

Media release: Rail and Maritime Transport Union  
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## **Lyttelton Port safety improvements welcome but overdue**

A union representing workers at the Port of Lyttelton say it's positive that the company is moving fast to fix safety concerns following the serious injury to a forklift driver, but a better commitment to health and safety should have seen it avoided in the first place.

Port of Lyttelton was issued 5 WorkSafe New Zealand improvement notices in January relating to its City Depot near Woolston.

It follows a [serious injury](#) to a forklift driver at the Depot. The Port also suffered the deaths of a watersider in December and of a contractor in November at the Port.

Rail and Maritime Transport Union General Secretary Wayne Butson said that the company has moved fast to effect the changes required by the improvement notices.

"It's a pity however that it took the serious injury of one of our members to get this sorted – all of the issues identified by Worksafe had been identified by members and raised in health and safety committee meetings in the weeks, and in some cases, months leading up to this incident," Wayne Butson said.

Port CEO Peter Davie's [comments yesterday](#), saying the incident in early January was not a result of poorly stacked containers, are indicative of a 'blame the worker' approach at LPC, Wayne Butson said.

"In fact, the WorkSafe notices related to a number of concerns including uneven ground, lack of signage and speed limits as well as highly stacked containers. It is noticeable also that Davie hasn't acknowledged issues like the lack of supervision, inconsistent induction and training and long hours."

"Sadly we once again see yet another example of how New Zealand management view health and safety as compliance cost instead of an overriding priority," Wayne Butson said.

Ends.

For further comment:

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