

# THE ACTIVIST



Published Regularly - ISSN 1178-7392 (Print & Online) 14 July 2016

## TARANAKI PORT CA – UPDATE

The RMTU / PTL Collective Agreement negotiations commenced back in March but these talks were put on hold while the company undertook a business review/restructure. The loss of container and other work at PTL has had a big impact on our members at this port with redundancies, early retirements and resignations seeing the number of members drop. Sadly farewells are now a regular event with a lot of experienced people moving on or retiring. The business review is now completed, CA negotiations have recommenced and the RMTU Band PTL met for two days bargaining this week.

It was a productive two days of talks with another two days booked in next week aiming to reach a settlement or get close to it. A big thanks goes to all our reps and active members that have been working through these very difficult times.

## KIWI RAIL H&S REP TRAINING - HALF REGISTERED SO FAR

About half of all H&S Reps at KiwiRail have registered to attend H&S Rep training over the next 2 months. Some courses have had to be cancelled due to low numbers.

Only H&S reps that've completed the H&S rep training will be legally able to carry out H&S Rep duties such as issue PIN notices and direct people to stop work likely to cause serious harm. It's vital we take this

opportunity the law provides to train our H&S reps to improve workplace safety.

All HSAT H&S Reps are entitled to the 2 day course. The process for registration is,

1. Check the dates of the courses in your area
2. Speak with your local KRG manager and administrator to work out the best time to attend
3. Register yourself to attend the course by clicking on the web link below

Here is the web-link to register [KiwiRail Initial Health-and-Safety Rep-Training](#)

If you have any problems contact our Union H&S Organiser Karen Fletcher [kfletcher@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:kfletcher@rmtunion.org.nz) or Laura Oldeman at [Laura.Oldeman@kiwirail.co.nz](mailto:Laura.Oldeman@kiwirail.co.nz)



## KIWI RAIL H&S REP TRAINING COURSE DATES

- Auckland - 28/29 July
- Auckland - 11 / 12 August
- Hamilton - 3 / 4 August
- Hamilton - 6 / 7 October
- Palmerston Nth - 3 / 4 August
- Palmerston Nth - 23 / 24 August
- Wellington - 3 / 4 August
- Wellington - 10 / 11 August
- Wellington - 26/ 27 July
- Christchurch - 2 / 3 August
- Christchurch - 9 / 10 August
- Christchurch - 16 / 17 August
- Christchurch - 23 / 24 August
- Dunedin - 27 / 28 July
- Dunedin - 3 / 4 August

This is for the information and guidance of RMTU members only!

## TOLL NETWORKS (TRANZ LINK)

Toll Ratification Meetings having been progressing throughout the Depots nationwide and will continue next week.

As all the meetings have not been held we cannot publicise the settlement but it is a fair settlement in the current climate.

## KIWI RAIL GROUP MECA BALLOT RESULT 2016-2018

The procedure agreed by members is that the proposed settlement will be rejected if more than 33% of RMTU Members who would be covered by the MECA vote to reject the proposed settlement.

Total ballot papers issued: 2143

Total ballot papers returned: 64

Total ballot papers ratified the agreement: 2079 or 97.02%

Total ballot papers rejected the agreement: 62 or 2.89%

Total ballot papers returned invalid: 2 or .09%

97.02% of members voted to accept the recommended settlement and the proposed multi-employer collective agreement settlement is deemed ratified.

As a clear majority of members employed within KiwiRail Group indicated support for ratifying the proposed settlement for the Collective Agreement, the Union will sign on behalf of RMTU members employed by KiwiRail Ltd immediately.

Howard Phillips  
National Returning Officer

## C3 SULPHUR POINT UPDATE.

C3 have finally tabled a wages offer which is being discussed at two stop work meetings with the final meeting being held on Tuesday 12th. We will know whether the offer is acceptable or not post those meetings. The company has finally decided to review the number of Guaranteed Weekly Employees [GWE's] in the straddle area,

which means a number of casuals should be moved into GWE positions, as part of the agreed C3-RMTU career pathway.

## PRESSURE BUILDING FOR JUST AND FAIR CULTURE POLICY REVIEW

There's nothing like raising expectations if you want to raise standards. And expectations have certainly been raised by the Just and Fair Culture Policy training that the RMTU and KiwiRail has rolled out in recent months.

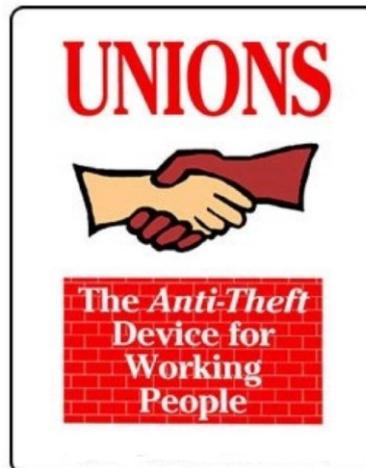
Some managers and delegates have embraced the initiative with enthusiasm and there are reports of some outstanding work being done around the country to identify and deal with systemic issues relating to incidents as well as individual behaviour.

We're also hearing that there are a few teething troubles in some areas and we have a number of cases where the policy is being applied unevenly. This isn't unexpected, after all KiwiRail is a big operation and to expect a culture change overnight would be unrealistic. What we do need to do however, is undertake a systematic review of the application of the policy. The RMTU will be engaging with KiwiRail on this.

Expect more news in the next edition of *The Activist*.

## NORTHTUGZ UPDATE

North Tugz (they operate at Marsden Point) Bargaining talks to renew the CA took place on Tuesday 5 July. The talks were productive and an agreed terms of settlement was achieved which provided for a rollover of the current agreement for 1 year with a 1% increase. A ratification meeting will be held in the coming days. A stand out for RMTU is that this was the first CA negotiation conducted entirely by our Northern Organiser Stu Johnstone – Good work and well done mate.



## LONGER HEAVIER TRUCKS – GOVT RULE CHANGE

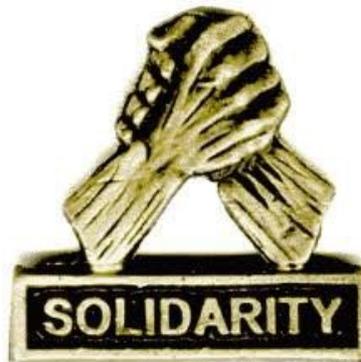
The Government back wants ever longer, heavier and higher trucks! They say they are seeking feedback on proposed changes to the regulatory framework for heavy vehicles and invites comment on the public consultation (yellow) draft of Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Dimensions and Mass (2016).

The proposed Rule (Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2016) is designed to deliver productivity improvements, greater regulatory efficiency and reduced compliance costs without compromising the road transport system and road user safety outcomes. The goals of the main changes are outlined below;

- Allow operators to carry more freight and passengers per trip, by better utilising the existing capabilities of heavy vehicles (within manufacturers' specifications), and capacity of the road network.
- Encourage fleet renewal by allowing industry to access a wider range of suppliers of vehicles built to international dimensions and mass limits with modern safety, emissions, and performance technologies.
- Provide for more effective planning in the movement of the largest (Category 4) over dimension loads.
- Allow local authorities greater flexibility in permitting, and clarify the categories of loads under permit.
- Decrease non-compliant operators' levels of accepted overloading by reducing weighing tolerance thresholds.

If you wish to comment on this draft Rule, please see the page headed 'Making a submission'. The deadline for submissions is 5pm, Friday 12 August 2016.

To Have Your Say Go to <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/about-us/consultations/land-transport-rule-vehicle-dimensions-and-mass-2016>



## LYTTELTON PORT BRANCH A HIVE OF ACTIVITY

The RMTU is engaged on a number of fronts at LPC.

Readers will recall that members unanimously passed a motion of no confidence in the Marine Services Manager. Since then we're pleased to report that we have established a forum to discuss issues of mutual concern. Whilst this is progress it is hardly worth celebrating given that it was a negotiated outcome of our collective bargaining eighteen months ago! Still good things do take time, so they say.

Down in the workshop the Trades Rates Review, after a promising start, appears to have lost momentum. We don't believe this is the fault of the very competent consultant engaged to undertake the review and we are waiting patiently for the results to be shared with us.

There is good news however, our Trades Assistants have mobilised to demand a better deal and we're sorting out a situation in Port Services where we had a member who was employed on a temporary arrangement that has become permanent.

Let's not forget that things are much improved on where we were a couple of years ago. We have well trained and confident health and safety representatives, more respect from management and we're looking forward to our next pay rise in September.

## A BLOODY DISGRACE

Labour's Grant Robertson says Uber's minuscule tax payment in New Zealand is a sign it's time the Government cracked down on multinational tax avoidance.

He says it's a joke Uber paid just \$9000 tax despite earning \$1 million in revenue in New Zealand, and if it wants to operate here it should pay what others pay.

"That's just not fair. I mean ordinary working people pay their taxes here every week. So should companies here, and the

Government should crack down on those who don't," he says.

"It's everyday New Zealanders that are losing out, because the costs of goods and services provided by the Government will end up being carried by hard-working taxpayers rather than by the big multinationals.

"New Zealand can't sit on its hands and wait for multinational tax avoidance to be dealt with at the global level."

Uber, the app-driven ride-sharing service, is one of the fastest growing companies in the country.

Accounts filed with the Companies Office show Uber's New Zealand business used a complicated structure of international companies to reduce its New Zealand tax bill.

Massey University taxation expert Deborah Russell says while Uber's tax minimisation is "perfectly legal", it's also completely immoral.

"They're operating here in New Zealand, they're using all the resources here in New Zealand - from the educated population to the rule of law, even to the roads they drive on - so I'd like to see them paying a fair contribution towards that."

She says multinational companies like Uber are undermining confidence and trust in the tax system.

"A large part of our tax system operates on trust - on us trusting the Government, trusting that our neighbours are paying their tax. If we think that everyone is paying their fair share of tax then we pay our tax too, because it's part of what we all do.

"But if we look over and see these big multinational companies are just escaping tax that undermines our trust in the system and our trust in each other."

## TRACK PROTECTION AND KIWI RAIL USE OF CONTRACTORS

The use of contractors is the most sensitive issue for our members who work on the track. The veterans know that contracting out is the road to undermining hard fought for collective terms and conditions like penal rates, night allowances and overtime pay. Newcomers are impressed at how successful the RMTU has been in defending these aspects of our collective agreement.

One matter that was recently raised at the Networks Industrial Council was how the failure to make practical qualifications a priority has led to a shortage of staff who are qualified to provide protection to worksites and the creeping use of contractors to fill the, entirely avoidable, void.

If you are on site and a contractor turns up to do protection ask yourself why is this happening? Was your delegate made aware of it? Was the RMTU Organiser consulted? If you're not sure of about the answers to these questions go

and sit in the van and get on the phone to your delegate or RMTU National Office. These are your rights under our collective employment agreement.

Yes, the job might delayed - but if we haven't been consulted about the use of contractors that's just too bad. Remember, in the words of one very wise unionist - 'they'll stop chasing when you stop running'.

## HOUSEHOLD OWNERSHIP

We know that the level of home ownership in this country is declining, but by how much? It is hard to obtain exact figures, but Statistics New Zealand does show an increase in the number of renters over the past ten years.

At 31 March 2006, there were 1,546,300 households, in this country, of which 1,023,900 (67%) were owner occupiers and 522,400 (33%) were renters. To 31 March 2016, the number of households has increased to 1,696,500, with 1,077,000 (63.48%), owner occupiers and 619,500



(36.52%) tenanted. The trend with more renting is set to continue.

## ONBOARD SECURITY AUCKLAND

Security in Auckland continues to be a focus for the RMTU. Since our stop work meetings earlier this year there has been some real improvements with no assaults on staff reported in June. As suggested by members the Ticket Inspectors have operated differently at Papakura station, posters have gone up on trains and our membership has been more vigilant in looking out for each other.

The Security Working Group are continuing to look at the option to have a Ticket Inspector, Train Manager and LE working together as a team between the hours of 1900 to 2200 5 nights of the week on a 3 month trial. There is always more that can be done so we need to keep pushing ahead and striving to make sure all RMTU members are kept safe at work and return home to their families at the end of their shifts. Safety First!



## REQUEST FOR ALL BRANCH AGM'S

The Union Women's steering committee requests that all Union branches pledge to;

- Get more involved in the women's network.
- Attend your AGM and take an RMTU sister with me.
- As per union rules, ensure a woman is on the local executive.
- Ask your organiser to participate in delegate training.
- Join the RMTU Women's facebook.

Together we will make a difference. For more information please contact your RMTU Steering Committee.

Ruth Blakeley - NMC Women's Representative. (027) 460-0504

Jenny Griffin - Wellington (027) 490-5255

Lisa Davidson - Palmerston North (021) 210-7197

Allana Ranui - Kawerau (021) 103-7663

Rachel Barrett - Auckland (027) 487-1436

Pare-Ana Bysterveld - Christchurch (027) 045-50736

Rebecca Hauck - Dunedin (021) 256-6486

## MARLBOROUGH PORT CA - UPDATE

The RMTU/PMNZ CA negotiations for 2016 started last week with two days of talks. A further 4 days of talks are booked in the next three weeks. As part of these talks PMNZ are seeking to update many parts of the current CA to improve understanding and provide clarity. This is a major exercise to make sure nothing is overlooked or missed out. Of course a savings clause is a given.

## P LABS

This is becoming an increasing problem in this country and it is a nightmare for any landlord to be faced with. It is expensive to decontaminate a dwelling, if P has been either used or manufactured. One way to view how serious a problem this is, is to look at what is happening with our state houses.

According to figures released earlier this year, under the Official Information Act, Housing NZ expects to decontaminate as many as 600 houses this year. This is nearly 2 a day. Two years ago, the figure was only 28 for the whole year, but the first quarter of this year, it was 174. Over the past year, 13 houses have had to be demolished, as the contamination was so bad. Unfortunately the problem is expected to get worse. Landlords need to be aware how serious this issue is, and have management measures in place.

## DUNEDIN RAILWAYS MEMBERSHIP GEARS UP FOR NEGOTIATIONS

The RMTU is growing in Dunedin Railways. Recent difficulties with management have led to a number of previously non-union staff joining our union. On 7th July the members held a meeting to elect delegates and discuss forthcoming wage bargaining. The meeting was well attended and, fittingly, held in one of the railway carriages.

South Island Organiser John Kerr and National Health and Safety Organiser Karen Fletcher were guests and there was a vigorous debate about bargaining strategy ably chaired by senior delegate Lyall Kelpie.

There is certainly a whiff of militancy in the air at Dunedin Railways, notwithstanding the efforts of the Board and senior management to smooth the waters after our recent dispute. With East Coast tourism enjoying something of a recovery this season, members are rightly saying that this is the year to achieve real wage growth. Dunedin Railways is a great little railway and a real tourist drawcard for the city of Dunedin, and our members are committed to its success. They also want to share in that success through their pay packets.

Karen Fletcher met with management and updated them on the Health and Safety at Work Act and the training provided by the Council of Trade Unions, not just for union representatives but also managers. She also discussed KiwiRail's Just and Fair Culture initiative. A good discussion followed about health and safety in general and it was gratifying to receive a positive response from management. We look forward to this translating into genuine engagement with front line members and a successful bargaining outcome.

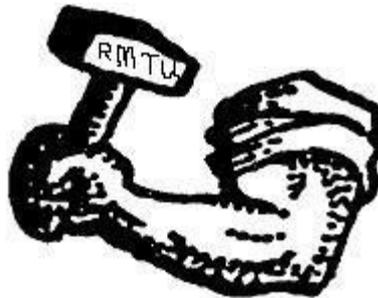
## FINGER SCANNING

Toll Networks (Tranz Link) have been trialling a finger print scanner computerised time clock system to move away from paper

timesheets. The trial is being conducted in the Auckland Southdown depot and started around 2 years ago and to date has not delivered the expected results. The plan has been to roll this system out across the country. Toll are currently reviewing the process and will meet with the RMTU in the coming weeks to discuss next steps.

## KIWI RAIL /RMTU FREIGHT/OPERATIONS INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL (KIC)

Following the last meeting KIC meeting (May 2016) in Picton, an agreed summary was put out via the Activist and KiwiRail. This summary is to briefly outline most of the KIC meeting discussion items without members having to trawl through 30 pages of minutes for the two day meeting. We will continue to put out a summary after each meeting in addition to the meeting minutes. The next KIC meeting will be held in Palmerston North, 24 - 25 August. Venue to be confirmed but is likely to be at the Station meeting rooms upstairs.



## ITF TAKES ARGENTINA TO THE ILO OVER INTERFERENCE IN UNION

The ITF has complained to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) about the Argentine government violating ILO conventions in its interference in the affairs of the Sindicato de Obreros Maritimos Unidos (SOMU) union.

The complaint states: By placing SOMU under its control the government of Argentina is in breach of its obligations under ILO Convention 87. "This interference by the Argentine government restricts the rights of SOMU, its officials and its members to organise their administration and activities in full freedom."

The ITF demands that the Argentine government immediately hand back control of SOMU to its elected leadership and its members.

Furthermore, the ITF general secretary Stephen Cotton has written to member of congress Ms Gladys Gonzalez, who now describes herself as the new leader of SOMU since the government takeover.

Mr Cotton said: "No intervention that violates the principles contained in ILO Convention 87 and 98, that may attempt to disrespect a union's self determination or constitutional provisions, that may lead to seizing workers' assets or property or that may try to deny their legitimately elected leadership, has any legal or moral validity."

Yesterday (6 July 2016) union leaders from Argentina, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Netherlands, Panama, Russia, Switzerland, UK and Uruguay passed an emergency resolution backing Sindicato de Obreros Maritimos Unidos, SOMU.

Ivan de la Guardia, general secretary of Unión de Capitanes y Oficiales de Cubierta (UCOC) and national coordinator of ITF affiliates in Panama, seconded the resolution: "We strongly express our support for SOMU as a sister organisation that has, for a long time, provided solidarity in Panama, Latin America and across the world. The situation must be resolved and SOMU must have its independence restored."

Read the resolution [here](#).

In February armed police raided SOMU offices confiscating equipment and removing elected union leaders from their offices.

## PORT OF TAURANGA UPDATE

Our lawyer is working through the member's submissions for the "wearing of Lifejacket" dispute which is going to the Employment Authority very soon. Book your seat in the gallery now to watch the show!

We are still trying to sort out the Customer Service Centre [CSC] relievers as the company has them all on different employment agreements whilst doing the same job.

## GOOD ATTENDANCE AT PORT OTAGO BRANCH MEETING

Karen Fletcher, the RMTU's National Health and Safety Organiser, met Port Otago Branch members at a recent Branch meeting on 7th July. Karen is one of only two dedicated union health and safety organisers in New Zealand, the other being employed by the largest private sector union E tu. Members heard about the new Health and Safety at Work Act and were updated on H&S Representative training provided by the Council of Trade Unions. There was also some good discussion about when and how to use the RMTU Red Card if workers felt they were being exposed to unsafe work.

South Island Organiser John Kerr gave an update on recent RMTU bargaining, outlining the settlements in KiwiRail and Toll. There was also a briefing on the forthcoming bargaining with Dunedin Railways and an appeal for support from the Port Otago Branch in the event that it was necessary.

Branch Chair Ruth Blakley gave a briefing on the progress with the personal grievance that our union is running on behalf of one of the Branch members and it was gratifying to know that there is a groundswell of support for our member, not just amongst the RMTU, but also from MUNZ members.

The meeting ended with members taking their RMTU beanies and baseball caps – this is certainly one of the best dressed branches in the country!

## CHAMPION COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT - UPDATE

These negotiations kick off on 20 July and the members have voted unanimously, by a secret ballot, to authorise the negotiating team to serve notice of industrial action if need be. So the meeting on Friday should be interesting.



## A BIG VISITOR FOR TAURANGA

The biggest container ship to visit New Zealand will visit Port of Tauranga later this year. Maersk Line and Kotahi, New Zealand's export supply chain firm say the ship will call at the start of the peak export season in September -October 2016.

The ship, which has not yet been named, is 348m long and can carry 9500 twenty foot equivalent unit containers (TEUs). In the past the biggest ships to visit New Zealand were just over 5000 TEUs. The largest vessels in the world can carry 18,000 TEUs.

## RULE 126 REVIEW

A working Party has been formed out of the Mechanical Industrial Council (KR) to review Rule 126 and to consider if a lockout system is required to better protect our members while working on or around locomotives in the depots. The group met for 2 days in Auckland this week to begin discussions, a formal communication with more detail will be sent around the depots in the coming days.

## HOUSING CRISIS AFFECTING MORE THAN 98 PER CENT OF NZ

Labour's new housing map shows the housing crisis is now affecting more than 98 per cent of New Zealand, Leader of the Opposition Andrew Little says.

"Housing pressures have seen house prices rise faster than wages in all but four areas of the country: the Grey District, Masterton, Westland and Wairoa. These four areas make up 1.25 per cent of our population.

"The housing crisis is making life tougher for most New Zealanders. Skyrocketing house prices are locking a generation out of the Kiwi dream of homeownership and pushing rents up so high, families are being forced to live in cars and garages.

"Labour's interactive housing map – being launched today at

<http://www.labour.org.nz/housingmap> – shows anyone how the housing crisis is affecting their neighbourhood. Information includes: rises in house prices, changes in homeownership rates, rent increases and the length of state housing waiting lists.

"The map highlights how dramatically National's housing crisis is exacerbating inequality. The highest homeownership rate in the country is in Waimakariri at 80 per cent, compared to just 39 per cent in the Waitemata.

"Unsurprisingly the highest average house price – a staggering \$1.4 million – is found in Auckland's eastern suburbs. In comparison in Kawerau it is \$131,000.

"The shortage of houses in Auckland is now affecting other areas. In South West Hamilton house prices rose 29.8 per cent in the past year – the fastest in New Zealand. The fastest rent increases were in the Bay of Plenty where they rose 9.5 per cent in the year to March.

"Behind all these figures are families who are paying more and more for a roof over their heads, leaving less and less for food and other essentials for themselves and their kids.

"Only Labour has a comprehensive plan to address the housing crisis. We will build 100,000 affordable homes, crack down on offshore speculators and provide the social and emergency housing our country so badly needs," Andrew Little says.

Data used in Labour's housing map:

House prices: Quotable Value. QV provides monthly updates on house prices by council

area and, for the main centres, by groups of suburbs.

Homeownership rates/proportions of renters: Statistics New Zealand Census Data. This data is broken down into census 'area units', which are roughly equivalent to an urban suburb or rural community – the names usually refer to the names of local communities or prominent locations. Rents: MBIE regional level data is



used to match with the income data, which is only released at regional level.

Incomes: Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand Income Survey. Data is released each year at regional level.

Heating: Statistics New Zealand Census Data. Data at council level used to match with the state house data.

State houses: Housing New Zealand. Waiting lists and vacant houses by council level are released quarterly.

## RAIL SAFETY WEEK 2016

Rail Safety Week (RSW) is an Australasian rail industry initiative that sees organisations across Australia and New Zealand come together to promote rail safety messages for one week every year. Now in its 11th consecutive year, Rail Safety Week is coordinated by the TrackSAFE Foundation.

The aim of the Week is to illustrate the importance of exercising caution when using the rail network and particularly, the onus on members of the public to take responsibility for their own actions. Fatalities, incidents and near hits on the network cause severe and lasting trauma to the rail employees involved, and every one of these is 100 percent avoidable. That is why we use the Week to bring attention to this important issue. This year's RSW will be held 15-21 August 2016.

The theme for 2016 is 'Rail Safety - it's everyone's responsibility'

## NZ SCARY NATIONAL DEBT

You can now see it in real time by clicking or typing in the following link. The numbers are very scary for a country of 4.6million. As I type this we owe NZ\$23,579 per person!

<http://www.nationaldebtclocks.org/debtclock/newzealand>

## BITS AND BOBS

- Ports of Auckland was fined \$49,980 with reparation of \$12000 after a stevedore fell 3m from the unguarded edge of a hatch lid on a container vessel. He was rendered unconscious and broke his

elbow. The policy that stevedores were to stay at least 1.4m away from edges was not widely known, and the company knew they used the faster option of walking across hatch lids rather than using ladders on board.

- Marsden Point C3 Negotiations have reached an impasse and we have requested Mediation assistance as outlined in the Bargaining Process Agreement [BPA]. Much to our bemusement C3 appear to be resisting going to mediation!!
- Quality Marshalling have sold their log side of their business to ISO, so now in Marsden Point there are two contractors involved in the loading of ships logs.
- The Terms of Settlement for the Ixom Collective Agreement have been signed and the Collective Agreement has been initialed. We are now finalising the signatures from both parties to the CA.
- The Ixom Drivers Dispute has been settled by way of a mediated settlement. The dispute was due to Ixom forcing the Drivers who were on hours of work of 5/2 to hours of work of 4x4. This meant a huge drop in income as the 5/2 hours of work included rostered overtime, where the 4x4 hours of work only had voluntary overtime.
- The Fluidex Collective Agreement negotiations have commenced with the next set of negotiations occurring on Friday 15 July.
- The Hutt HPHE working group will work on developing a "score Card" on identifying the relative benefits to the two stakeholders (RMTU-KiwiRail) from the process to date. KiwiRail are keen to expand the use of HPHE within the business and the RMTU seeks to see gains for members through its use.

# SAFETY FIRST!

