s a terrible sensation.”

As he grew older the back, neck and head aches grew worse and despite frequent visits to chiropractors, physiotherapists and osteopaths there was, and is, no cure.

He said the complaint is now better recognised and while the Union provides “excellent” and unqualified support the Company is slowly coming into line. The bright news is that retirement has made a difference.

“Since I retired I’ve noticed a vast improvement and now can go days without taking any pain relief.”

Despite the pain trains inflicted on his body Les wouldn’t have it any other way.

“I enjoyed what I was doing,” he said, but also he was conscious that any days he took off for his complaint put extra pressure on the remaining depleted number of loco drivers.

Les worked his way through the levels of qualifications and was forced to wait patiently while space became available in a seniority-bound system which required those above to “pass on” before upcoming new blood could take over.

He met Jennifer early in his career and with a good job in Dunedin he was happy to do likewise. Apart from six forays to regional depots in the lower South Island to assist gaining seniority and to fill in when required, Les spent all his working life in Dunedin.

Country depots great places

“Those country depots were great places to work and gain experience and seniority,” he said. “Lacking the manpower of the city depot and its various machines, we had to do almost everything ourselves. The fireman had to light the fires in the morning and dowse them at night, plus load up with coal.”

The camaraderie he found in the country depots has made him life long friends. “They were great people and loco men were a breed apart. We had to work such odd and varying hours and that made us somewhat different.”

He joined the Union at the start of his career and has been a loyal member ever



Les Box proudly sporting his cap and badge at the controls of a Ka942 – his favourite spot!

since accepting various branch and national positions along the way.

Regrets downsizing

Looking back he regrets the Government’s decision to downsize rail and staff levels saying: “In the end the government is still paying whether it be wages or a benefit, wouldn’t it have been better if they had all stayed working? I’m not sure there were any winners in the end.”

Les marks a series of lasts with his retirement: the last steam-era train driver to retire in Dunedin. He believes only three others remain in the South Island. He was also the last fireman to stoke a time-tabled train in New Zealand before diesel engines took over – the night express out of Dunedin – was one of the drivers on the last Southerner passenger trains and one of the last shed drivers in Dunedin.

We wish him well in his retirement. 🌐

NORTHLAND BRANCH

GREETINGS from the north. Recent restructuring of the branch executive will see us joining the fold as regular contributors to our great Union's publication, *The Transport Worker*.

Plenty of work lies ahead of us to get the branch functioning effectively. Our first challenge will be to obtain amalgamation of the rail and port branches into one. This will bring us into line with smaller areas nationally.

With the appointment of Stuart Johnston as our new Northern regional organiser we have begun recruiting new port members. We warmly welcome Stu and experienced unionist Alby Barr who has

been elected to the branch executive as chairperson. We are delighted to have both their knowledge and skills, recently put to good use in a DOL mediation meeting for one of our members.

Albert represents us on Unions Northland and the Whangarei Labour Party committees, and also plays a leading role in the Labour Party Husting meetings up here, and getting CTU president, Helen Kelly, to outline pending employment law changes – a real eye opener to members.

With the Northland line 'still' under review the branch will be holding an official function late summer to thank the many supporters trying to save it. Their strong

campaigning has kept the wolves at bay so far. Confirmed guests are big hitters from Labour and Greens.

Retiring local National MP, Phil Heatley, commissioned an electorate survey which highlighted saving the line and support for the proposed port/rail link as major 'must dos'.

Was it David Cunliffe's commitment to fund rail up here, or just a case of another Nat rat abandoning a sinking ship? Probably both, we will find out in 2014.

Wishing all members and family a safe and happy break. Remember to save some annual leave to fight against the lowlife, kick in the guts, employment law changes heading your way. 🌐

AUCKLAND RAIL BRANCH

MANY changes continue to happen for the RMTU in Auckland.

- The rail corridor is constantly changing appearance as the electrification of the network continues.
- We have seen the Wiri EMU depot opened and the arrival of the first of 57 spanish built trains.
- Veolia has changed its name to Transdev.
- We have had many new members join largely from the excellent work of the team of delegates in the KiwiRail Stanley

Street office.

- Scott Wilson moved on from the RMTU and Stuart Johnstone (fresh from being made redundant from Hillside Workshops) took his place.
- The AGM saw many new delegates elected, with some experienced delegates actively working on encouraging others to join them.
- Delegates have enjoyed the training courses that have been offered and are very keen for more.

The branch is currently working through the transition of 66 loco engineers from KiwiRail to Transdev to operate commuter trains for that company.

The process has gone relatively smoothly, despite the huge amount of work involved in running comparisons of the two companies to satisfy the same or more favourable test.

An indicative survey of the 126 KiwiRail LEs and trainees was run to ascertain the likely numbers interested in moving to Transdev and the result was interesting in itself. Of the 126, 58 were interested and

CAPTION COMPETITION

\$100 prize

Make up an appropriate (or even inappropriate) caption for this photo and win a cash prize.

Entries close 28 February 2014.

*Winner will be contacted and name and entry published in the March 2014 issue of *The Transport Worker*.*

*Entries can be sent to
admin@rmtunion.org.nz*



62 were not with no return from six. The difference between the "interested" and "not interested" was a lot closer than most people expected.

Things have progressed to a point where on Sunday 3 November a meeting was held with the 66 drivers identified for transfer and representatives of both companies along with the RMTU where the process and outcomes were presented.

AUCKLAND RAIL BRANCH [cont]

There was a question and answer session and it is fair to say that there was broad acceptance of the change of employer by those affected. The timeframe for the movement of the 66 from Kiwirail to Transdev will see the members finish with KiwiRail on January 4 and start with Transdev on the 5th. We must record our thanks for the effort of the working party.

This has been a big year for us and many will be looking forward to some well earned time off over Christmas. From all of us in Auckland, we would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas with many happy hours spent with your families, have a safe holiday and we look forward to hearing from you in 2014. 🌐

GREETINGS to one and all. The dairy season is upon us, extra tonnage and trains but, as usual, not enough staff in either the loco or yard rosters.

Single man servicing is an ongoing problem, with management burying their heads in the sand over the issue. As we are now down to 1 1/2 terminal drivers, who most of the time are out driving or relieving trains, our servicing staff do a sterling job despite the conditions they work in.

A crusty old derelict fuelling shed and a turntable that can only be accessed via the yard. And while a new fuelling station is in the process of being built, it is far from satisfactory, with the roof only providing minimal shelter from the west. Apparently the wind and rain only comes from that direction in Te Rapa! Hopefully the new servicing area will include a proper sand-

WAIKATO RAIL BRANCH

ing facility. At present we are sanding locos manually from 20kg bags. Each sand box on a DL takes between 3-4 bags when empty and with eight sand boxes per loco, that's a lot of sand! Not to mention the possibilities of neck and shoulder injuries from sanding the older diesel locomotives.

The yard is short staffed with all the usual excuses as to why and yard conditions remain disgraceful with dust in the summer and lack of regular maintenance, the list goes on. The yard received a new hilux ute a month or so ago, a welcome replacement from the older one which was never designed for the environment in which it operated in.

Loco remains short staffed and we continue to be worked like dogs in a roster that is filled with too much forward rotation, too

many night shifts and single days off.

There has been an improvement in problem solving since the delegate training earlier in the year. The training was based on the handling of disputes and the resolving of disciplinary issues.

The local organiser has been using the union office on a regular basis, and the members are starting to warm to the idea that the organiser is around for longer periods.

There has been a number of failed medicals, in freight and I&E which are pretty hard to deal with for the members who are facing medical terminations especially at ages where it is difficult getting work. The local RMO has, in the view of the members, a very cavalier approach to the feelings of those members who have been told that



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SOVEREIGN

WAIKATO RAIL BRANCH [cont]

they have failed their medicals. Perhaps we can arrange seminars to talk through this issue.

Congratulations to Barry Simpkins for

getting re-elected to the NMC and the KIC council.

We have had three new certified drivers in the last few months; Rhys Read, Steve

Vickery and Glen Booth. Congratulations guys and welcome to the team.

Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year from the Super Champs. 🏆

BAY OF PLENTY RAIL BRANCH

THE Kama Tunnel focus group is working its way through to their conclusion, however there are still skirmishes with I&E over the use of contractors in the tunnel. After numerous meetings we

have come to an agreement on how blocks of line are to be worked, in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty. If the agreement is bided by there should be an increase in the quality of work on the lines.

Congratulations to William Lanigan for successfully gaining a seat on the KNIC council.

Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year from Steamers land. 🚂

BAY OF PLENTY PORT BRANCH

WE have lost members at the Mt Cosmopolitan Club and GEA through redundancies and job resignations.

After many months the C3 collective agreement was finally settled, and well done to the Union's negotiation team for their resilience in seeing through the negotiations to the end. However, both parties are off to

mediation on November 22 to resolve the outstanding issue of back pay.

The POTL monthly meetings are working well in resolving issues rather than leaving them to the collective agreement negotiations.

As a consequence of an incident between two Union members, the branch executive had to advise the members "that

it is an unacceptable practice to record conversations with other members without their consent". Hopefully, this practice will be curtailed.

At the start of the year the Port of Tauranga purchased Quality Marshalling, a log marshalling company that is in Napier, Murupara, Mt Maunganui and Northport. Unfortunately Quality Marshalling will lose approximately 60% of its work to Inter-▶



\$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.

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national Stevedoring AKA ISO, from early next year. Which shows how cut throat the competition is on the waterfront as result

BAY OF PLENTY PORT BRANCH [cont]

of ports reform.

Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year from

the guys from the Port of the Future. 🇳🇿

PALMERSTON NORTH BRANCH

SPRING is here and with it the good weather. While great for BBQs it has also brought a multitude of heat restrictions no doubt as a result of cost cutting and redundancies in I&E. Over 65 km of heats between Palmy and Whareroa over a 128km route. Over half of the Bay line is restricted to 40 or less. The MTL is following closely behind. How can we boost rail travel and tourism when the Northern Explorer will be hours late is beyond this branch.

These heats are nothing new, but what is new is that the LEs will be the ones checking them as opposed to the professionals (gangers/inspectors). LEs, please be careful and take extra caution around heats. Do not take any risks. To go with the heat restrictions, timetables will be blown out, rolling

stock and locomotives will be flogged from braking and acceleration, overtime will be high and staff will not be home on time. You need not be a student of accounting to figure these heats are going to cost the company thousands. But there is no need to fear, EnergyMiser is here to save the company millions in fuel. This branch says properly maintained tracks will also save the company millions!

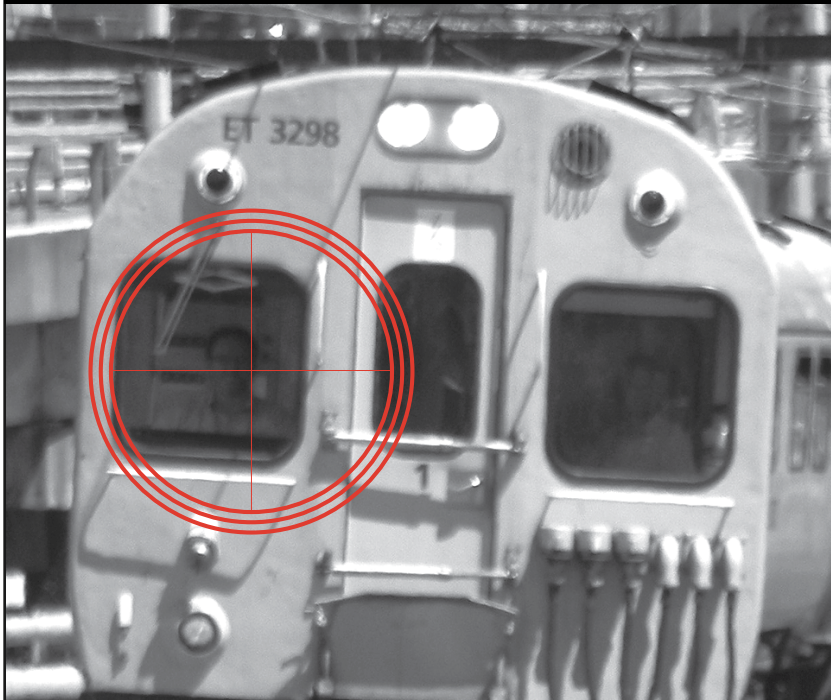
Also of concern are the number of slips we had in October. There were about five north of Taihape alone in one day. The Explorer hit one of them, the mud was higher than the nose of the DX. Are the culverts getting cleared? Is there anybody left to clear them? The slip at Makotuku was caused by a blocked culvert. If that farmer

hadn't noticed the 30 odd metre gap in the tracks, one of our brothers or sisters would surely have been injured!

The brothers and sisters in the yard are feeling the strain of being short staffed which was brought to management's attention before the milk season. We were assured that we were fully staffed. Two months in and we are short and nobody has left! Yard conditions will hopefully be improved very soon after the branch brought solid action over the poor underfoot conditions. This has taken a very long time to resolve. Thanks to the yard delegates for their hard work, dedication and over 200 photos of affected areas.

Mechanical have had meetings within the electric depot, servicing and C&W on

Sickness, accident & death



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

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retire did not receive anything.

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PALMERSTON NORTH BRANCH [cont]

how to improve communication. Many ideas were tabled and Todd Valster (RMTU) and Tony Langridge (KR area manager) were invited to speak so management could hear about the issues and understand what is required. The meeting was topped off with a BBQ lunch provided by the branch. As a result of the meeting the company are advertising for a new servicing assistant to answer the calls of the brothers and sisters.

The branch recently held its H&S team elections. The mechanical and I&E teams have been elected while the operations team are still balloting. Congratulations to all the new members and a huge thank you to the previous teams and their work.

Following the example of our brothers and sisters in Wellington, we are also going to host BBQs around the sectors. Mechanical have had their BBQ and it was thoroughly enjoyed! It is a great chance for members to bond, have a laugh, and meet delegates and executive. Communication is the key. Look out for the posters on your notice boards. Your sector branch BBQ is coming soon.

December 24 marks the 60th anniversary of the Tangiwai disaster when the Wellington – Auckland passenger express No 626 received her final token at Tangiwai but tragically it never made it. As 626, headed by Ka 949 with 11 total, came on to

the Whangaehu bridge it gave way due to a large lahar and which weakened it. Ka 949 pulled the first five carriages into the river while a sixth followed after teetering for a short while. In total 151 people perished that night including Charlie Parker, a 1st grade engine driver and Lance Redman, a senior fireman, both from Taihape and members of the Taihape branch of the EF&CA (a predecessor of the LEA and one

Rob Butters (certified ML rail op)
Mark Walker (certified rail op)
Daniel Hoterani (certified ML rail op)
Heinz Kruger (certified LE)
Shannnn Stafford-Hyde (certified ML rail op)

And to Rick Barnes and Les Perrin on being elected KIC reps. A huge thanks to all our members in Palmerston North, Wanganui, Dannevirke and Taihape, delegates



of the unions which formed the RMTU). Let us remember Charlie and Lance this Christmas Eve and all the souls who never completed that journey.

Congratulations to:

Logan Rusling (certified rail op)

and executives, and also to RMTU head office for their continued support and advice.

Best wishes to our brothers and sisters and their families around the country and a very warm, happy and merry Christmas and a very prosperous new year. 🌐

NAPIER PORT BRANCH

KIA ORA brothers and sisters. Another year drawing to a close and as we head into the festive season with 2014 being an important one for workers and unions. It will be a year that we must see a change: a change of government, providing we all gets off our 'proverbial' and make an effort to engage in our democratic right. The apathy of NZ voters at the last election where some 800,000 eligible voters failed to fire, has come at a great cost to us all. The past five years has seen a path

of political tyranny not just in IR legislation but at a cost to the country as a whole, as with, for example, the asset sales. There has been plenty of written information put out by the concerned to keep us all well aware of the dire consequences of such policies.

I guess the message here is, as we head into campaign season by all the political parties, is that we too must get involved, be active in the campaigns and ensure hard working New Zealanders and union members are heard and to make certain

those parties are promoting policies which are union friendly.

Unions and the CTU are driving campaigns against the pending legislation, which, if it becomes law, will completely undermine the union movement and all workers across the board. It is essential we play a part in backing this crusade. It's as simple as signing a petition.

Helen Kelly (CTU president) recently visited Napier port and gave an address to RMTU, MSG and AMEA members as to the direction the campaign is taking and its progress to expose and piss off the blue

brigade behind these draconian law changes taking us back 200 years. Our Union must ensure that our banners are flying at the meetings scheduled around NZ and as individuals we should assist where and when possible.

We need to keep a foot on the throat of our oppressors. It is in earnest we remove any government that takes an approach to totalitarianism so flippantly at a cost to workers.

Let's make it happen in 2014.

On the local front, two new Gottwald cranes have arrived and are currently being assembled by sub contractors from Chile with assistance from the port trade staff.



Cost to completion and commission will be around \$11.6 million. We remain in growth mode with three new heavy plant operators becoming RMTU members today.

We are also continuing to make inroads

into C3. A work in progress.

As we head toward Christmas and holiday time, all the best to you and yours. Stay safe, be safe,

Noho ora, ahei ora. 🌐

THE H&S meetings are going well, except with the issue of which disciplines are represented on the freight H&S committee. H&S reps have been elected: Dave Murdoch, Barry Hiscox and Neil Huntley.

Dave Murdoch is the new branch chairman and is working through a ton of issues ably supported by the branch secretary, Mike King.

There is still some confusion as to the status of the Gisborne line, to the extent that at this year's AGM agreed to place a ban on the line between Kopuawhara and Maraetaha due to serious safety concerns.



Please cut on the dotted line

NAPIER RAIL BRANCH

After some discussion with KiwiRail the matter was resolved to the satisfaction of Union members. However we still are concerned as to what is happening on that line and it is very difficult to get any answers from KiwiRail as to who is allowed on the line and when.

The DI locos are a regular sight especially the pulp train. At last, our main line loop points have been upgraded after many derailments. The state of dirty windows on loco cabs is a problem in Napier as we have no facilities for cleaning them. This issue

will be placed on the agenda of the H&S committee.

The branch has lost many fine guys to Aussie and rumours abound that some are still keen to go. You do not have to be a rocket scientist to figure out why! We are still short of staff and to apply for a day off for a special family occasion is almost a waste of time.

We wish Phil Bagely a long and happy retirement.

Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year from Magpie country. 🌐

RMTU ERNEST WILLIAM FILE SCHOLARSHIP

THE Ernest William File Scholarship was established in 1978 by members of the Locomotive Engineers Association as a tribute to Ernest William File, the retiring general secretary of the Association. The Scholarship was continued and expanded by the Combined Union of Railway Employees and the Rail and Maritime Transport Union has continued to support it on the same basis.

The scholarship is open to male or female applicants in two groups:

♦ those who are the children of a locomotive engineer; and

♦ those who have a parent who is a member of the Rail & Maritime Transport Union at the time of application.

Three years

The scholarship is tenable for a maximum period of three years at any university or tertiary institution in New Zealand, by a scholar undertaking full time study for his or her first degree or qualification. The value of the scholarship is \$1500 a third of which shall be applied in each of the three years during which the scholarship is tenable.

Written applications may be made on

the application form on the following page and should include details of your most recent scholastic achievements, career intentions, the names and addresses of two referees and sent to the address below before 31 January 2014.

**The General Secretary
Rail & Maritime Transport Union
PO Box 1103
WELLINGTON**

HUTT WORKSHOPS BRANCH

KIA ORA and greetings. Well Christmas is upon us and it's time to wrap-up this year and look forward to the next and the challenges that it will inevitably bring.

Again, we will commence with acknowledging the contributors to the September edition of the Transport Worker especially our port brothers and sisters. It's always nice to get a balance of stories and updates from the maritime component of our strong and able Union.

As we plunge into the Christmas period for a well-earned break, it's time to reflect upon progress over the last year, particularly events since the September issue.

We mustered a busload of supporters who attended the local Fairness at Work rally at the Petone Recreation Ground alongside our brothers and sisters from several other like-minded unions who nailed their colours to the mast to stand up and fight back at the National-led government's attack on workers and their rights. It was a well-attended rally which sent a message to central government that we will not be trodden on or ridden over!

Random D&A testing has finally occurred with a small number of staff being selected for a 'puff and a wee' in the back of the drug bus. All passed (of course) and there have been no further examples of the upset that this poorly planned exercise has brought to members (and indeed the

greater staff) thus far. It was interesting to read the D&A fiasco mentioned by our fellow scribe in the Otago branch notes when it appears an over enthusiastic manager went on some orgasmic crusade testing staff as if carrying out some scorched-earth policy for self-gratification. I certainly hope our Otago brethren clubbed the manager with the policy document as a show of unity and strength!

At the time of writing, we still await the kick-off for the major structural re-strengthening project. There have been many delays and rethinks associated with

this so maybe another Christmas will pass without any real advancement although it was recently mooted that the closedown period may well permit the contractor(s) to make some inroads provided the plans are confirmed and the money approved! If we were cynical about the whole project we would be thinking that this is yet another example of a poorly managed project by the corporate body! Only time will tell.

Pay and progression issues are still being worked through with a recent management comment presenting an interesting dichotomy; on the one hand it was stated that the company only pays on qualifications and on the other hand, we



ERNEST WILLIAM FILE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Surname of applicant: First names:

Contact postal address for academic year:

Age (yy:mm): Date of birth:

University/institute at which enrolled:

Degree/qualification(s) for which enrolled:

Student ID if known

Which year is this of your undergraduate study? (eg first, second etc.):

References (use separate sheets if necessary):

Latest academic results (sixth or seventh form and certified copy of Bursary results) – attach copies:

Parents name & signature:

Loco running Non loco running: Parents please indicate

Applicant's signature:

Date of application:

had been prosecuting an allowance issue that was qualification-related. This own-goal appeared to blindside the industrial relations manager who was filling-in for an HR advisor who appears to be so timid that she never leaves Auckland city limits. Whilst we hope the issues will progress towards some finality before Christmas, we won't bank on it because this has been dragging for a couple of years or so.

Once again the parking-up of locos on-site has been rumoured although no-one would or could confirm what class(es) of loco this would be. A few years ago we were told that the displaced DCs would soon be held here but the initial performance of the over-hyped generation 1 DL locos put paid to that act of wishful thinking. Thankfully the DL problems are being overcome and now some of the old plans can be dusted-off and put into effect, perhaps (yeah – nah). Rumours from the field indicate that this is still an act of nonsense as we're heading into the busy season and need every erg of horsepower we can muster (coupled with the fact that the DCs are a good-performing class of locomotive).

Speaking of putting stuff into effect, we were somewhat amazed to learn of a poor attempt to introduce life saving rules. Whilst the intent appears sound, the attendees at the summit felt the mandarins had overlooked our existing documentation and established processes and exposed their rear with their flash, but poorly written, draft (daft?) document. As a result, a working party (oh no not another one) has been

HUTT WORKSHOPS BRANCH [cont]

formed to address the issues accordingly.

Progress under the auspices of LEAN has been slow, however, the previously-referred to contractor has been engaged and the management team has been allocated three days in early December to learn and discuss the LEAN philosophy, going forward. I won't speculate on what this will bring in the New Year as there are many related issues that will serve to undermine the effectiveness of this initiative if we blindly jump-in with both feet. Either way, next year will be full of surprises and challenges!

Back in late September we were visited by Tana Umaga espousing rail safety. The session got off to a poor start with the introductions of both Ian Hill (our GGM) and Tana. Given that neither have apparently been here before it would've been appropriate to properly introduce both of the visitors. Despite management consulting style consistently showing a poor rating in staff surveys, this was downright rude!. Tana was taken aback by our large crowd when compared to what he had faced when traveling around the depots. With our good team safety records, he was of course preaching to the converted, although it was pleasing to have him acknowledge our (Union) unity and make good mention of solidarity. I wish he was available for the Fairness at Work Rally as that would have completed the message to central government! After Tana's speech the Q&A session was all about rugby followed by pizza.

The Injury Management Programme (IMP) is becoming a bone of contention. The branch has had to resort to the LCC process to initiate some (refresher) training as we are not satisfied that all staff with illness/injuries are being administered correctly whilst on the road to full recovery. The documented company process is quite extensive but appears known only to a select few. Why those in charge would want to keep a fair and equitable process a secret is beyond me!

The replacement traverser remains under construction however it will be a welcome replacement to our existing one which has well and truly passed its use by date. We hope to see it early next year however we'll have to wait and see if the contractors work through Christmas or not.

At the time of writing, our final paid union meeting for the year was tentatively scheduled for Friday December 6 followed by a full BBQ where we were intending to have a politician (or two) come along as guest speakers. We'll let you know how that went in the next issue.

For those of you working through Xmas, take care and work safe; for those taking a break, enjoy your time off as we all have both a wage round and a general election next year and YOU will be needed to play your part on both occasions.

Cheerio, and we'll see you all back safe in the New Year. 🌐

AS advised in the September issue of the Transport Worker, the Wellington AGM's increased participation and attendance was the most impressive display of solidarity and unity we have seen for a number of years. At that meeting members unanimously endorsed the expansion of our executive to include a women's representative – train manager Jenny Griffin – and a youth representative – passenger op Ka'isa Beech. A warm welcome to you both and we look forward to your contributions on behalf of members.

October 2, 2013 delegates from the wider Wellington branch met for a day of networking and education (see centre spread). It was a fantastic day and I appreciated all the work attendees did to make the

WELLINGTON RAIL BRANCH

day so successful. As a result, the branch has endorsed all new health and safety delegates, implemented delegates training sessions and now have a branch-based web presence on Facebook for information sharing and networking. Steven Hay and Ka'isa Beech now host informal fortnightly meetings open to all staff to attend and participate in.

Branch worksite BBQs will continue and we are getting around all our worksites to meet up with, eat together and get to know each other. The executive will be hosting the next BBQ for our Interisland Line members and then I&E networks members in Kaiwharawhara in early February 2014.

Reflecting on what we have achieved in 2013, I acknowledge is a direct result of the passion, dedication and hard work of our delegates and members. On behalf of the executive I thank you for what you have accomplished.

We wish all our fellow RMTU members a joyous Christmas, and a prosperous New Year.

Please take care of yourselves, families and friends, relax and enjoy the break, and we will see you in 2014 ready to tackle the challenges we will face in bargaining and the cuts to workers' rights created by this government. Season's greetings from the capital! 🌐

LYTTELTON PORT BRANCH

PAUL DENNIS, electrician's delegate, has been developing a much improved Corrective Action Reporting system (CAR reports). Members were fed up with reporting an incident and seeing no change or fix and had stopped filling out CAR reports. Paul identified this as a major hazard needing to be fixed. With the help of H&S organiser Karen Fletcher he raised it with LPC. He also identified ways to fix the problem.

For the last couple of months Paul has been working with a small team to create an online reporting system with open access. The IT department has written the program.

Paul says, "I wanted the new system to be like online shopping. From the time I buy the item until it arrives at my door I want to be able to track it every step of the way."

The new system allows employees to go online and track reported hazards from start to finish. Additionally, the new system will generate automatic reports for action to relevant managers. Nobody will be able

to say they didn't know about a reported hazard and at all levels people will be able to report what they have done to minimise the hazard.

We look forward to updating you further once the system is rolled out and working.

Two sets of H&S rep training are sched-



(l to r) Andy Kelly, Kevin Fitzgibbon, Dennis Bergham and Mike Tasker.

uled for the more than 20 members across LPC who have identified they are committed to undertaking the training. We have advised LPC that we are available to run the two, two day courses during February 2014.

We are meeting with LPC this week to discuss the logistics.

LPC have requested a review of the current D&A policy which has been in place

for nearly four years. Representatives from management, MUNZ and the RMTU are working on this and have met three times over the last three months. There is much to discuss!

The representatives are: RMTU: Libi Carr, branch secretary and Paul Dennis, electrical delegate. MUNZ: Les Wells, branch secretary and Brad Fletcher, branch president. LPC: Bo Samuelsson container terminal manager, Trish Telfer, human resources and Chris Holt logistics manager.

The parties have agreed that the review is to make the workplace safer.

Reviewing the policy is about identifying:

- what is working well in the policy
- what is not working and why not
- what can be improved on to make the workplace safer.

All proposed changes will be clearly communicated with the people affected to consider and respond to. Currently there are no changes from the three meetings.

Stay safe at home and at work, take care of yourselves and each other and may the summer be long and glorious. 🌞

CANTERBURY RAIL BRANCH

IT'S been a busy time lately in Christchurch and the surrounding area. The Labour Party held its conference at Wigram as we went to press. It will be interesting to see if Cunliffe can sustain the momentum generated during the leadership campaign and mobilise the party faithful to get the vote out next year.

If that's going to happen Labour need to come up with some concrete policies that will benefit working people – we're tired of the so-called Left being National lite, what we need is an employment relations system that is going to reverse the trend of the last

two decades.

On to more prosaic matters. The RMTU has been working hard to ensure the Tranz Alpine can resume running through the Otira tunnel and that it can do so safely. By the time you read this normal service should have resumed with fire suppression equipment installed. Thanks to all delegates and H&S reps who played a role in making this happen.

The future of the Tranz Scenic in Christchurch is still at the mercy of the tourism market post earthquake. Hopefully, next year will see the beginning of a sustained recovery in passenger numbers and those lovely Hillside built AK carriages will be well patronised.

Christchurch has hosted two RMTU-KiwiRail meetings looking at better ways of investigating incidents and promoting a 'just culture' when it comes to ensuring accountability at all levels. It's too early to say how this will pan out but the early indications are positive and we're hopeful that

we can change the culture for the better.

New 'temporary' facilities are slowly being commissioned for members who service and maintain rolling stock at Middleton although we're not hearing much about long term permanent solutions to the loss of Linwood. Our members continue to do some outstanding work in very challenging conditions.

There are plenty of new faces among the freight membership as trainee LEs and RCO/ROs come on board. It's good to see the new guys joining the RMTU and the rail family. Remember, all those terms and conditions that we enjoy didn't just fall out of the sky – they have been fought for over



Jo Carr and Darryl Dodd.

generations and we owe it to future rail workers to fight to keep and improve them.

Infrastructure and engineering remain the areas with some of the biggest challenges. The stupidity of last year's so-called 'Cost Improvement Programme' is making itself felt as we attempt to maintain the network with fewer and fewer people. Of course, we are also fighting off the menace of contracting out and the failure of the Company to honour agreements in this

HERE at Timaru port we're preparing for bargaining which kicks off in late November as our collective agreement expires in late January. Not the best time to be negotiating but hopefully we'll have a smooth wage round and get a good result before Christmas.

The Council rubber-stamped Port of Tauranga buying half of our port and it was interesting to hear our CEO say that we are the 'most flexible and adaptable port in New Zealand' at the company's AGM. So we are looking forward to being rewarded in our pay deal for being so obliging.

HELLO from a very wet Coast. We've had a hell of a time with weather in recent weeks and it's creating low morale on the whitebait front, with flooded and dirty rivers.

Despite low staffing and lack of certification, the guys maintain the tracks have been working miracles with the help of two staff drafted in from Dunedin who loved the warmer climate. Although it's been tad wet at least they now know what rain is.



Peter Wallis is the new signal technician at Otira.

CANTERBURY RAIL BRANCH [cont]

area. It is infuriating. Phil Kearns has been working hard on the KNIC to make our voice heard and it's good to see that head office has backed legal action, with a mediation about to take place as this is written. If the boss won't stick to agreements made in good faith what alternative does that leave but an industrial response?

On a positive note we had a good day of delegate training in Christchurch in

October. It was great to see new people stepping up for this and also to have some of our more experienced people coming along to pass on their knowledge and learn a few new tricks.

Best wishes for the end of year festivities and hopefully some of you will get a well deserved break and time with your families. 🌐

TIMARU PORT & RAIL BRANCHES



Other than that our greatest achievement this year is still being here! With the way we've been buffeted by the vagaries of globalisation and the lack of a coherent approach to fixing the problems with New Zealand's ports by government – that is no mean feat! 🌐

Richard Hamley, rail operator, Timaru.

WEST COAST BRANCH

Due to the downsizing of staff on the West Coast and the failure to get guys into training the bosses have been trying to use contractors to do track staff duty such as taking track warrants and driving KiwiRail vehicles. This outrageous behaviour seems to be tacitly condoned by management and does nothing for staff morale or trust in the company.

We've had issues again with drug testing. It's so frustrating for the Union when people fail a test. If you have a problem with alcohol or drugs please get help before you fail a test. There's no shame in facing up to a problem and it's easier to deal with before you put your job on the line with a positive test.

Locomotive engineers are kicking up ▶



Track supervisor and RMTU rep on the KNIC John Bannerman almost working.

WEST COAST BRANCH [cont]

over rostering and have at long last realised that the power lies with them. It's not easy keeping everyone happy in the three depots that serve the coal route and the Midland line but our only strength lies in our unity. If you don't believe me talk to any shift worker in a non-unionised workplace – there is stuff going on out there that'd give our guys shingles.

The so called amended Tuesday train plan – so our gangs can get time on the track – has been a bad joke partly because of the weather and partly through some spectacular own goals by the people who get paid to run the railway. We're working through a change to hours of work as this is written.

Remember that when things start going wrong don't say 'what's the Union doing' because you and your mates are the Union!



(l to r) Some West Coast trackies Andy Lancaster, Trevor Grant, Robert Potts, Kevin Gubb and Phillip Thomson.

Instead, try discussing solutions with your delegates and branch officials AND how you and your fellow members can support them as they try and achieve it.

Without your support your delegates are powerless.

We have a bloody good collective agreement that we've fought hard for over the years. We can make it work for us or we can let the bosses use it for their own ends. Read it, enforce it and make it work for you! 🇳🇿

PORT CHALMERS BRANCH

A very warm season's greetings to all from the deep south. It is a good time of year for our port as we head into the busier time of year. The first cruise boat for the season has just arrived with passengers disembarking into a very warm and sunny Port Chalmers/Dunedin.

On the Union front, we are still fight-

ing the good fight for all our members and will continue to do so, despite the current government trying to knock us back any way they can.

We have a couple of members off work currently so we wish Willie Shum and Mike Harris all the best while they recover. We hope to see them back to full health soon.

On a happier note, we have had one of our members welcome the new arrival of their baby girl, so congratulations to Nick Pow and his partner. Hopefully not too many sleepless nights ahead.

We look forward to hearing from all of you in the new year, and wish everyone a Merry Christmas. 🇳🇿

OTAGO RAIL BRANCH

THE catchphrase was 'a vote for Marty is a vote for change' and change it is. Brother Marty Duncan has been successful in gaining a seat on the KIC. Congratulations to him and we will all look forward to sharing in the achievements that a new face will aspire to deliver.

The locomotive engineers and trainees are enjoying a busy time with Mario Sopp getting a feel for the high iron whist waiting for his turn to go to Woburn for the initial training. Garry Wilson is progressing with his OJT and Geoff Milne and Matt Pritchard are back from Woburn.

The Dunedin yard extension is making visible progress and will hopefully be completed in the not too distant future. To increase the fuel capacity in Dunedin the fuel pod that was sited in Oamaru but not used, so it is being relocated to sunny

Dunedin.

We must all be vigilant when it comes to the use of contractors on our sites. Our brothers and sisters in I&E are only too well acquainted with the agreed process for hiring contractors and how they are paid but contractors can sometimes slip in without raising attention. If you see someone doing what was traditionally your work don't be afraid to challenge it. It is in our contract and it is enforceable.

So now we have random D&A by appointment! One of our members who works night shift was contacted by NZDDA and asked if he could rendezvous with the NZDDA van the next day at a specified time and place as the van was going to be in his area and it suited them. The member declined their offer – and rightly so – as it makes a mockery of the whole D&A test-

ing process. If this is an indication of the methodology employed by the NZDDA then it would need to be questioned if they are the right people to be carrying out testing for KiwiRail. If they were prepared to give prior notice of a test what other short cuts are they taking in the interests of boosting their profits?

Doug Tamatea is now back at work on light duties after recovering from a nasty truck accident earlier in the year and we hope he will make a complete recovery and be back to full duties soon.

To one and all, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and get ready for next year as we begin the battle to oust the National Government and the smiling John Key, (have you met his brother Don?). 🇳🇿

GREETINGS from the deep south. The onset of the season has meant we're busier and busier keeping the New Zealand economy afloat shipping milk powder on the first stage of its journey overseas. Our freight members keep the stuff moving and our I&E members make sure the track is safe to move it on.

Congratulations to Nick McCleery, he is now a fully qualified loco engineer. Work within the freight depot rosters has been shuffled around with the inclusion of Y-33 shunt now on the LE roster, for how long? That is the question.

Southland has been in the news of late with the National government subsidising Rio Tinto's aluminium smelter with cheap power in order to make the privatisation

SOUTHLAND BRANCH

of said power easier. Of course there were plenty of families down here who breathed a sigh of relief as it meant many bread winners kept their jobs for a while longer. How about Labour's new leadership saying it will nationalise the smelter and re-nationalise the power companies? We won't hold our breath.

We're still working hard with the local CTU affiliates to sort out a permanent workers' memorial in preparation for next year's Workers' Memorial Day. This has been an object lesson in patience and persistence but we're hopeful we will have the thing ready on time and in a prominent position at the city council headquarters.

In I&E we're watching developments with interest as we keep an eye on contractors and the circus that appears to be going on as management continually break agreements around their use. It's not that we're opposed to the use of contractors if they're doing work that is required as part of the turnaround plan and is not our core work. The flash butt welder crew have made good progress on the Wairio line with the projective time for completion being the end of this year, then it moves onto the Bluff branch and the change in track conditions will be very apparent as they move along if the Wairio line is anything to go on. What we don't like are contractors who are doing our core work that our people should be doing. The message is clear: if you want to protect your job security and minimise the impact of contractors on your pay and conditions be vigilant and keep National Office informed!

It has been about six months since freight members have been fuelling loco's. From the outset we were promised that the equipment would all be up and running before we got to use it. After countless faxes and phone calls to remedy the situation we are still waiting on some locos to have fuel tags fixed that don't work and, in some cases, the replacement tags that replaced or were installed because they weren't fitted in the first place. They don't work either, and like the FM radios, no one appears willing to take responsibility to get them fixed.

Plenty of good will was shown by the branch to get this project operating and typically not much is being reciprocated. I guess the only option left now is to not fuel the locos with faulty equipment and then we will see who sits up and takes notice.

Goes to show that you can spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a turnaround plan but no amount of money can fix a piss poor attitude by those tasked to manage these issues.

Now, about those bloody radios!

All the best to our fellow members and their families for the holiday season and have a safe summer! 🇳🇿

Rail & Maritime Transport Union Inc Statement of Financial Position As At 30 June 2013

	Note	2013	2012
		\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Bank Accounts	5	725,499	593,460
Accounts Receivable	3	39,687	19,820
Interest Accrued	4	39,880	24,508
Tax Refund Due	2	-	1,047
Total Current Assets		805,066	638,834
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Fixed Assets	6	144,078	166,270
Investments	7	2,921,405	2,767,819
Total Non Current Assets		3,065,484	2,934,089
Total Assets		\$ 3,870,549	\$ 3,572,923
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable	8	102,646	104,586
GST Payable		22,796	24,789
Konemu Provision		6,452	9,677
Provision for Leave		53,532	65,781
LE Reunion Trust Fund		6,350	6,350
Taxation Payable	2	721	-
Total Current Liabilities		192,497	211,184
NET ASSETS		\$ 3,678,052	\$ 3,361,739
Represented by:			
MEMBERS' FUNDS	10	\$ 3,678,052	\$ 3,361,739

Signed on behalf of the National Management Committee

General Secretary

11 September 2013

National President

11 September 2013



The accompanying notes form part of, and are to be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

PN pair set new steam standard



(above) First certified run together for KiwiRail on September, 28, 2013 aboard Wab 794 with six total back to Palmerston North. Tim Lawton (l) and Adam O'Sullivan.

(right) Newly NZQA certified, Adam (l) and Tim light up Ja 1250 the day before operation at GVR in December 2006.



THERE'S a new breed of steam LE in New Zealand and they're challenging others to follow.

Tim Kerwin (branch secretary) and Adam O'Sullivan (loco delegate), who are both freight LEs and now certified as steam engine drivers, ran their first trip together on September 28, 2013 from Wellington to Palmerston North. They now want to see more steam enthusiast LEs within KiwiRail pushing to acquire their steam tickets.

"At the moment," says Tim, "The only people certified are ex steam era LEs. We got our initial training at the Glenbrook Vintage Railway then our steam team leader, Phil Wagener, trained us to mainline firing and driving. We are now paid professionals on what has been a very long and enjoyable road."

What is really required, he says, is for the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand (FRONZ) to allow KiwiRail to accept full responsibility for the training and put in place a recognised training school for the continued crewing on heritage trains on the KiwiRail network.

Currently, only KiwiRail-employed LEs with a steam certificate can take a passenger steam engine on to that network.

The Union are concerned that without a sufficient number of trained and enthusiastic people the pressure will be applied

to allow the heritage enthusiasts to take over, which both the Union and KiwiRail say they are not capable of doing for many reasons.

"These people are keen, do a great job and are very dedicated to restoring New Zealand's history, but they simply don't have the relative experience and knowledge to operate them in the large arena," says Tim.

Tim and Adam have both been steam and rail enthusiasts from an early age. In fact it was a steam locomotive video which was used to bribe Adam as a seven year old to move from Ireland to New Zealand.

Both met, at age 10, at the Glenbrook Vintage Railway south of Auckland where their parents, bowing to their children's overwhelming passion, paid for their membership to the club. They have been close friends ever since. Between them they have nearly 25 years steam experience and they haven't yet reached 30. Their hobby soon became their profession as they both joined Toll Rail at Westfield in 2004 as shunters then went onto become LEs with Connex from 2005. Adam headed back to Ireland for two years in 2008 to see what he had been missing and while he was away Tim picked up a job driving freight in Palmerston North. The allure of freight and encouragement from Tim brought Adam back to New Zealand and

to Palmerston North where they both drive freight trains now.

They both see themselves as forging a new mark for professional steam in a new era in New Zealand's railway history.

"Neither of us grew up with steam and we're the youngest in the country with tickets to drive them professionally for KiwiRail," said Tim.

Adam says that its "a great personal achievement for us both to have begun so young watching the videos, working our way up through the ranks professionally and now we are the ones driving and firing these machines," says Tim. "We learnt a lot from current and retired LEs from the steam era and that has helped us no end. It is not as easy as it looks and is not something that cannot be sold short."

Now, he says, they would like to see all those other enthusiasts around the country within KiwiRail back the Union's calls for KiwiRail to establish a thorough training course.

"We know they are there," says Tim. "There's a terrible shortage of steam drivers and the heritage sites, keen to get their own drivers and firemen on the main line, are not keen to help." 