



**Media Release
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Rail & Maritime Transport Union

Labour Announcement on Future of Hillside Workshops Welcome says Rail Union

Labour leader David Cunliffe's announcement in Dunedin today that a government led by his party would re-open Hillside Railway workshops was welcomed by the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU).

'Since the workshops were shut down in late December 2012 as a consequence of the National Government's failure to buy rolling stock manufactured in New Zealand, a small heavy lift locomotive maintenance operation employing fewer than a dozen workers has been the only activity at the once bustling Hillside plant,' said RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson.

'Today's announcement by David Cunliffe that Hillside will become the centre of a future focussed hub of engineering excellence under any government he leads is good news for Dunedin and good news for New Zealand manufacturing'' he said.

'A combination of the boutique manufacture of rail rolling stock, refurbishment and heavy lift work, will provide up to one hundred and fifty jobs at Hillside and in associated engineering plants in Dunedin and elsewhere, and that's just a beginning' he said.

'This represents a major investment in high value manufacturing, building our knowledge base and creating secure, well paid employment in a region that has been hammered relentlessly under this National Government,' he said.

'What's exciting about this announcement is that it brings together progressive ideas around research and development, building a high skill workforce, government procurement, and transport related policies in an initiative that will have concrete benefits for ordinary New Zealanders,' he said.

'This is in stark contrast to the do nothing policies of John Key and his party during the last six years, policies that have seen jobs in Dunedin exported overseas,' he said.

'Our union is right behind Labour's announcement, and we're confident most New Zealanders will be as well,' he said.

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