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Port union welcomes LPC guilty plea over worker's death

The Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) is pleased Lyttelton Port Company (LPC) has pleaded guilty to charges laid by Worksafe over the death of port worker Brad Fletcher in August 2014.

Mr Fletcher, who was president of the local branch of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, worked as a maintenance fitter. He died on the job after the collapse of a scissor lift

It's good that LPC is taking responsibility for what happened, says RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson, it means the family and friends of Brad aren't being dragged through a distressing legal case.

Now we must work on improving the safety culture at the port.

Since Brad's death we've been working with LPC in an effort to improve the culture on the waterfront and we want to keep up the momentum, says Butson.

However, it's gutting to see that LPC haven't entered a guilty plea in the charges relating to Mark Truscott, another worker in the maintenance department at the port who resigned after a dispute with management around refusing unsafe work.

This proves that LPC has a lot more work to do when it comes to providing a safe work environment and a culture that values workers' safety.

We're committed to working with members and management to ensure that our people are going home at the end of every shift in the same condition as they were in when they clocked on.

The culture will only change if unions, management and Worksafe have a united front on health and safety. We also need to fast track the improvements to Health and Safety legislation, improvements the government is stalling on, says Butson.

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