



Media Release
Rail & Maritime Transport Union
Tuesday 8 March 2016

Rail Union Mounts Picket Over Health & Safety Concern at Dunedin Railways

The Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) is today mounting a picket at Dunedin Railway Station in protest at the continuing persecution and intimidation of one of its members for raising a genuine concern over health and safety.

“Dunedin Railways is wholly owned by Dunedin City Council and runs passenger excursions on the mainline as well as up the Taieri Gorge, so you’d think that health and safety would be an absolute priority” said RMTU South Island Organiser John Kerr.

“One of our members was recently hauled in front of management after filing an incident report and passing it on to the RMTU Health and Safety Representative. The incident report highlighted our member’s genuine concern at the apparent failure to correctly record radio traffic in relation to a track occupancy issue in the Taieri Gorge. She was then accused of misconduct for ‘posting offensive notes in the workplace’”, he said.

“The RMTU is still working through the matter and management have dropped A charge of misconduct. They still appear bent on disciplining our member however, alleging that she has somehow breached ‘good faith’. We are meeting management tomorrow, Wednesday 9th March,” he said.

“We see this issue as an attack on the fundamental right of a worker to raise health and safety related issues without fear of reprisal. The RMTU takes health and safety very, very seriously. Rail is one of the most dangerous industries there is and if we don’t do everything in our power to protect our members we may as well shut up shop,” he said.

“That’s why we’re taking a stand. Dunedin Railways is a great little railway and a real asset to the city of Dunedin. It should not be behaving this way towards its staff who must be able to raise genuine concerns regarding health and safety without fear of intimidation or reprisal. The public need to know what is going on at Dunedin Railways, that’s why we [are picketing](#) the railway station today”, he said.

The picket will commence at 0900 at Dunedin Railway Station.

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