

28 June 2011

Union- KiwiRail Talks Back On Track, Public Rally Still On

The RMTU met with KiwiRail management today to discuss proposed 40 job losses at Hillside Railway workshops in South Dunedin. Whilst the talks were generally constructive, the RMTU is clear that we have to maintain the pressure on the Government to save these jobs and the future of the workshops.

'We've called a rally in Dunedin on Saturday 9 July to send a message to the Minister that his Government, as the shareholder of KiwiRail, has a responsibility to these workers and to Dunedin', said RMTU Organiser John Kerr.

'It's not just these jobs and it's not just Hillside. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of jobs in Dunedin that are dependent on the work that Hillside does,' said John Kerr.

'Hillside is very much the beating heart of South Dunedin, there are dozens of small and medium size businesses that rely on Hillside for their livelihoods,' he said.

'KiwiRail agreed today to extend the deadline for consultation on the proposed redundancies by a week to 8 July. They've agreed to give us more information so we can make a submission on why these jobs shouldn't go'.

'In return we've committed to work with them on productivity. We know, however, that if the shareholder, and that means Steven Joyce, isn't on board we're wasting our breath,' said John Kerr.

'The business community, the Mayor and the local opposition MPs are supporting us, environmental groups like Greenpeace are on board and the people of Dunedin have been tremendous. All we have to do is convince the Government,' he said.

'To do that we need thousands, not hundreds, to turn out to the rally and make their voices heard. We know we can do it, we're fighting for the future of these workers and the future of South Dunedin,'

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