

THE ACTIVIST



Published Regularly - ISSN 1178-7392 (Print & Online) 21 December 2016

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY, JOYOUS AND SAFE 2017!

It has been a very busy and productive year for RMTU members. For all of our members who are having a break over the Christmas and New Year, we hope you have a restful time off, and for those members who are at work – take care and above all else - think safe and be safe.

UNION OFFICE CLOSURE

The Union's National and regional offices will close at 1700hrs on 23 December 2016. The National Wellington Office reopens on 16 January 2017 @ 0830hrs.

The **Emergency** "on call" roster for Union Industrial matters by delegates during the closedown period is;

- Todd Valster 24 to 26 December 2016 inclusive 0274454691
- Phil Spanswick 27 December 2016 to 30 December 2016 inclusive 027 2188126
- Wayne Butson 31 December 2016 to 2 January 2017 inclusive on 0274962461
- John Kerr 3 to 5 January 2017 inclusive 0272464941

- Stu Johnstone 6 January to 8 January 2017 inclusive 0272464961

TRAIN DRIVERS CONDEMN KIWIRAIL'S RETURN TO "DIRTY DIESEL"

The union representing the country's rail workers is condemning KiwiRail's decision to replace the current electric locomotive fleet on the North Island Main Trunk Line with a diesel-powered fleet.

"KiwiRail shouldn't cut corners. No one wants to return to outdated diesel locomotives," said Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) General Secretary Wayne Butson.

KiwiRail will phase out the existing electric locomotives over the next two years and replace them with an eight Chinese-made diesel Locomotives.

"The drivers want to reinvest in a clean energy electric fleet. The public is behind us on this too. But

KiwiRail is cutting corners and making a decision that's going to hurt us in the future. The decision feels pre-determined."

"Our models show that reinvesting in an electric fleet is better for KiwiRail's wallet in the long term and it's better for the planet. The current electric fleet saves 8 million

On behalf of the Union's President, National Management Committee and Staff we wish all members and their families a happy and joyous Christmas. We also wish you a healthy, safe and prosperous (the only way with collective bargaining) 2017.

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

litres in fuel each year and the price of upkeep is only \$1.13 per km, but the Chinese-made diesel locomotives will guzzle the gas the electric fleet saves and the likely cost of upkeep will be \$2.27 per km."

"Diesel-powered locomotives are the past, not the future," said Butson.

"It's a no-brainer really. If we upgraded the electric fleet we could do it in a local workshop employing local people. Instead KiwiRail is sending money offshore to buy 1970s technology that'll cost us in the long run."

"KiwiRail says the electric fleet operates like a rail system within a rail system, but just like the electric fleet the new diesel fleet can't operate on all North Island rail lines either. Our rail system already uses multiple wagon classes, multiple locomotive classes and follows multiple operating rules for different train operations and signalling areas. That's how a good system works. We don't need to switch to an entirely diesel-powered system. That means going backwards," explained Butson.

"Our members have always made it clear they prefer the electric fleet because they make for a smoother ride, they're quieter, more powerful, and the best option for the environment."

MNL TO BE REBUILT

The Government on Thursday formally announced that it is committed to restoring road and rail services from Picton to Christchurch. This is a resounding victory for the RMTU's (and our political partners) immediate initiation of an online petition calling for such a commitment to be given. We know that the inland route is getting hammered with more than 1000 truck movements a day and this graphically demonstrated the valuable contribution of

the rail service between Picton and Chch to reducing the number of behemoth high productivity trucks on the road corridor in the region. This is great news! Let's hope it is not as empty a promise as the 12 bridges in Northland!

DITCHING ELECTRIC TRAINS MASSIVE STEP BACKWARDS

KiwiRail's plan to replace its electric locomotives with a dirty diesel-powered fleet is backwards and bad news for New Zealand, the Green Party said today. The Green Party understands that KiwiRail will today announce a plan to phase out its 16 electric locomotives responsible for freight between Hamilton and Palmerston North. The electric locomotives will be replaced with Chinese-made diesel locomotives.

"We are very disappointed by KiwiRail's decision to abandon our electric freight trains and infrastructure. Many New Zealanders will despair at this short-term approach – it's 2016, not 1916," said Green Party transport spokesperson Julie Anne Genter.

"National has promised to take climate change and transport issues seriously, but it's underfunding of rail is responsible for short-sighted decisions like this.

"National should commit to completing the electrification of the North Island Main Trunk Line. This would send a clear signal to KiwiRail that they can invest in an electric future.

"New electric trains are cleaner, quieter, and have lower fuel and maintenance costs over their lifetime. They're also powered by local renewable energy rather than imported oil. "Diesel trains will cost more to operate long-term, which could encourage more freight to move off rail and onto dangerous trucks on the road.

"KiwiRail's claim that it takes too long to switch between diesel and electric trains ignores the fact that electric trains are faster



and can make up for this delay across the journey.

"Now is the time to invest for a cleaner, safer future.

"The Green Party will complete electrification of the rail lines between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga so electric trains can be used right across those heavily used lines," said Ms Genter.

MUNZ STRIKE AT LYTTTELTON STOPPED BY EMPLOYMENT COURT

MUNZ are in bargaining with Lyttelton Port Company for renewal of their collective agreement and had issued a strike notice for Christmas weekend. LPC immediately applied to the Employment Court to have the strike notice declared invalid.

We have just received word that LPC's this application for an injunction declaring the strike notice for this weekend unlawful has been granted by the Employment Court.

There will be no strike at the port over Christmas. MUNZ has issued another strike notice for the New Year and this remains in place and so we will await developments.

TRANSDEV AUCKLAND ON BOARD SECURITY

The annual Christmas in the Park event had many Members in Auckland on edge after an incident the previous night where a Maori Warden and a Train Manager were pushed by a group of youths, before this group then went on to the track throwing rocks at the train smashing the windscreen in 3 places. Then, after a mostly very successful special event, another Train Manager was assaulted the following night on one of the last runs of the night.

Random acts of violence are hard to stop but as the weather gets warmer there appears to have been another spike in anti-

social behaviour and this only strengthens our call for the Authorised Officer Bill to be passed by Parliament.

Concerned passengers have even been stepping in to assist in removing this anti-social element off the trains. It is imperative that any future Authorised Officers form part of the Train crew. Placing random security guards on board as happens now does not offer enough protection for crew or passengers.

LABOUR TEAM READIES TO FIGHT 2017 ELECTION

Labour leader Andrew Little today announced a reallocation of portfolios in his shadow cabinet following the retirements of David Cunliffe, Phil Goff and David Shearer and the arrival of new Mt Roskill MP Michael Wood.

"These changes will help sharpen Labour's focus on some core areas. We know we can do so much better as a country and the team I lead into next year's election will be working as hard as ever to

show New Zealanders Labour has a plan for the future.

"I am underlining how important this is by creating the New Economy portfolio. Labour is committed to growing wealth in the economy through greater innovation and productivity."

In other changes Michael Wood will be the spokesperson for Consumer Affairs, Ethnic Communities and Revenue.

Chris Hipkins adds all the associate delegations of Tertiary Education held by David Cunliffe to his overall Education duties.

"Education is a crucial area for Labour because of the funding freeze on schools and declining performance, and we'll be increasing pressure on the Government on this. Chris will be focusing all his energies on this important area and so will be stepping down from the Senior Whip role.



I will be nominating Kris Faafoi to be the new Senior Whip with the vote taking place at the first Caucus of 2017. Chris will retain the Shadow Leader of the House role."

David Parker also takes over Foreign Affairs from David Shearer. Stuart Nash gains State Owned Enterprises and will also be the new spokesperson for Innovation and Science, and Research and Development.

Iain Lees-Galloway will be the new Defence spokesperson. Dr Megan Woods adds State Services to her duties while Clare Curran takes over ICT and moves into the Shadow Cabinet.

"We're really looking forward to 2017 and spending time talking to New Zealanders up and down the country about how a Labour led Government will restore the Kiwi dream," says Andrew Little.

CANTERBURY RAIL AND LYTTELTON PORT COMBINED BRANCHES MEETING

A combined Canterbury Rail and Lyttelton Port Branches' Mass Meeting will be held on Wednesday 21 December 2016 between the hours of 1400-1600hrs at St Marys Church Hall Heathcote, Corner of Martindales and Truscotts Rds.

This is a paid union meeting. If you attend at a time when you would normally be working you will be paid by your employer.

The agenda includes recognition of delegates and active branches members, a discussion on the impact of the Kaikoura earthquake on KiwiRail and Lyttelton Port, and a discussion of the implications of the MUNZ dispute with LPC and the issuing of strike notice.

We have invited Josie Butler, political activist and nurses' union member, who gained notoriety for throwing a rubber toy at Government Minister Stephen Joyce, to

be a guest speaker. Minister Joyce is known to RMTU members for his masterminding of the closure of the Hillside Workshops.

SOUTHDOWN CONTRACTORS

The failure of KiwiRail management to consult the RMTU before bringing a contractor on to the Southdown CT site resulted in our members sitting in the meal room while this situation was resolved.

The contractor was asked to leave site by KiwiRail, returning several days later only after full and meaningful consultation in accordance with the MECA had occurred.

Members were very clear that they expect their managers to know and comply with our Collective Agreement.

SOUTHLAND BRANCH STANDS TALL: DONGWHA BAN GETS RESULT

The Southland Branch of the RMTU held a stopwork meeting on Monday 19 December to discuss a host of issues that has had the Branch in uproar in recent months. It takes a lot to get the lads down south wound up but once they are then look out...

Members watched our film of the LPC dispute, 'The Red Card', and as a result were considerably enlightened about their right to refuse unsafe work. They are so disgruntled at the condition of four locos that are manifestly unfit for use and as such expose LEs to a range of hazards, including Whole Body Vibration (WBD), that a ban was passed unanimously by the Branch.

Next up was the condition of the siding at Dongwha. This was again subjected to an immediate ban. Within 24 hours KiwiRail management had visited the siding with the Health and Safety Rep and actioned improvements that led to the Branch lifting the ban. After weeks of stalling, solidarity and action by members resulted in management actually doing something about the problem. As one attendee put it: "they'll stop chasing us when we stop running".



UPDATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

There was then a unanimous vote of no confidence in the Operations Manager for Otago and Southland as a consequence of disgruntlement over rosters, difficulties obtaining safety glasses, and lack of consultation and information over the installation and operation of security cameras.

Southland members were supported by South Island KIC Reps and Otago Branch delegates. Otago and Southland Branch officials are meeting with management on Wednesday 21 December to seek a way to improve relations between the branches and the bosses. It looks like the establishment of a Local Industrial Council (LIC) is likely to be on the agenda.

TROUBLE LOOMS @ MARSDEN POINT.

A union meeting is being held with our C3 members based at Marsden Point on 22 December to conduct a strike ballot as C3 is refusing to negotiate a collective agreement.

TRACK INSPECTORS PILOT

KiwiRail has approached the RMTU to be part of a pilot study to gather information to assist them in understanding what needs to be changed to improve the way track faults are identified.

Currently an over proportionate number of tracks faults are reported by signal or traction technicians. The pilot study will be conducted out of Auckland for a metro perspective and out of Hamilton for freight. RMTU delegates and Track Inspector members will gather this information, looking at areas they can walk the track or ride quad bikes.

TAIC REPORT – ARATERE PROPELLER

The Transport Accident Investigation Commission 's report into why the starboard propeller fell off the ferry Aratere is now publically available on the TAIC website

[http://www.taic.org.nz/ReportsandSafetyRecs/MarineReports/tabid/87/ctl/Detail/mid/484/InvNumber/2013-203/Page/0/language/en-NZ/Default.aspx?SkinSrc=\[G\]skins/taicMarine/skin_marine](http://www.taic.org.nz/ReportsandSafetyRecs/MarineReports/tabid/87/ctl/Detail/mid/484/InvNumber/2013-203/Page/0/language/en-NZ/Default.aspx?SkinSrc=[G]skins/taicMarine/skin_marine)

It's a comprehensive report and although it deals with a large number of highly technical issues, we have done our best to present them in plain English. A spokesman will be available to talk through any issues if required but you are best to phone me in the first instance as he is often in meetings.

The following report paragraphs are of note:

1.4/1.5 - Main finding – shaft failed due to a fatigue fracture/fretting was likely to have been the result of a sub-optimal fit of the new propeller

1.7 - Commission also found a lack of documentation about the process of fitting propellers and the final fit achieved.

4.4.1 - There are four basic mechanisms that can cause a shaft to fail. No evidence of failure due to wear or purely overload. Instead the evidence suggested that shaft failure as a result of fatigue was likely. Accordingly, fatigue cracking was one of the main areas of interest to the Commission.

6.3.3 and 6.3.4 - Fretting likely reduced the amount of stress required to initiate fatigue failure. This view was supported by the review team at the Australian Maritime College.

7.2.8 - KiwiRail, DNV or the shipyard were not able to provide reports covering the propeller fitting process. This would have been good practice says Commission. See also 7.2.19 and 7.2.20

7.2.11 - There were several attempts to fit the new propellers. The repeated attempts would have increased the opportunity for damage to occur to the contact surfaces.

8.3.3 - Aratere had had on-going issues over shaft alignments.

9.5.2 - Records show the starboard propeller had sustained damage while in service and that this damage resulted in a change in blade pitch for all four propeller blades.



11.2.1 - Advice from appropriate experts was either not sought or not followed. Examples given in 11.2.3/11.2.4/11.2.5

The Commission notes that the Aratere is twin screwed so to an extent had a built-in redundancy. However, 80% of the world fleet are single screwed. Given this, the Commission's report will be of special interest to the owners and operators of these ships.

ABSENTEEISM – TRANSDEV AKLD

Absenteeism is proving to be a topic of concern for Transdev in Auckland. A one day workshop attended by RMTU delegates and TDAK managers was held using Interest Based problem solving techniques to better understand the cause the level of absenteeism.

A number of contributing factors like the leave schedule, difficult access to Alt days and the shift swap arrangement were identified, on their own these caused some problems but when combined led to a much larger problem elsewhere. The work has now been collated and another meeting will be organised in the New Year to work through some solutions.

SUPERANNUATION CLAMPDOWN REQUIRED

Winston Peters is backing the Retirement Commissioner's proposal to tighten up on immigrants getting superannuation.

But he disagrees with her call to raise the pension age from 65 to 67.

Commissioner Diane Maxwell has proposed raising the residency requirement from 10 to 25 years before a person can get superannuation. The Government said it would review her recommendations.

The New Zealand First leader said his party had long called for the residency requirement to be increased.

Maxwell's raft of suggestions including increasing the residency requirement, raising the age of eligibility and resuming contributions to the New Zealand Superannuation Fund were released as part of her three-yearly review of retirement policy.

At present people have to be resident in New Zealand for just 10 years after the age of 20, including five after the age of 50, to be eligible for NZ Super.

But Maxwell wants it to increase to 25 years.

She said New Zealand's residency requirement for superannuation was the lowest in the OECD. The OECD average is 26 years.

As well as the residency increase, she has repeated a call to increase the age of eligibility from 65 to 67 but wants it done incrementally over an eight-year timeframe starting in 2027.

Peters took issue with her view that NZ Super was unaffordable, and said there was no need to increase the age

BRANCH NOTES OMISSION

We humbly apologise for the omission of the West Coast Rail Branch notes in the Dec 2016 edition of the Transport Worker. Here they are:

In Greymouth we have some rostering woes. Here is a brief outline what is going on with the Greymouth rail operators roster. This used to be a 7 link roster that worked well within capacity to cover day to day operational needs and any variances as they occurred. This worked well and the staff were pleased to help out when they could, working RDOs and tack on's and doing whatever was needed to help keep trains moving. This has changed of late.

In Greymouth one of our senior rail operators retired after 50yrs service to the rail industry and management decided no replacement was needed. At the same time management decided that the Reefton rail

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



operator's role was going to be disestablished and the operational requirements covered from Greymouth, some 80 km's away.

The reasoning behind this decision was that tonnage had dropped off, but there are still small amounts of coal coming out and the next siding close by produces 24 hlc in and out 5 days a week, so there is still work there. At the time of writing there is a 60,000 tonne coal order and KiwiRail now have no rail operators available or willing to man these extra services so the Reefton rail operator that was going to be made redundant has been asked to stay on to work this extra tonnage, which is worth a considerable amount of revenue to KiwiRail, and by all accounts the fortunes of the coal industry is up on the move again so the redundancy decision looks very short sighted.

In the interim management replaced the 7 link Greymouth rail operators' roster with a 6 link version. In a nutshell two positions have been removed and the work load dumped on the remaining links resulting in an over tight roster that is a complete shambles, and has led to some very unhappy rail operators, resulting in management getting a well-deserved bite on the rear.

This 6 link roster management dropped on to us is nothing short of diabolical and solely built to cut costs.

Some of the issues are: there is three shifts (loading coalies) with no rail operator rostered; jobs that require a rail operator to be in two places at once when the jobs are 50 km apart; one job with a 0230 start and book off at 1400; most of the shifts are 10 hours and more one job in particular requires 9 mainline shunts in different locations over a 190 km road trip - try this when you live in the wettest climate in new Zealand it is too much for one person, we are sure if a manager had to do this it would be a different story. In addition there are jobs that run that just do not have a rail operator available.

So what happens, the KRM and the Operations Manager are at times running around plugging all the many leaks to keep the system running. The Greymouth rail

operators, all six of us, requested a meeting with management to bring all off the above to their attention and basically they did not want to know as cutting costs is more important, and they were running with their roster.

This roster is so crappy the rail operators are now not working RDOs tack on's, or changing hours when things go pear shaped which is semi-regular around here.

In addition some staff are choosing not to work the stat days as they would prefer to spend the time away from the job and be with family, thereby giving some indication of what is thought of this kind of rostering, as the penal rates and a day in lieu should be a good incentive to work, but sadly good will and morale is absent this depot at present.

This to us is a failure in rostering and the people that produce these shockers should be taken to task. These managers who make these rosters run computer programmes in the virtual world and come up with a roster that looks ok, but this is not the KiwiRail world and there is considerable variation when you are in the real world and a computer programme will never work these variances out.

So, after informed objections from the people who actually know what will work, this has been bulldozed in and we're watching it die a slow death and in the end it'll fall over.

Recently one of boys started his shift and soon into it he felt fatigued and asked to be relieved and the KRM bought him home with no issue. The company had an investigation and believe it or not there is yet another computer programme (FAID - look it up sometime) and part of the process was FAID said the hours were in code. What a lot of rubbish! If rosters were of a more user friendly nature this type of thing would not happen. All it will take is a decent well constructed roster and kiwiRail will find things will run better with harmony restored, instead of adversarial position we're in now as all this does is cause the affected staff to dig their toes in harder, which is the case in our small part of the system

Mr Reidy, you have a very disengaged work force and it is not a good look.



Over on the Track side of the business it's not a matter of having a disengaged workforce – it's a question of having any workforce at all. The attrition rate due to retirements (medical and otherwise) as well as people moving on for other reasons is shocking. We wonder how our hard working track staff are coping.

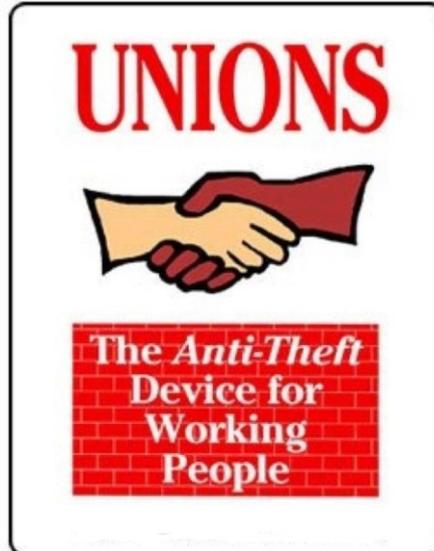
On a positive note Solid Energy now has bids from prospective new owners and the world coal prices are starting to recover so with our major customer in better shape we look forward to orders ramping up so the Coast can again be a significant contributor to KiwiRail coffers.

IIC MEETING – THURSDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2016

The scheduled industrial council meeting on Thursday 8th December 2016 occurred in Wellington and the following agenda items were discussed:

- Recap on last Industrial Councils action points and meeting minutes from 21st September 2016.
- Baggage Handling
- Picton Terminal layout update following earthquake
- Picton Bollard Incident
- Review of Wellington Restructure, 12 months on
- Interislander business update and any other business

Following on from the recap on the last Industrial Council and the actions points that had been set, we discussed key health and safety items which were raised such as the impact the earthquake had to Interislanders operation, the Baggage Handling process across Wellington and Picton Terminal and the investigation which is occurring around the Bollard incident in Picton.



There was also a discussion around a review of the Wellington restructure which occurred in November 2015. It was agreed that the 12 hour shifts for back of house staff was working well however with recent retirements and resignations, we had not filled all roles, specifically the Load Marshall role, which had been stated as a designated role as part of back of house teams in the decision document. It was therefore agreed that a recruitment process would follow for the current Load Marshall vacancies in Wellington.

Given that it was the last Industrial Council meeting of the year, we also agreed the schedule for the year going forward. The dates that were agreed for the quarterly Interislander and RMTU Industrial Council meetings in 2017 have been stated below.

Industrial Council Meeting Schedule 2017	
Meeting	Scheduled Date
First Meeting	Wednesday 15 th March 2017
Second Meeting	Wednesday 14th June 2017
Third Meeting	Wednesday 13 th September 2017
Fourth Meeting	Wednesday 13 th December 2017

SOUTH ISLAND EARTHQUAKE IMPACT

The recent Kaikoura earthquake, that closed both State Highway One and the Main North Line, is having a huge impact on our members down south.

Our Networks members are working flat out to assess the extent and seriousness of the damage and are being ably assisted by LEs who know the route intimately. KiwiRail has met with Christchurch LEs and is encouraging them to take leave and has also asked for expressions of interest from LEs for severance. We are currently working through this with management.

Meanwhile our Lyttelton Port members have picked up much of the slack as KiwiRail and LPC have organised freight to be transported

via coastal shipping to and from the port. Accordingly our permanent relieving pool cargo handlers are working long hours and LPC is promoting some to full time roles. We are sure this will also mean the inland ports at Woolston and Rolleston will be much busier, underlining the need for the RMTU to continue to organise across the full supply chain.

The uncertainty around the future of the transport routes north of Christchurch needs to be resolved and resolved quickly. The disaster parasite capitalists are already making noises about the future of the rail corridor and the RMTU has been pivotal in mobilising against this, together with our political allies in the Green and Labour Parties. We know National's track record with this sort of thing given the debacles surrounding the Christchurch rebuild – yet another good reason for a change of government in 2016!

KIWI RAIL LCC'S AGREED

It has been agreed that there will be a Local Industrial Council set up to cover Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. The first meeting will be early next year.

A meeting was held with senior management to sort out a fair and transparent incident investigation method as we have been at loggerheads with local management on how to conduct investigations. Agreement was reached that investigations should be reviewed in the Just and Fair Culture review that is currently underway between KiwiRail and the RMTU.

Meanwhile at Kawerau the stropping dispute is ongoing and both KiwiRail and the RMTU have been meeting to see if the dispute can be resolve in an expeditious way.

CAMPAIGN SUCCESS – SAVE THE PICTON TO CHRISTCHURCH RAIL LINE!

This rail line was severely damaged by slips, damaged bridges and tunnels

following the November 14 earthquake. The Government was under pressure by various anti-rail groups to not rebuild it. The Greens ran a campaign – “Save the Picton to Christchurch Rail line” which was well supported. The newly minted PM, Bill English, announced this week, under the National Party banner, that this line and SH 1 will be rebuilt either side of Kaikoura. This is great news but the PM is a bit confused putting the announcement under his party rather than the Government he is PM of. This outcome stresses the need to support important campaigns and lobby both friends and foe.



KIWI RAIL (FREIGHT OPS) INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL UPDATE

The last KIC meeting, KIC 33, for 2016 was held in Palmerston North 23 & 24 November. Many of the projects that KIC reps have been working on during 2016 and beyond were reported back on and updates provided. While it can be hard to see KIC progress at times, there has been significant movement on many of the projects which include but are not limited to;

- Terminal/Yard Standardisation
- Excessive Hours (Busts) Review and management
- Ballast Steepling Update
- Asset management (Mechanical) Action items

Other KIC agenda items included – HSAT Reinvigoration, In-Cab Technology Strategy, Generator cable between wagons, LED's as a safety measure at Pedestrian level crossing, Uniforms/PPE, DAS 2, LE mobile phone policy and more.

The minutes, action items, presentation and attachments are available to download at - <https://1drv.ms/f/s!Alg5Vz8nkmzAi0kiE4pkT6E7ICmm1A> In total over 150 pages form KIC 33.

All 2017 KIC meeting dates can be found on the RMTU website calendar - <http://www.rmtunion.org.nz/calendar-yearlyplanner.php>

WIN AT DUNEDIN RAILWAYS

Readers may have missed the news about Dunedin Railways in the Otago Rail Branch notes of the latest Transport Worker.

"Breaking news is that our Brothers and Sisters at Dunedin Railways have just settled and ratified a new collective agreement. After issuing a strike notice, the RMTU negotiators were due to enter mediation on 17th November to try and resolve the issue but the Company made a very positive offer the evening before and terms of settlement were drafted and signed. The membership voted to ratify the deal at a full meeting on 18th November, attended by our National President and General Secretary as well as representatives from this Branch and the Otago Port Branch. The agreement delivers a minimum 9.27% increase on wages and allowances by August 2018 with a minimum of 3% now and 3% next August and 3% in August 2018. Some individuals have increases beyond this kicking in straight away, ranging from 3.79% to 16.67%. Well done to everyone involved, especially our rank and file members who stuck together. Also a big thank you to everyone from the wider union and our international comrades who sent messages of support to the members and e-mailed the Employer and the owner. This agreement is testimony to the value of being organised and resolute."

VALE – TREVOR BURKE

Trevor Burke, a Senior Signalling Engineer in KiwiRail has passed away while on a hunting trip. Trevor joined New Zealand Railways and the Union in January 1974 as a Draughting Cadet in the Signals & Electrical Branch. He spent his entire career at KiwiRail (and its predecessors) in Wellington, working in both the Regional Office and Head Office. Our thoughts are with Trevor's family, his friends and work colleagues as well as those in the Search and Rescue team at this difficult time.

BITS AND BOBS

- Strait Shipping has been sold to an investment group CHAMP Private Equity. New owners state they see growth potential on the Strait. CHAMP Group manage A\$3b in assets.
- The Port of Tauranga crane dispute ended up in mediation Monday 12 Dec. After a day of mediation the matter remained unresolved but the parties were still talking so it was agreed that the mediation be adjourned until Monday 19 Dec to enable the Port to further consider the issues that were on the table.
- MUA Celebrate the settlement of the Patricks Contracts. The settlement heralds a period of harmony on the Australian waterfront.
- CODA to create a freight hub at Rolleston which will grow rail usage in the south.
- The Sulphur Point C3 Collective Agreement was signed off by the parties and our members are now awaiting the 12 months of backpay.
- Shipping operator Toll Transport has been convicted and fined a record \$1m following the death of a stevedore who was crushed while helping load the Tasmanian Achiever at Webb Dock in Australia.

**Please take care
of each other
and above all
else - Have a
Merry, Safe and
Joyous Festive
Season!**

