

Media Release: Rail and Maritime Transport Union
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Rail union will look to open dialogue with new KiwiRail head

The Rail & Maritime Transport Union said today it would look forward to meeting KiwiRail's new CEO as soon as his feet are under the desk, with health and safety and strengthening rail's role as a key part of New Zealand's transport infrastructure being top priorities for workers.

KiwiRail's Board [announced](#) this afternoon that Peter Reidy, currently with Downer EDI Group in Australia, has been appointed Chief Executive and will start on 10 February 2014, replacing Jim Quinn.

RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson said that KiwiRail workers were looking for stability after significant upheaval in recent years.

"The cut backs at the Infrastructure and Engineering division and closure of Hillside workshops in Dunedin were among big changes the workforce has had to deal with," Wayne Butson said.

Wayne Butson said KiwiRail's commitment to health and safety had been strengthened under Jim Quinn and workers would be looking to Peter Reidy to continue leading this work.

"The most important aspect of health and safety is having informed and engaged employees. This is even more critical in an industry like rail which has multiple high hazards," he said.

Wayne Butson said workers would also look to Peter Reidy to champion a world class rail network as a cornerstone of the national transport logistics supply chain.

"As oil prices increase over time, rail becomes an even more essential feature of our national transport infrastructure. The retention of a skilled workforce is critical to this."

"A long term view which places rail front and centre in our transport planning is needed, rather than a process of 'managing' it into extinction by systematic mothballing of regional lines and losing skilled personnel."

Wayne Butson said the rail multi employer collective agreement (MECA) is the largest in the rail industry and covers over 3,000 workers at NZ Railways Corporation, Ontrack Infrastructure and KiwiRail, and workers will look to the new CEO to ensure KiwiRail remains committed to maintaining and building on this document.

Ends.

For further comment: RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson, on (027) 496-2461.
<http://www.rmtunion.org.nz/>