

THE

MARCH 2018

# TRANSPORT WORKER

The journal of the RMTU – NZ's largest specialist transport union



DECEMBER 2017

**Please plan ahead.**

Passenger trains may not run on the Auckland Metro network due to RMTU industrial action. We will update you **HERE**, and through other communications.

**TRAINS WILL RUN TODAY**

In the event of industrial action, please use scheduled bus services or make alternative travel arrangements. Please travel outside peak times, work from home or carpool if possible. We expect the roads and buses will be much busier.

Highlights of current transport services in place to ensure an alternative mode of transport is available to all passengers. For more information on the current status of services, please visit the website [www.aucklandmetro.co.nz](http://www.aucklandmetro.co.nz) or call 09 276 2762. If you are unable to access the website, please call 09 276 2762. If you are unable to access the website, please call 09 276 2762.

metro

# Auckland strike



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RMTU delegate Christine Fisihoi travelled all the way to Marrakech and was blown away!

**COVER PHOTOGRAPH:** Auckland RMTU members pledging solidarity outside Britomart Place. The inset photo shows a banner created to support the action.

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"On page 14 there is reference to Saida Abad, the first female loco engineer in Morocco. I found this billboard with her very moving quote whilst in London recently."

**Wayne Butson**  
General secretary  
RMTU

# Is this the year the dog bites back?

**W**ELCOME to the first issue of *The Transport Worker* magazine for 2018 which, as always, is packed full of just some of the things that your Union does in the course of its organising for members.

Last year ended with a change of Government which should prove to be good news for RMTU members as the governing partners and their support partners all have policies which are strongly supportive of rail, ports and the transport logistics sectors.

According to the Chinese calendar, 2018 is the year of the dog. However, in my view, 2018 is going to be a year of considerable change for RMTU members. We have seen Transdev Auckland alter from being a reasonable employer who we have been doing business with since 2002 to one where dealing with most items has become combative and confrontational.

Transdev Wellington is an employer with much less of a working history but we were able to work with them on the lead up to them taking over the Wellington Metro contract and yet, from almost the get go after they took over the running of the business, what little relationship there was has subsequently been destroyed. All this has played out in the media and our Union magazine in 2017 and sadly it looks to be continuing into 2018 with no tangible sign of hope for change.

The RMTU relationship with KiwiRail has also undergone meaningful change. With the roll out of the Just Fair Culture training and the expansion of the High Performance High Engagement (HPHE) initiative through the business we are seeing many win–win scenarios for members.

Long festering issues like payscale seven and the loco engineer's ROM review have been resolved or are making real progress using the principles of HPHE. The challenge for the Union and its representatives in these projects is to ensure that it is not just the company's interests which are addressed but also the commercial needs and interest of members and the Union.

HPHE in KiwiRail is not only about improving the productivity and returns of KiwiRail it is about increasing members' satisfaction at work, obtaining better rostering to combat fatigue, enhancing job security not diminishing it and to see productivity gains shared with members in their pay packets.

We now have HPHE projects in mechanical (RSAS), freight and I&A and they are dealing with real issues of concern to the company and to members.

Hutt workshops has been the pilot study for HPHE and whilst inspiring gains have been made we await real funds being allocated to enable the major shifts of the bogie and wheelset groups to new areas with new equipment.

Also in mechanical the company is promoting a super depot concept. This would see Auckland and Christchurch become super depot sites with heavy lift capability. Such a move would cement in the alteration of Hutt's operation from a heavy fabrication facility overhauling locos within the workshop to a component refurbishment centre.

It would also see Hillside heavy lift no longer being necessary and Hillside closed totally.

Considerable funds would be required to upgrade or rebuild the super depots with obvious questions being asked as to why KiwiRail is spending so much money to replace and relocate functions that already exist. Surely these funds would better be spent on the track?

In contrast to these plans there is the inconvenient fact that it is Labour Party policy to reopen Hillside shops and the repercussions on some regional depots flies in the face of New Zealand First regional development plans and promises.

It is in this vein that the Union has advised KiwiRail that the RSAS strategy needs to be paused whilst we revisit and review the implications of the changed political landscape and its impact on the strategy.

The RMTU is convinced that under this new government there is much opportunity for rail to prosper and grow and we don't believe that plans developed under the last government provided the best vision nor capture the opportunities on offer now.

Let us remember that the minister that had the well received 'Value of rail' report sitting around for 18 months and, as reported, would not permit its release, is gone from the power position and is only left to fight over the National Party leadership to fill his days. Clearly the National government was not strongly supportive of rail and so it is common sense to say that the plans for then are not the plans we should be putting up to the new team in town.

So in 2018 we are planning for many things to change. They include;

- No introduction of DDO or DOO in Auckland.
- A settled collective agreement (CA) with Transdev Auckland and Wellington.
- Restoration of a mature, honest and respectful working relationship with both Transdev companies.
- A renewed CA with KiwiRail.
- The repeal of the partial strike deduction provisions from the ERA.
- A settlement with Lyttelton Port which has good outcomes for members and continues to repair the relationship.
- Victory in all our litigation actions against Transdev Wellington. These are shocking cases and you should keep your ear to the ground to ensure that you find out the full story. For example when a person is on bereavement leave and not even in New Zealand should they have a day's pay deducted because their workmates went on strike on that day? I think not and you really have to wonder as to the competence of any HR manager that thinks they should.

The only thing that won't change in 2018 and beyond is the passion, drive and determination of the RMTU to give our members a voice and to empower them to seek and fight back against imposed change – and for what is right.

Perhaps the Chinese calendar is right: it is the year of the dog and this one bites! 🐕



## To the dark side

Dear Editor,

I have been a member of the RMTU for 12.5 years and it is with a heavy heart that I tender my resignation. I have taken a position in a company that is a non-union enterprise, which will be an awakening for me to remember how the other half live.

I would like to thank all of those within the RMTU head office for their hard and tenacious work. Without you we would not be stronger together. The support that you all provide to us as members can be a thankless and unseen job, but from my perspective priceless.

Keep on keeping on with the good fight. Kia kaha and kindest regards

Tracey Grace  
Interislander.

## Resignations

Dear Editor,

It is with much regret I must leave this wonderful Union.

After 28 years working in rail, (second time around) I find my skills are no longer needed within KiwiRail.

Despite having applied for numerous roles within the company, and with amazing support from my manager Colin Vickery, I am forced to accept redundancy.

I am fortunate to be on the short-list with Fulton Hogan for a position I was turned down for with KiwiRail.

Maybe, with any luck, I will be able to keep in contact with many in the railway family I have had the pleasure of meeting over my 35 years railway career.

In continued brotherhood, I wish my colleagues well.

Paul Bryden.  
Ex signal box controller.

Dear Editor,

I wish to tender my resignation from the RMTU having retired from my employer Port Marlborough New Zealand Ltd.

I started work as a boatman fitter in 1977 with the Marlborough Harbour Board and transferred to the port company when it replaced the harbour board.

I am very grateful to have got to retirement age in reasonable health when many of my friends and workmates haven't made



it. My job entailed repairing all of the port infrastructure but mainly the gangways and link spans. It has been a great job with great workmates.

The changes over the years have been amazing and good to have been a part of except for some of the dumb restructuring that resulted in some good people losing their jobs.

The standout event of my time has been the sinking of the cruise ship Michail Lermontov after the company Pilot tried to take it on the wrong side of the Cape Jackson lighthouse in the Marlborough Sounds and found out the hard way that there wasn't enough depth of water there.

The flotsam from the wreck was bought to our compound in Picton and I remember four members of the Russian KGB (one of whom was reputed to be Vladimir Putin) wandering around trying to figure out what had happened to their ship. It was an interesting but sad time because one crew member lost his life.

I have been very fortunate to have had the RMTU to advocate on my behalf with very capable and helpful staff at head office. I received a loyalty certificate from the Union for 40 years of membership which I will hang in my man cave and treasure with pride.

I would like to thank the committee of my own branch who have put in a huge amount of time and effort (a lot of it their own time) into the branch.

I have bought a launch and am off down the sounds chasing fish. Thanks everybody,  
Larry Patterson.

[Ed: Looking out for the gps location coming our way!]

Dear Editor,

As you are aware my health has deteriorated over the past month and I've had to come to terms with my predicament and make some decisions.

I've handed in my notice to LPC, which has been accepted. I therefore now tender my resignation from the RMTU.

I wish to thank our local branch for running a tight ship.

The Union is doing a great job from my perspective. My thanks to you and all the best for the future.

Arohanui  
Keith Davis.

**"I thoroughly recommend union membership to all wage slaves"**

Dear Editor,

Last week I officially resigned from LPC, with my final day being approx March 31st, when my holiday entitlement runs out. As a result I'll be reluctantly resigning from the RMTU at the same time. I've never regretted being a union member since I first joined the truck drivers union back in the 1970s and I thoroughly recommend union membership to all wage slaves as a way to get a better deal for themselves and their fellow workers.

I've been actively involved in the RMTU and its predecessor, the Harbour Workers Union, since I started work at Lyttelton port in 1979. It's one thing to join a union, but the only way to make that union successful is to get involved by becoming a delegate, or to stand for the union executive if you think you can contribute by doing so.

Thanks for everything you've both done for our members in the time you've been employed by RMTU and all the best for the future. Keep up the good fight. I'm looking forward to a long and happy retirement.

Kind Regards  
John Smith.

## Safe travel on

**R**EADERS will be aware from previous editions of the Transport Worker that RMTU members employed by Transdev Auckland are embroiled in a long running dispute over safety. This came to a head at the beginning of December when collective bargaining broke down and the RMTU issued 24 hours notice of a full day strike on Auckland's passenger trains.

**ALL aboard!**  
**Staffed trains are safe trains**

At issue is the desire by Auckland Transport (AT) and the French owned multi-national company, Transdev, that operates the passenger trains on AT's behalf, to introduce driver door operation (DDO) and sack the train managers who currently staff the trains. This will result in a move to driver only operation (DOO), something that our members say is unsafe.



# Auckland trains is the issue



◀ The support the strike had was solid, and all passenger trains in the Auckland Metro area stopped for a full day on December 8.

Public support was overwhelming, despite the potential inconvenience to commuters. Passengers and the public understand that this dispute is over their safety and they are on our side.

Members gathered at their book-on depots and organised publicity and information pickets (as well as barbecues) and received plenty of positive comments from the public first hand. Media coverage was comprehensive and sympathetic.

Our Auckland members are united, with locomotive engineers backing their train manager and ticket inspector brothers and sisters despite Transdev attempting to bribe them with a pay offer conditional on accepting DDO. There has been a whispering campaign by some managers to try and undermine this unity but it has fallen on deaf ears.

Since the strike the RMTU has had several meetings with Transdev, Auckland Transport, Worksafe, KiwiRail and, at the time of writing, is scheduled to meet with NZTA.

Any shift to driver only trains requires

approval from NZTA as the regulator and KiwiRail as the network access provider. In addition it requires agreement from the RMTU, as we have a claim for no driver door operation/driver only operation in our collective bargaining.

In addition our delegates and active members have been working hard lobbying politicians.

We even have an appointment to see the Prime Minister in mid-March!

By the time you read this we hope our campaign will have convinced AT to drop DDO/DOO. We are under no illusions however, that this could be a long drawn out fight and are confident that our members will not shirk from that. Safety and secure employment are fundamental to us as a union and any attack on this poses an existential threat that the RMTU will fight. 🌐



Members gather at Britomart for a meeting.

# Tunnel safety compromised: deadline not met

**L**OCO ENGINEERS are frustrated that KiwiRail has failed to meet Worksafe's improvement notice deadline to have respiratory protection in place for LEs who are required to chock and set brakes in the low oxygen environment of the Otira Tunnel. The due date to have respiratory protection up and running was 31 January 2018.

KRG and the RMTU agreed that compressed air breathing apparatus (CABA) would be the best solution for LEs required to chock and set brakes in the tunnel. The self contained, self rescuers (SCSRs) used by track staff and LEs operating in the other rail tunnels were ruled out due to the danger of ripping the air bladder whilst working outside the loco.

RMTU delegates were stunned to discover in the days before the Worksafe deadline that key operational systems were not in place to use the CABA equipment safely.

Train control reps were equally frustrated that they hadn't been consulted on aspects that directly affected their role, nor had they received training in safety critical equipment known as ECO boards which track the air consumption and location of a person using CABA inside the Otira Tunnel.

On the night of the January 31 the tension culminated with the threat of a Red Card by the LE delegates who were not prepared to accept the risk of operating in the tunnel with an incomplete emergency system.

After a fraught evening of urgent phone calls and meetings KRG agreed that CABA



With face masks blanked out, members are being trained to use the new CABA safety equipment.

## The (delegates) behaved with pragmatism and integrity

wasn't ready to be rolled out safely which would mean KRG would not meet the Worksafe deadline.

A joint decision was made to revert to the current respiratory protection of mask and filter until the outstanding issues were sorted and CABA could be introduced without creating new risks.

RMTU delegates and members of the Southern Tunnel Focus group – Mike Williams and John Reizinger – were faced

with extreme pressure to accept the incomplete CABA set up so KiwiRail could meet the Worksafe deadline.

Despite the pressure the delegates refused to buckle and worked tirelessly to find a solution that would keep the trains running without compromising safety.

They behaved with pragmatism and integrity.

The use of CABA is now expected to be operational by the end of March. WorkSafe has told the RMTU they will not be taking enforcement action against KiwiRail for their failure to comply with the RPE improvement notice for low oxygen environments. 🌐

## DDO/DOO – the case against

### Medical emergency update

**L**ATE last year a medical emergency on a train between Newmarket and Ellerslie involved one passenger who suffered a seizure. Those sitting nearby helped him through the seizure and the train manager, who was notified, was described as "fantastic" in his deal-

ings with the passenger and helping with organising an ambulance to meet the train at Ellerslie to check out the passenger. The train manager then communicated with the rest of the train passengers by PA regarding the delay. After making the announcement he walked through the train verbally updating passengers. After the sick passenger disembarked at Ellerslie

(in the care of St John) the train carried on to Penrose and waited for the next train to Onehunga. All the passengers were comfortable with this and were glad the young man was OK. The incident was reported by a passenger named Paula who asked that Francis (the train manager) be complimented and thanked for the way in which he handled the situation. 🌐

# Whole body vibration working group established

**I**NJURIES relating to whole body vibration are not new to rail. The Union is currently running an ACC test case on behalf of retired loco engineer George Whyte who suffered a work related gradual process injury after 50 years service.

The RMTU alleges that years of rough riding are to blame for the injury coupled with poor cab design. Driving a poorly maintained and designed loco is like driving a car with flat tyres, the strong jarring and jolting was caused by the failure of the rubber mounts. The angle of the seat was fixed and it was one size fits all, no neck support.

There are three factors that cause rough riding: poor track maintenance and cab design and a lack of preventative maintenance.

Poor track maintenance leads to sideways jolts and jarring while poor cab maintenance leads to bad vibration.

Long hours sitting in prolonged non-neutral positions also contribute to the risk of injury.

## Dancing tea cup

In late 2016 Southland branch secretary Danny Kent filmed the famous 'dancing tea cup' video that graphically illustrated the vibration in the cab when the engine was idling. This went viral among rail workers via social media and resulted in the RMTU's Southland branch voting to 'Red Card' the worst DCs. Further investigation revealed major corrosion in the cab mount resulting in them being withdrawn from service.

Danny says: "The reason that a locomotive engineer feels aches and pains and fatigue after a shift is that we are bounced up and down and around on the seat. It can be so bad that your feet leave the floor and hit the floor again. The DX sits forward of the pivot point of the lead bogie. When you go around a curve you are extended over the curvature of the track. If that curve is rough, then the effect of the jarring is amplified."

The Union applauded Danny's escalation of the WBV issue and nominated him for the Safeguard awards. He received a special judges' commendation and was later



*KRG's safety ambassador, Tana Umaga, with Southland Union leader Danny Kent.*

acknowledged and paid tribute to by KRG's safety ambassador, Tana Umaga.

Following the ban of the DCs, KiwiRail and the RMTU established a working group to develop an agreed whole body vibration testing methodology and protocols. KRG purchased three vibration monitors to measure vibration levels of all locos. Data is currently being collected from mainline loco classes working over a range of track sections in the Auckland, Palmerston North, Christchurch and Dunedin areas.

The Union/KRG working group will adopt a suitable vibration exposure standard which will then be used for future mainline locomotive procurement.

The project will also be extended in 2019 to cover shunt locomotives and major plant (hoists etc). The working group includes representatives from Zero Harm, RMTU industrial council reps from mechanical engineering and loco engineers, and

## Whole body vibration?

International studies show that long term exposure to intense whole-body vibration is associated with lower back pain and other back disorders such as accelerated spinal degeneration effects, disk herniation and nerve root damage (sciatica). If you think your back and neck pain is linked to cab conditions and rough riding contact the RMTU H&S organiser to discuss.

external medical and occupational health advisors.

KRG is commissioning a research project that will ask LEs to fill in an anonymous survey to identify the prevalence of neck and back pain caused by whole body vibration. This project is a follow up to the earlier McBride study into neck and back pain due to whole body vibration. 🌐

# Auckland city loop takes shape



*The tunnels for the Auckland loop for underground commuter rail is taking shape. Here you can see those two tunnels threading across the middle of the photograph.*

## PORTS RETIREMENT PLAN ARE YOU A MEMBER?

The Ports Retirement Plan is open to all port workers.

The plan has an external administrator and contributions are invested with four fund managers.



Ports  
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Product Disclosure Statement:

[www.portsretirement.org.nz](http://www.portsretirement.org.nz)

# Historic Hutt visit a first



**F**OR the first time in modern history the full KiwiRail board visited Hutt Workshops on 15 February 2018. They were accompanied by KiwiRail CEO Peter Reidy, several members of the executive of KiwiRail, RMTU chair of the Hutt branch Matt Cordel-Bain and GS Wayne Butson.

The board were there to view and to

receive reports from delegate leaders on the HPHE project at Hutt focussing on ACP.

"The board members appeared highly engaged in the presentations by workers and managers within the bogies, wheelsets and electrical shop areas and were especially interested in the improvements in morale and the union/management relationship, not just the bottom line pro-

ductivity improvements from the project", said Wayne Butson.

This project has reached a point where more capital investment is needed to enable further gains to be made and so we await with interest advice on the apportionment of funds to continue the gains. 🇳🇿

## Solidarity from railway workers in Myanmar



**F**OR several years RMTU members have supported the budding union movement in newly democratic Myanmar. When it came time recently for railway workers to return the favour they were more than happy to do so.

Through the union movement's international development charity UnionAID, the RMTU members and staff are giving monthly donations which has helped fund the establishment of the Myanmar Railway Workers Union Federation (MRWUF) to fight on behalf of Myanmar's railway workers for job security and decent wages.

When MRWUF members heard of the struggles facing RMTU members in their dispute with TransDev they were eager to show their solidarity. At a meeting in December they drew signs with messages of support and sent them through to the RMTU.

UnionAID executive officer Michael Naylor said: "Railway workers in Myanmar face many struggles themselves, so that they were keen to show their support for RMTU members says a lot. They really value the support RMTU has given their movement over the years and want to return that in what ways they can. That's what solidarity is all about." 🇳🇿

## Lyttelton strike action

**A**S we went to press RMTU members at Lyttelton port have issued notice of an overtime ban for three weeks from March 3 and notice of consecutive 24 hour stoppages from March 9 onwards. Collective bargaining has broken down over management's desire to change hours of work without adequately addressing the risk of fatigue. LPC has no fatigue management policy and whilst its health and safety team is working with the RMTU on drafting one, its negotiation team wants to push ahead before that work is complete.

"We will not compromise over safety," says RMTU branch president Andy Kelly, "the risks of fatigue while operating heavy machinery are well documented and our members unanimously backed industrial action in order to fight for a safe workplace.

"There is a culture at LPC of leaving the difficult issues until we are in bargaining. We'd much rather work through this sort of thing during the term of our collective agreement as part of a mature employment relationship," he said. 🇳🇿

# New northern organiser steeped in unionism

**U**NIONISM flows through the blood of the RMTU's latest recruit, Rudd Hughes, the newly appointed Auckland-based organiser. His pedigree is impressive as is his allegiance to the union movement and a lifetime's work.

An Aucklander by birth he has spent most of life in the city apart from a brief period in Wellington and Hawkes Bay as a youngster and the obligatory travel overseas in his early twenties.

"We started out in Otahuhu but moved to Howick while Dad was secretary at the Auckland Seaman's Union."

In fact unionism and issues surrounding the plight of workers was – and remains – a significant topic of conversation in his household.

His brother is an organiser with NZEI and his partner is an organiser with First Union.

After leaving school Rudd tried his hand at being a bricklayer ("Too bloody hard"), joined the Post Office where he became one of its youngest union delegates and then moved on to the Labour Department – again volunteering to become a delegate.

During this time his father found himself at the front of a confrontation.

"They tried to deregister the Auckland union to get rid of my father," he said. "It was a big drama. The company had brought in a roster system that saw workers come off boat and join the end of the line at 'the corner'. From there they were chosen for work by boat engineers and such. They had all the power. You could sometimes stay there for months until you were chosen.

"What the old man did was propose a roster system whereby you progressed through until you were at the head and could choose your work. You'd get three chances. Basically he took the power of worker selection from the boat owners and



operators and gave it to the workers. The bosses didn't like that. It took three months to resolve.

"It was a pretty interesting childhood."

Back from Europe he went to university to study sociology and history – a BA and a Masters but balked (temporarily) at the Doctorate stage.

"The study gave me a real taste for Marxism," he said.

In the 1990s he tried a brief foray into union work but failed the interview and instead did some research for the Problem Gambling Foundation before getting a scholarship to get into his PhD. He studied, researched, tutored and lectured through about three quarters of his degree before grabbing a job with the Service and Food Workers Union.

"This was my fourth attempt to get work within the union movement I succeeded and haven't looked back. My year at the Servos taught me heaps especially from Paul McFarlane who was an excellent negotiator and could make deals. He was solid and

ethical and a good guy to work with."

Next the NZEI came calling where he described the experience as "excellent" and which took him through some significant changes. The bonus for him was their outstanding organiser training - "it was sensational grounding for me".

He was then shoulder tapped to join the Nursing Union but didn't find the fit he was looking for and took an opportunity at First Union

"I jumped ship, took a significant drop in pay but was never happier," he said. "I loved the work."

He happened to hear our South Island organiser John Kerr speak at the CTU conference on strategy and was well impressed.

"It was about the best thing I'd ever heard and seen."

So impressed was he with John's acumen, smart thinking and analysis he jumped at the suggestion that he apply for our Auckland organiser

post.

The new job provides him with new challenges – not least being sole charge for the first time, and learning real quick!

"I also love the All aboard campaign. It hits all the marks – internal leverage, public, ministers, local bodies and a smart focus on health and safety. I liked the style."

He also likes the idea of working with members from relatively few companies. He figures this will allow him to get really involved in issues.

He sees his role as raising morale and boosting worker's conditions saying its all about relationships: with members, colleagues and employers.

"My job is to move people: getting non members into membership, members into activists and activists into leaders. That's my aim – it's my central role.

So far he says his union trip has been wonderful and he's looking forward to what's in store. 

# Hillside, five years on

**A**T the last minute, before the closure of the workshop, some workers at Hillside were given a reprieve and began the next part of their working careers with the Hillside Heavy Lift – part of the Christchurch RSAS facility that was damaged beyond repair in the 2011 earthquake.

The operation was originally set up to undertake loco bogie changes, traction motor changes and anything else that required a 100 tonne crane, plus wagon and repair work.

Within a short space of time it was apparent that the workload would be more varied and interesting than initially thought.

So far they have completed almost 450 loco repairs. These include: traction motor change, bogie swaps, compressor changes, drive train repairs, crash and accident repairs, under frame crack repairs, spigot rebuilds, splash gear changes, generator changes, radiator changes, wheel swaps and bogie rotations. Additionally they have repaired fuel tanks, checked wagon compliance and repaired CC/CE hopper wagons and, latterly, upgraded YL latches, DC cabs and corrosion repairs.

Since Jan 2013 staff numbers have doubled due to the increased workload. The current requirement to undertake the DC cab mount project requires two loco repairers per week who contribute to seven wagons per week shared between the Dunedin depot, the Invercargill depot and Hillside.

The original seven team members are still there with a further seven starting. Fortunately they have been able to recruit some good skilled team members with most having worked at Hillside previously and coming from varied backgrounds including driving tanks, blowing stuff up, peace keeping operational duties in Sarajevo during the war, working on an oil and gas platform off the coast of Is-



(l to r) Peter Buckley (mechanical engineer), Phil Lewis (also below, mechanical engineer and RMTU delegate) and Wayne Butson.

rael, mining in the desert of WA and working at Cerebos Greggs just up the road. They have even poached one from Bradken, the foundry next door.

Antipodean Rail have taken over the old fabrication shop and plan to build luxury passenger trains out of the ex ARTA SA/SD fleet for the tourist market in the North and South Islands. This will give the rail industry a larger footprint in the Dunedin area, boost the local economy and, hopefully, with a sympathetic Labour government, see local Labour MPs remain for the foreseeable future.

All up, Hillside has achieved a good deal of work in the past five years and hopefully is set to increase as other projects require its attention. Prior to Christmas the RSAS management team presented Hillside workers with their proposals for the new super depot concept in Auckland and Christchurch. Part of this also was for Hillside to carry on as present working with the 'lights dimmed'. Needless to say this was very unpopular and hard to understand considering rail freight is quite stable and with some good opportunities for future growth. We would have thought Heavy Lift would be kept as is with the Christchurch depot rebuild going ahead, thereby offering a full service in the South Island for locos and wagons of all descriptions. Also, the largest train on the network travels from Invercargill to Port

Chalmers every day carrying 100% Fonterra product. Apart from the farm gate, Port Otago Limited is rumoured to be looking at an increase in its containerised traffic to Port Chalmers. Further, folk are looking for a larger footprint to create an inland port area and the need for rail to provide a regular shuttle service to Port Chalmers.

So with Hillside's ability to handle most work that comes through the gate and a stable and skilled workforce at hand, it provides more than 'lipstick on a pig' service and should be recognised for this.

It is true it could do with a little money spent on the facility and modernisation of some of its processes, but everyone feels they have accomplished a good deal with not a lot spent.

Speaking with GS Wayne Butson at a debriefing session when he was in Dunedin attending the most recent MCC meeting, he indicated that any development to the disadvantage or downgrading of services at Hillside or the Dunedin depot would not be supported by the RMTU and would be fought against most strongly. Additionally, support from all local MPs show they are committed to seeing Hillside grow

Hopefully good business sense will prevail and Hillside will continue to meet the challenges that lie ahead and reach its potential. Watch this space. 🌐



## RMTU WOMEN

## Lisa Davidson

**Union role and why did you become active in the Union?**

I put my hand up to become a Palmerston North branch delegate, then later RMTU women's rep. I like to be involved helping and supporting not only my fellow work colleagues but all workers across our RMTU industry.

**What does your job entail?**

An electrical safety observer gives their undivided attention to protecting the plant operation inside the minimum approach distance (MAD) areas. No person or plant may approach closer to live electrical equipment reduced minimum approach distance without EF201 Permit to Work from a qualified competent traction ESO.

**Why did you decide to become a safety protector?**

My career path started as a traction ESO for KiwiRail three and half years ago and is focussed on the safety of everyone there and the health of the environment around our industry. This has always been one of my passions even when I first started into the workforce at the age of 16 and a half when I became a long term health and safety rep and worked up to be a health and safety co-ordinator. So naturally every day I am doing out there what I love best.

**What's the best part of your job?**

Being out and about around our beautiful country side every day



keeping my workmates, colleagues, contractors – everyone – happy and safe.

**What's something that bugs you about your job?**

Not having enough ESOs or safety protectors out there on sites in our industry to help Zero Harm and complying with our new Health and Safety act and legislations.

**What (if any) were the barriers to being a safety protector in KiwiRail?**

Learning the electrical overhead infrastructure, sub sections and NIMT geographic access ways – until the penny dropped – thanks to my patient, caring, supportive I&A traction team mentors.

**What piece of advice would you give your 21 year old self?**

Don't be hard on yourself if you cannot help everyone or change the unsafe actions they have done or performed. 🌍

## New face for front desk

**D**ON'T be confused by the Canadian accent when next you phone or come to the Union head office. New to the admin seat is Chelsea Cardy who followed her (ex) boyfriend to New Zealand and liked it so much she stayed. She is now an official resident.



The boyfriend has since departed her immediate scene but has been replaced with a very cute pug puppy – Walter.

Chelsea and her ex met in Perth while both were doing their OE and travelled on together to Thailand for three months and eventually back to New Zealand where she gradually upgraded her visas as she grew more comfortable in the country.

"I love the feeling of community here," she said. "People here are so friendly and helpful. Kiwis are the nicest people in the world!"

She was doubly impressed when her train to the Kapiti was cancelled one day and everyone was 'tipped off' the train at Porirua.

"people came driving by offering us stranded passengers a lift home. I doubt that would have happened in Canada."

Her work path took her first into tourism and hospitality and then to airline flight and travel sales where targets ruled her work life.

She wanted out and her current job at the RMTU came up and fitted like a glove.

"The people here are amazing and the work atmosphere is so much more relaxed," she said. "And folk here care for me. I'm constantly having people thank me for just doing my job. I've never felt more appreciated. Give me more work!"

Her immediate family live in British Columbia and have no immediate plans to visit New Zealand so she is off back home for a holiday later this year. 🌍

# Southdown



*During Rudd Hughes' induction to the Auckland rail branch scene, he spent some time at the Southdown CT site. He also met Caf managers and Transdev training staff where he even got to drive the EMU simulator at the Wiri depot. The photo was taken at Southdown: (l to r) Rudd Hughes (new Northern regional organiser), Warren Makaua, James Collins (CT operators), Wayne Butson (general secretary), Chris Jackman (CT operator) and Bill Sweeney (NMC Auckland and Transdev LE).*

# Solidarity!



*Members of UNITE! join the RMTU for a show of support and solidarity outside the Sky Tower in Auckland on the day of the RMTU strike that halted Auckland passenger trains. UNITE! organises workers at Sky City and is always keen to back fellow working people in their struggles for fairness and justice.*

# Massive Marrakech confere

**I**N November, I was honoured to represent our Union at the ITF (International Transport Workers Federation) Womens Conference held in Marrakech, Morocco.

After 43 hours travel from Wellington I arrived in Marrakech to a warm welcome from delegates from around the world at Hotel Atlas Asni (chosen as it is fully unionised).

I was the only delegate from Aotearoa but I met Jodi Evans who is based in London and is the ITF Women Equality officer originally from Wellington and FINSEC.

The first morning of the conference we had a powhiri, Moroccan style, with a traditional band who played and took us to the conference room.

The Union des Syndicat UMT de Transport thanked the ITF for choosing Marrakech as the venue and welcomed us all to the 'Ochre City'. Ochre is the colour of hope.

There were 242 women present.

We had interpreters and video link ups, plus the conference was live online.

One video showed Nermin Al Sharif (pictured below), a Libyan trade union leader who was put in prison because of her union



work. Through the video she made a very passionate plea for strength among unions and equality for all. She had been released but her passport has been confiscated by the Libyan government so she was unable to attend the conference in person. We have heard since that, in part due to our protests, she has had her passport returned to her.

The speakers were amazing with friendships being renewed and made. It was a paperless conference with everyone using their laptops and phones etc.

Bullying, violence and harassment towards women in the workforce and at home kept rearing its ugly head.

Kalthoun Barhallah, vice chair of ITF Arab Women Transport Workers also gave a passionate speech where she said that Arab women in the work force had grown on every level of ITF, but Arab women have been threatened by every type of harassment including in domestic situations, with violence, rape and deprivation of education. She demanded that gender based violence be stopped.

However, she also said that Morocco had their first ever woman locomotive engineer, Saida Abad and that women were now being allowed to drive cars in Saudi Arabia – both are huge steps.

Our Indian sisters spoke of the violence facing them on buses.

Leanne Sookram from Canada, spoke of domestic violence at home and in the work force with the effects from threats, phone calls at work, and the worries about safety.

She was successful in having an amendment to the Manitoba Violence and Stalking Act enforced in 2016 which includes paid domestic violence leave.

One poster from the Columbian women truck drivers said that a lot of their workers are single parents and that some employers like that as the women are more vulnerable to abuse.

Brigitta, speaking for

ITF President, Paddy Crumlin, said the main focus is to enable gender equality and that equal transparency is vital.

A workshops was held on automation and its effects on women. Wendy Kavolo from Malawi and Baepepe from Botswana both from rail, said that since points had been automated, women were the first to lose their jobs.

Automation can also create insecure white collar work, where workers are segregated, isolated and dispersed with contracts and working from home. Online workers are growing globally led by media and creative work. This form of labour is expanding under neoliberalist philosophies – and they rarely belong to unions.

The growth of Uber came up as casuals and untrained staff are taking jobs from unionised, trained workers around the world.

The Pathway to Congress was represented when we were introduced to the first women sea going captain from the Philippines, along with Renata Cymon who is a crane operator from Poland and Cecelia Ramirez an air traffic controller from Argentina.

I sat with sisters Mich-Elle Myers, a union organiser, Anne Grey a chief steward on a gas tanker and Krista le Graas, a chef on a merchant ship from MUA. We all moved around the room, meeting many avid union members in the workshops.

Appointed women officers on the ITF committee shared their experiences working in male dominated areas.

Many women are outshining men – education wise – and economies need women.

One major point emphasised was: always be kind and respectful to fellow workers.

Women membership within the ITF has grown by 242,000 since 2012.

The next ITF womens conference is in Singapore in October this year where 2500 delegates are expected.

All 242 of us were taken to dinner at a restaurant, Dar El Difah, inside the Medina in a beautiful old building. We were mostly transported there by horse drawn carriages. A band welcomed us and played throughout

# ence a lifetime experience

dinner which was served on huge platters at every table with about five courses of traditional delicious cuisine. There was much dancing and laughter after the dinner.

The people of Marrakech were so welcoming and friendly. I will always remember being woken up by the mullah's call for early morning prayer.

Marrakech has so much history. We walked past the Royal Palace, a 12th century mosque, the gardens and the ancient Medina where so many businesses thrive as they have for centuries. These memories will remain with me forever. So many enterprising people with the Watermen in their colourful robes with their brass cups selling water for just a few dirhams. The taxi ride through the narrow streets in the Medina with workers on horseback, in carts, with donkeys and moving at the last second as we went through was certainly an experience. And the snake charmers with their cobras where I watched from a safe distance. We could have travelled around the city by bus, taxi, horse and carriage with camel rides in the park nearest our hotel.

The souk food markets, which have been run by families for generations and open at 6 at night and cater for thousands of people out for their dinner.

Many, many thanks to the RMTU Womens Committee for allowing me the wonderful opportunity of attending this truly inspiring conference and the ITF for all the planning and logistics in making the conference such a success. 🌍

Naku noa

Christine Fisihoi, Wellington branch.



(l to r) Anne Grey, Krista Le Graas, (both from MUA), Kelly Budden (Buses Newcastle, TWU, NSW) and Christine Fisihoi (RMTU).



Sisters from Nigeria, Malawi and Botswana.



(L to r) Ria (ITF London) and Leanne Sookram (Manitoba).



Wendy Kavalo (Malawi Rail) and Christine.

# CAPTION COMPETITION

Entries close **15 MAY 2018**.

Winner will be contacted and name and entry published in the **JUNE 2018** issue of *The Transport Worker*.

Entries should be sent to [admin@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:admin@rmtunion.org.nz)

or

[office@rmtunion.org.nz](mailto:office@rmtunion.org.nz)

Make up an appropriate (or possibly inappropriate) caption for this photo of health and safety organiser Karen Fletcher testing SCSR breathing apparatus and win a Union jacket.

**WIN a Union jacket**



## \$1,500 AD&D

All members of RMTU are now covered by a \$1,500 Accidental Death & Dismemberment Benefit, including \$500 spouse coverage and a further \$500 coverage on dependent children. This is an automatic membership benefit of belonging to the RMTU.

Members also have the option to increase their coverage an additional \$10,000 which costs just \$2 for the first year. Please reply on line at [ailnz.co.nz/request](http://ailnz.co.nz/request) to have an AIL representative deliver your certificate of coverage and explain the additional insurance coverage available. This is very important to you and your family.

Please note: To qualify for the \$10,000 of additional ADB coverage, an AIL representative must visit you, obtain an enrollment form and collect premium for the first year. You may renew annually thereafter for \$5.



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A.M. Best, one of the oldest and most respected insurance ratings companies, has rated American Income Life as A+ (Superior) for overall Financial Strength (as of 6/15).

# Global support grouping



*French transport union delegates from CGT, pledge solidarity with our struggle with Transdev with Wayne and Bill flanking them.*

**T**HE RMTU is affiliated to the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), the largest and most effective global union federation representing more than 6.5 million transport workers in almost every country.

The RMTU is affiliated to the road, rail, dockers, inland navigation and tourism sections.

The urban transport group straddles the rail, road and inland navigations sections and Wayne Butson and Bill Sweeney were at its February meeting in London.

This group is key to the ITF campaign

called 'Our public transport' and a key agenda item at this meeting was 'building union networks amongst global multi national transport operators'.

Given the current difficulties that a number of affiliates (including the RMTU) are having with anti-union aggression from multi-national companies like Transdev the item is topical so a decision was made to attend.

The RMTU knows the value of inter union, international solidarity from its experience when Toll purchased Tranz Rail in 2004 when it reached out to its Australian

colleagues in the RTBU, TWU and MUA to assist in resisting Toll aggression.

The RMTU attended this meeting with the key goal of seeking to develop a Transdev group and of achieving international support for the struggles in Auckland and Wellington.

The meeting resolved to form a Transdev group and for three other companies and the RMTU's fight against Transdev is now being globalised.

Anti-union Transdev would be well advised to begin to treat the RMTU with mutual respect and honesty. 🇳🇿

## AROUND THE BRANCHES

### NORTHLAND RAIL

**K**IA ORA, it is a rather upbeat Northland rail branch reporting. The game changed when NZ First leader Winston Peters uttered the words: "We chose Labour".

As part of that coalition arrangement we are overjoyed at the prospect of an \$800m investment in Northland rail, including the building of a rail spur to North Port (Marsden Point) New Zealand's ONLY natural deep water port, north Auckland line tunnel work and a full upgrade of the NAL.

There is a lesson here: 'never give up the fight' as this branch did through the

Grow Northland Rail campaign. Much kudos goes to our number one political activist Alby Barr.

After the new Government's first 100 days in office we are seeing changes up here as illustrated by the makeover of bridge 179 in Whangarei central. Old rotting sleepers, a wobbly wooden walkway, an ugly rusted crash beam, all the cause of many complaints in the vein of "it's a \*\*\*\*\* eyesore". This author tells those people, mostly Tories, that bridge 179 reminds him of that other mainstream political party.

Looking tired, spent, nothing fresh – a change was needed. Now look at the bridge gleaming in the summer sun – strong,

sturdy, a freshness one cannot mistake. Just like our new Government!

Speaking of the first 100 days, we still wait to hear the drum beat which signals the emergence of the firing squad for the KiwiRail board.

These monied Tories have wandered around boardrooms throughout the nation, dismantling and wrecking, causing havoc to the lives of the working class!

At the grass roots of Northland's I&A we have a new addition in the form of Parata Paraone who is making his way home after distressing the length of the country, a few times over one would imagine.

He brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience to help with moving

◀ along the big chunks of work that should be approaching over the horizon. The branch welcomes him.

Big thanks to our members for the hard work over the holiday season completing heat inspections, attending to 155 call outs and lending a hand at the Auckland block of line.

It's never easy work and the 'skeleton' crew we have of 13–15 from Waitakere to Otiria has always been light on the ground, but we continue to do our best to keep the trains on track.

Some recent 10 year anniversaries and a 20 year anniversary are testament to the hard work ethic and loyalty of the crew up here in the north.

Let's hope 2018 is indeed a year of great change and growth for rail in Northland. In unity. 🌐

*Bridge 179 gleaming in  
the summer sun*



# SAFEGUARD AWARDS

## *Nomination time*

The RMTU has an awesome track record at winning these Awards. Last year RMTU LE delegate Danny Kent took home the Judges Special Commendation Award for using the RMTU Red Card tackling whole body vibration in DC locos.

The year before Laurie Collins, RMTU delegate at Lyttelton Port, won the top award for stopping unsafe work at the port.

The RMTU nominates people who have stood up for the health and safety of their workmates. Standing up and challenging unsafe work takes courage and deserves to be acknowledged. This is our opportunity to nominate members, delegates and H&S reps who have made a stand for safety and acknowledge the great work they do.



**Who do you pick for 2018?**

**Nominations close on 4 April  
2018**

**Entry details on the Safeguard  
website at:**

**<http://bit.ly/2EGiJwV>**

*The winner of last year's award, Danny Kent flanked  
by his daughter and South Island organiser John Kerr.*

## AUCKLAND RAIL

**W**E start on a sad note: we lost one of our staunchest stalwarts, Ani Te Namu, in late November last year. The service was held on the Pukekohe marae and she was buried on Taupiri Mountain. It was very sudden and we were all shocked.

There have been a few changes in the branch. We now have a new branch secretary, Leighton Mosese, one of our junior drivers and he has taken to the role energetically.

We also welcome our new union organiser in Auckland, Rudd Hughes, to our branch. He started with us 5/2/18. Rudd has come from First Union, Auckland (see page 10 for a profile). We farewelled Stuart Johnston who, for personal reasons, left last year for Dunedin. He is working for the Dairy Workers Union.

I see Spark have a new poster girl in

Yolanda Krueger, the only female LE at Westfield. You look pretty impressive on the big screens in Britomart. Way to go Yolanda!

We are still battling Transdev over the collective agreement. We had one strike on 8/12/17 where no Metro trains ran on that day. We had a full stop work meeting 19/12/17 in Britomart, where no Metro trains ran for two hours. The Employer is still refusing to budge. The main sticking points are:

- Driver only operation. This would leave the driver solely responsible for operating all aspects of the train and managing the customers. We believe that this would be a dangerous and unsafe practice for the public as the Auckland network is not designed for driver only.

- Fair and reasonable wage increase: The employer has only offered us a 1.99% wage rise. Living in Auckland that is just

not enough and will not cut the mustard.

- We have asked for an increase in sick days from 6.5 days pa to 10 days p.a. The employer has categorically said no.

Auckland Metro passenger numbers are growing at a rapid rate with over 20 million passenger journeys last year. The new city rail loop is well under way and Auckland Transport have placed an order for 15 more three car sets from CAF.

KiwiRail freight volumes are holding fairly steady with an average of 13 Metro Port trains per day between Auckland and Tauranga. Obviously, we will be keen to get our hands on the \$800 million to upgrade the North Auckland line from Auckland up to Marsden Point. Who knows how many Metro Port trains will be plying that route in the future. KiwiRail have spent some money at the CT site at Southdown with nice new big yellow Hyster reach stackers.

Cheerio from the bigger, better, brighter office of the Auckland branch. 🌐

## WAIKATO RAIL

**W**E are having a mighty battle over LE rosters in Te Rapa and it would seem we are heading for a health and safety dispute as KiwiRail's proposed roster does not take into account accumulative fatigue, sufficient time off and work life balance. It is sheer penny pinching by KiwiRail and there seems to be a complete lack of good faith shown by them in dealing with the roster delegates.

As such the Te Rapa members are considering serving either a PIN notice or issuing a Red Card over the proposed roster. In other words the union members have had enough.

We are working through the outcome of job changes at the Te Rapa mechanical depot, which is affecting one of our members, and Tommy Rusher the long-time Te Rapa mechanical manager has moved on from KiwiRail.

We are dealing with another SPAD with

the help of Steve Peacock the Waikato rail branch chair, and hopefully resolving it under the Just and Fair Culture policy.

There are a number of vacancies on the branch executive which will be filled at a special branch meeting in February.

The five new networks delegates from the Waikato and the BOP – Rowan Hodgson, Eric Hayward, Chris McMillan, Conrad Wright and Moses Moana – will be attending their first training in February. 🌐

## BAY OF PLENTY PORT

**T**HE local industrial council of the Waikato/BOP met in The Mount union rooms Monday February 12. This meeting had a full representation of RMTU delegates from Te Rapa, Kinleith, Mount Maunganui, Kawerau and Murupara, but there was a weak turn out from the managers, with Mark Heisenbuttel, Harvey Stoneham, Simon Hughes, Christine Law

and Simon Prevent giving their apologies.

With the above managers missing there was a call from the delegates to postpone the meeting as it would become a talk fest as issues from previous meetings could not be reported on as being cleared or being dealt with from the previous minutes.

However it was decided to carry on and that all issues that the missing managers had to deal with would be passed onto them to

respond to the LIC members prior to the next KIC meeting.

Some new issues covered were: staff shortages in Kawerau leading to two-man shifts (normally three), the payment of T/L rates, roster issues for both yard and loco staff, piloting from vehicles and piloting on DLs.

The issue of two man gangs has been a thorny issue in the Kawerau yard, as a number of members were off work for sickness and suspension and then to top

it off KiwiRail insisted on getting everyone to take annual leave. This resulted in two man crews. The crews were told to only do what was safe, but that did not take into account the wrath of customers when trains were delayed. They received the brunt of customers' ire.

We are getting prepared for the following working parties as a result of the settlement of the POTL collective agreement: the Fatigue in the Workplace working party, the moving of the shore side crane working party, the electrician's roster and hours of work working party and the rewrite of the C/A working party. These will take some time to conclude so should be able to report back on them later in the year.

We are back into the C3 issues left over from last year, they being the log marshalling tier 3A variation, the move of the crane casuals to permanency, the career progression to the cranes, the lashers' variation to move back into the main C/A (which looks like falling over due to a lack of a bona fide wage increase), the initiation of bargaining for a C/A for the C3 truck drivers as C3 have rejected their move into the main C/A, the call out issue for the two Sulphur Point me-



*Waikato/BOP LIC meeting 12th FEB 2018. (l to r) Steve Peacock [Waikato], Phil Spanswick, Anton Moses, Riki Simmons [both Kawerau], Jackie Ransfield [Murupara], Willy Dashwood [Waikato], Theo De Bruyn [LOM, Mount Maunganui], Hamish Paton [Waikato], Lewis Lind [TOM, Mount Maunganui], Russell Gordon [KiwiRail H&S], Josh Goodwin [Mount Maunganui], Darrell Edwards [Kinleith] and Tim Peebles [Mount Maunganui].*

chanics who work 4x4s but do not want to be on call on their 4th and last day of work, and the unjustified dismissal of one of the crane drivers. Delegates will be working overtime on the list until they are resolved.

We have had three failed D&A tests recently and it seems some union members are not taking the agreed KiwiRail/RMTU D&A policy seriously, and it is clear that some KiwiRail managers do not understand the policy either. We have been promised

that training will be given to all managers in the KiwiRail/RMTU D&A policy. So we will wait and see if training is provided.

There are two new workers on the way and thankfully they are fully trained and are good to go. Also talked about was this year's Workers Memorial Day which we decided would focus at Te Rapa on April 28, 2018, with a commitment to working with KiwiRail members in Kinleith for the Memorial Day in 2019. 🇳🇿

## NAPIER PORT

**W**ITH our new collective signed and sealed, we believe we achieved a big part of our goal to look after the members who are paid the least and those who work without a fixed roster.

The inevitable glitches are also coming to the surface. Fortunately these little kinks are being ironed out as we go. The biggest 'little' kink of the new collective is rewarding the heavy plant operators who don't have the luxury of a fixed roster and lead a very itinerant family life at times. Getting this structure and selection process carries 'work in progress' as we work with the company to iron out the 3 tiered selection criteria.

Napier Port still runs a very seasonal operational. Due to the high skill level required, the manning levels for the 'busy season' [as it is coined] is maintained year round with a small crew of seasonal members on top.

are being commissioned this month and are welcome additions to the fleet. New reefer towers are in the final assembling stage, our Navis software has had the latest update installed and numerous roadways are being re-laid.

All these preparations for the 'busy season' are coming to an end as we brace for the deluge of Squash and Apples. This is the period where we pay the bills for the whole year.

The busy season also brings with it stresses and issues.

Health and Safety is a big part of Napier Port's daily culture. The company this week have launched a 'Season Wellbeing' campaign to assist. A wellbeing pack containing a chilly bag [to keep our marmite sandwiches cool?], packed with a wellbeing brochure, a Napier Port branded water bottle [nice quality I might add], a clip on sunscreen and a stress-ball hardhat [Napier

Port branded of course!].

Napier Port's on-site clinical nurse, will visit each department. The focus being, protecting against workplace fatigue and stress, healthy eating and keeping hydrated, being sun smart and skin smart, protecting against heat stress and point us in the right direction to lead a healthy lifestyle.

This initiative addresses some of the many issues that arise from working in a 24/7 environment. With a typical hot Hawkes Bay summer making sleep for afternoon and midnight shift operators even more difficult, the onus is on the individual to hold their hand up if they are feeling stressed or fatigued.

As previously stated health and safety is a big part of Napier Port's daily culture. A few of our members have been disciplined for breaching some of our policies and procedures. This is a timely reminder to all members to stop and ensure that your actions are always safe.

Take care of yourself and your work mate. 🇳🇿

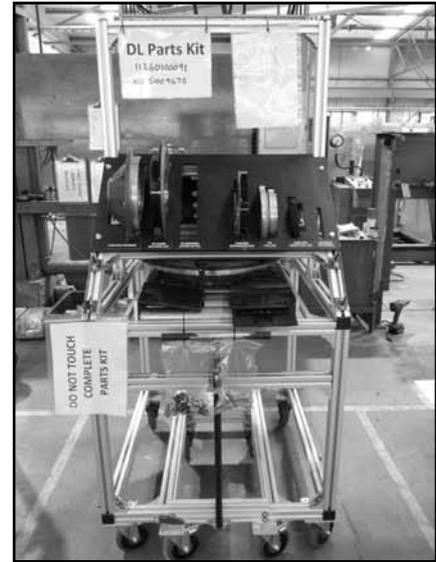
## HUTT WORKSHOPS

**H**ELLO to all and we hope you had a well-earned break with your families over Christmas. The new government has been in power for the 'magical' 100 days and the media has reported this accordingly. It's interesting to note that right-wingers (read whingers) like Mike Hosking and Larry Williams, make no bones about being miffed at the election result. They have conveniently forgotten that MMP generally drives political parties to form alliances and sign-up to deals. Labour, NZ First and the Greens have done exactly that and now they're putting that into effect. The closing date for these notes coincided with the opening of Parliament so you should've seen some examples of those alliances in action! The recent media release in January indicating a rebalancing of employment law was most welcome.

Another decision that will be welcomed will be the KiwiRail Board signing-off on some much needed investment at Hutt Workshops. At the time of writing a mid-February date was being rumoured for them to visit the site before convening their formal meeting. We hope to bring you a favourable update in the next issue.

At the time of writing there have been no LCC meetings scheduled (yet) for the year – for us the year required a 'safe start' and the return of key personnel from extended leave. This is also indicative of the very good morale and industrial stability that we have on site including a functional health and safety action team. Working through issues in the spirit of HPHE delivers results and we're glad to be at the forefront of this continuing achievement. Reading the branch notes in past issues indicates some branches are dealing with parties who do not subscribe to the company values and this is somewhat concerning given the enormous investment the company has made in 'lifting the bar' of communication and mutual respect across many levels.

The T/L vacancies mentioned in the December notes have finally been filled by Kurt Millikin, Rhys Lowe and Bernie Hunt. These appointees have filled gaps created by two resignations and a retirement. We now need to focus on those rank and file staff vacancies created by similar natural attrition over the last two years or so as we have a number



*Sample homebuilt kit parts trolley under development.*



*Fire warden's but.*



*The demolition site looking east.*



*The front entrance with cellphone tower, security lighting, cameras and the memorial garden with flags flying in the breeze.*

of skills' deficiencies which creates a great deal of business risk.

Our apprentice of the year for 2017 was Anthony Higgison. Anthony was chosen out of a group of high flyers that we're lucky to have on site. Additionally, we selected Connery McGarvey-Teohaere and Jarrad Denbee from our pool of candidates to become our next injection of new apprentices. We wish them well in their training ▶



*The new evacuation tally board.*

and advancement.

The official heat wave that we've been experiencing over summer has led to management supplying ice blocks on occasion to assist with additional rest and hydration breaks. This is most welcome and appreciated as part of our 'care and protect' value. Such simple initiatives go some way to fostering and enhancing a close-knit working environment. In an act of twisted irony, the first of February saw us experiencing the continuing heat and humidity but with storm-force gales and rain!

Our former health clinic/ambulance

garage/telephone exchange building has finally been demolished to make way for the new rail weld facility.

To end, we farewell Allan Cameron who has retired from KiwiRail after a colourful 46 year career. Alan was one of four planners at Hutt who was well respected amongst his peers and an active contributor within the Hutt HPHE steering committee from its inception in late 2015. Allan was presented with a 'Certificate of Appreciation' from the RMTU and a gift card from the branch. Thank you for your service and support Al. 🇳🇿



*Allan Cameron reflecting on his 46+ years' service.*

## WELLINGTON RAIL

**K**IA ORA brothers and sisters. So 2017 was a year of ups and downs for our Transdev/Rotem union members as well as our colleagues at KiwiRail and on the buses.

However, we stood fast – as one – when our employers wanted change: change to the collective agreement that our fellow workers before us fought long and hard to maintain. These are the rights we have now.

Last year was my first year of really getting involved as a union delegate, as a bargaining team member, on the strike committee, as well as a voice for my fellow co-workers. A year that has given me the chance to use my voice as a tool to stand up against anyone and everyone who would undermine, bully, or harass any worker.

I thank you for standing stronger together. I thank you for your voice, as this has made me grow and want to fight the good fight for our members.

But it's 2018 and we still have a fair way to go to keep what is rightfully ours. I, and many others like me, will continue to stand against any corporate, company, executive, or manager determined to take away what is ours. 🇳🇿



## NELSON PORT

**S**ADLY for the Nelson branch 2017 ended with the loss of our long time brother, branch president Peter Hoff on November 15. Pete joined the Union on 9 December 1981, so yes that is 36 years as a member and employee at Port Nelson. He will be sorely missed by many whose cause he championed. We will miss his knowledge and the history that goes with him. There are now only a handful of the old guard around who remember the times of the port reforms and all the drama

that went with it. He was great for being able to put into context a lot of the things we have fought for and gained over the years. He will be missed.

In 'Hoffy's' absence Allan Addison-Saipe has been elected the new branch president with Anne Wells taking over as secretary. The show must go on.

We are in a non-negotiating year but there is still plenty of work to be done as we continue with a process of consultative meetings to monitor and input to some ongoing issues that we raised during negotiations. With the company offering to

implement pilot schemes for 'indicative scheduling' and RDOs for cargo handlers. With the hope being that we can embed a roster and give these people some certainty and regularity to help gain some life balance.

We continue to campaign on behalf of the most vulnerable of employees, the casuals, as although we have managed to get more moved to permanent contracts we have around 50% of members still on casual contracts.

The branch has a good working rapport with the company which is highlighted by their willingness to increase consultation

with the branch. With the commencement of monthly meetings with the branch executive it will give us more opportunity to bring up issues in a more timely manner and hopefully to address the issues. It signals a significant change in our relationship and signals the company's willingness to improve conditions.

Membership continues to grow in the branch slowly as we recognise the value of density and the bargaining power that brings to us.

We hope to have another positive year in Nelson as the company continues to grow, adding another weekly container service from 24 February, it looks like another busy

year for the port. We continue to support the wine industry; log volumes look buoyant and the port continues to expand and develop.

All this creates a positive environment for change and helps us to get a better deal for our members. 🌐

## PORT LYTTELTON

**A**T the time of writing industrial relations on the Lyttelton waterfront are at a crossroads. We have been in bargaining for our main collective agreement, that covers all members (with the exception of logistics officers (planners in other ports) and those at our inland port in Woolston, City Depot) since July and matters are coming to a head.

As your scribe taps out these notes we have had 20 (yes, you read that right) meet-

ings with management and the vast bulk of these have been spent discussing management's desire for changes to hours of work clauses and rosters in our collective agreement.

We're not philosophically opposed to these changes – we recognise that the port has grown and become busier since these provisions were negotiated over 15 years ago and that the trend is set to continue. What we struggle with is that management are demanding these changes but don't seem to want to pay a reasonable price

for them, nor are they coherent in their approach. Any changes to hours of work, particularly in the container terminal is going to have a major impact on fatigue management, yet the health and safety managers don't seem to be involved in any aspect of the discussions!

To cut a long story short we are at the point where we are balloting on industrial action as the employer tabled such a low pay offer to members that they feel alienated and have said that all change is off the table for this bargaining round. The level of frustration on our side of the table is beyond ▶

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◀ belief. Pig-headed positional bargaining by the boss has created a potential conflict when in a mature employment relationship we would have sorted this out during the term of the collective and the negotiations would have been a mere formality.

Our logistics officers are also in bargaining and by our third meeting it looked like groundhog day – more demands for change and an unwillingness to pay for it. Something we said must have worked however and we actually started meaningful negotiations. By the time you read this we will hopefully have reached a deal.

Management have convened a Fatigue Management Working Group that our national health and safety organiser, Karen Fletcher, attended alongside key officials and delegates from all the waterfront unions. We need to keep momentum on this important issue. The report and recom-

mendations of this group will impact on all areas of operation, especially rosters, and while RMTU is pleased that LPC has finally recognised the risk and wants to work with us to do something about it we fear that the silo effect and lack of impetus may discredit the project.

Next to this we've had a plethora of individual and collective issues that, whilst they are not enough by themselves to wreck the relationship between our union and employer, taken together they are making things very tense.

There does seem to be a tendency to haul members in front of management for investigation meetings on health and safety and operational issues. For example, we went through a completely unnecessary drama over alleged discrepancies between rostered and worked straddle drive times when it transpired the issues were systemic.

This was repeated over a purported failure to follow standard operating procedures after a prior investigation by health and safety managers had concluded the issue was largely systemic failure.

Finally, what's really winding up our members is that we have a chief executive who is paid the thick end of a million dollars as a reward for his so-called 'performance' when the above is going on! Layers of management that apparently don't communicate with one another insulate this individual from the front-line work. Anyone would think he was running a major global multi-national employing thousands of people across several continents instead of a relatively small regional port that employs a few hundred employees. We think it's time he got out from behind that desk and started listening to the rank and file staff. 🇺🇸

## CANTERBUY RAIL

**W**E had a pretty frantic end to 2017. In network services there was a run of bad luck that saw one of our member's truck hit side on while commuting to work. He ended up hospitalised with injuries caused by his seatbelt but is making a full recovery. If he hadn't been wearing a belt the injuries would have been far worse and he may well have not lived to tell the tale. As if that wasn't enough, one of our communications technicians was struck down with pneumonia and whilst this used to be called 'the old man's friend' for those languishing at death's door he didn't think

he was quite that old yet. Thankfully, he's back at work and has got his legendary appetite back.

Over in freight we've also had a pretty torrid time on the health and safety front. There's been a whole saga involving the introduction of compressed air breathing apparatus (CABA) for members driving locos in the Otira tunnel that almost led to the tunnel being shut when, literally, at the 11th hour before a Worksafe improvement notice had to be complied with, a certain project manager unilaterally changed the rules and told us CABA would only be issued to locomotive engineers running uphill in the

tunnel. We ended up on a teleconference at 2200 one night as the clock ticked towards expiry of the improvement notice. The issue was resolved but the whole drama was, and is, completely unnecessary. Our network members have experienced problems with members of the project management office in the past, namely around a disregard for the contracting-out provisions in the MECA, which seems to have been sorted after dialogue and training. This particular individual however, seems to have something of an attitude that can only be described as gung-ho and it's not helpful. We understand that senior management are as ticked off as we are. Good!

Our service centre members have shifted out to palatial new offices on Ensors Road near the site of the old Linwood loco depot – a victim of the earthquakes. There is ample car parking and they are safe from truck and forklift movements that their previous location in the Toll building on Matipo Street exposed them to. The difference in morale is remarkable – any visitor can see and feel it immediately on entering the building. So, credit where it's due to management for making the right decision and to our members, delegates and health and safety representatives for advocating that something be done. Now we just need



RMTU president Aubrey Wilkinson presenting certificates to (l) Brad Roberts and Brian Watkins at the Canterbury joint meeting.

◀ KiwiRail to give our RMTU organiser an office in there.

Our passenger members are doing fine work on the TranzAlpine, which is getting an increasing amount of global media coverage as one of the outstanding railway journeys on the planet. Passenger are the unsung heroes and heroines of rail in the South Island. They have been through the

tremendous disruption caused by earthquakes. They have also impacted on all our members who have put on happy faces day after day dealing with customers from all over the world.

And finally our mechanical members at Addington and Middleton. Our general secretary once said that "When you join rail you join a family". Sometimes we're a

pretty dysfunctional family but we do stick together and back one another. The other day our organiser visited Middleton and had a cuppa with the lads and commented that not only was the tea first class, the sense of camaraderie was superb. That is something that has got us through everything nature has thrown at us these past few years and we shouldn't lose sight of it. 🌐

## WEST COAST RAIL

**A**T the time of writing KiwiRail is grappling with the use of Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus (CABA) issue in the Otira tunnel while it is trying to sort out the many issues that have become apparent in the roll out of this critical safety system. Our brothers and sisters over the hill in Canterbury will doubtless report this in their branch notes.

The Otira tunnel, in the new world of health and safety corporate accountability has become a monster which has cost the company mega dollars and has been a steep learning curve for the people that have to be trained to operate in this environment.

Hopefully by the time you are reading this KiwiRail will have got all their ducks in a row as it has been a difficult roll out with the finishing line moved out as problems surface.

Whatever way the company decides it is going to need more resources to satisfy health and safety requirements. And that's fine by us as we're not putting a price on our right to go home at the end of our shift.

Since Solid Energy sold up and new operators have taken over, coal traffic in

this part of the world is on the increase, with coal being transported

to locations that have not seen traffic for a long time. This is great news for us in the transport industry and the future is looking a bit more secure.

While we have a new government in power there is dismay in this part of the world at the new government's apparent anti-mining stance. In Buller there is a new mine ready to proceed, but the Conservation Minister has put a veto on it. This mine would be a major employer and user of rail getting the product to port so this decision is very unwelcome as the Buller region really needs this to move forward. Whether you like coal or not, it will come from somewhere and be used so it may as well be us getting the jobs and our country the export revenue. The fact is there is no substitute for the high grade, clean burning coal we produce in the manufacture of steel. Moreover, jobs in tourism and hospitality are precarious and poorly paid in contrast to those associated with the mining industry. A combination of the Greens and New Zealand First, with their commitments to the environment and regional development

respectively, really need to get their act together on this one.

In other news, after a well-deserved Christmas break our track gangs came back to drought conditions (yes, you read that right – drought on the West Coast) with daily heat runs on all main lines taking up most of the boys' time and then to top it off we copped the tail end of a cyclone last Thursday leaving extensive damage from Haast to Karamea and inland to Arthur's Pass.

We worked flat out with all teams removing downed trees, unblocking culverts and repairing downed wires enabling the lines to reopen that same evening – a great effort guys and well done. A special mention to the signals guys who worked right through the weekend and Waitangi day. This is the kind of thing we do well and it is a reflection of the commitment and good will of our members but take pride in our railway.

Finally, we're hearing that Lyttelton Port members are heading into strife along with our comrades in Wellington and Auckland passenger services: stay strong brothers and sisters – the cradle of the New Zealand trade union movement is on your side! 🌐

## TIMARU RAIL

**T**IMARU is once again sweltering in the summer heat. At the time of writing it's a year ago that when driving up to Christchurch on the MSL we could see a column of black smoke that heralded the Port Hills fire. Our track gangs have been busy doing heat runs and we're all hoping that there is no repetition of that fire which shut the Midland line.

That hasn't stopped the lads working on the Timaru yard with consequent improve-

ments in yard conditions. Well done guys, and thanks from your fellow members.

Operations are temporarily short staffed. We are down one rail operator and have two staff in training for more senior roles. James Turnbull is away in Te Rapa for remote control operator training and Bernard Fox is currently training to be an

acting team leader. By the time you read this we expect them both to have passed with flying colours.

The ROs here are looking forward to their first pay in March with a wage increase and back-pay after the ratification process for the Pay Scale 7 amendments. Well done to all involved.

Stay safe and solidarity with our comrades in Auckland, Wellington and Lyttelton! 🌐

## OTAGO RAIL

**H**APPY new year from all at Otago Rail Branch. There has been a big increase in workload at Dunedin mechanical depot and Hillside, with staff numbers doubled at Hillside since 2013. Great to see workmates back, most of the new staff are ex-Hillsideers now on fixed term contracts.

You may recall recent news of a luxury passenger train being planned by a private operator, intending to use the Hillside site for carriage refurbishment and maintenance. Well, an outfit called "Antipodean Rail" have taken over the former Fabrication Shop at Hillside and have purchased a number of former ARTA SA and SD carriages to be converted into luxury units for regular journeys in the North Island and the South Island. They have contracted Dunedin Railways for the mechanical work and Hillside staff will operate the shunting and delivery of the carriages, so those parts at least will be done by RMTU members.

On the loco side, another hot summer here sees the DC fleet back to reduced power due to risk of exhaust sparks starting trackside fires. Not great on the hills with heavy trains, and increased chance of stallings if the weather turns while still under the reduced power regime.

Continued thanks goes to the Hillside team for their work on the South Island DC fleet. A tidy up of cabs and rust removal is really positive and something not seen in these parts for many years. Stage two is about to begin which will include the original windows being replaced with the newer type. We also recognise the good work put in by Danny Kent (Invercargill) and Mike Kilsby (Dunedin) in bringing the issue of DC condition to the attention of KiwiRail management, and the help and

support given by our KIC rep. Mike Williams.

This combined work along with other things has seen a united Southland Rail branch and Otago Rail branch, with both branches working together on a number of issues.

A new loco (to us), DXR 8022, turned up in Dunedin recently, DXR running rights now extending to Invercargill. So with DXR 8007s release from Hutt workshops in the near future, the Otago LE team is wondering if it will get to smell new paint?

They are hoping (against history) that the deep south is not forgotten territory when it comes to newly overhauled locomotives.

Loco rosters are looming as a cause for concern, the master train plan and train crossings from that not helping. With late running, shifts can be extended by a number of hours, sometimes with no relief in sight. Other depots will relate.

Roster delegate Graham Fahey has been working on a new roster, focusing on the number of rostered shifts in a row, as well as trying to improve placement of night and weekend work.

Of course this is very difficult to improve with fixed jobs and staff levels, which have reduced by one to two LEs. KiwiRail reports the depot to be overstaffed by two, which is clearly rubbish when people told to take leave are then approached to return from holiday to cover jobs that can't be filled! Staffing levels for safe rostering is a real issue, not just here of course, and this branch plans to use the same united approach mentioned earlier to address this.

Now away from the tracks and into the community, RMTU Otago branch is part of Unions Otago, the local affiliates council of New Zealand CTU. Unions Otago meets regularly and co-ordinates local union activities such as fighting cutbacks at the

Otago University Humanities department and the ongoing struggle for fair pay and collective bargaining at the centre city New World, to name just a couple. Their latest activity was running an information stall at the "Thieves Alley" market day held in Dunedin on 10 Feb. This was very successful, and was used to raise the profile of unions in the community, talk about workers' rights, and put some in touch with their relevant union etc.

Our branch has been in touch with Dunedin based government ministers Clare Curran and David Clark following the general election result, and have now been approached to meet with David Clark on 23 Feb. This will be a good opportunity to raise some issues for him to take on board, and pass on to the relevant transport and SOE ministers, such as the future of Hillside. It is Labour Party policy to re-open these works. Also the re-instatement of the double line between Mosgiel and Port Chalmers.

Port Otago has signalled its intention to rail all freight into the port instead of trucks on SH88, this would greatly increase shunting services, and the Dunedin railways cruise ship traffic is only going to get busier.

Retention and expansion of NIMT electrification is another issue. This is a no-brainer as we all know, sad that KiwiRail is so un-ambitious, preaching about saving diesel while scrapping electrics

Finally, getting rid of driver only operation plans at Transdev and keeping safe staffing levels will require strong political will and funding, which is just what we are demanding. It may also require the removal of some Tory-appointed board members to be replaced by others with a worker and safety focus rather than just commercial short-sightedness.

Until next time, keep safe and keep fighting for your rights. 

## PORT CHALMERS

**I**T has been a really busy season so far and everyone is getting tired. Fatigue has been raised on numerous occasions and we await any positive response.

On one occasion, a worker raised an issue of feeling fatigued after working in excess of 80 hours for the week and they are now working eight hour days and not being offered any OT. Says it all really.

We do have a handpicked 'roster project team' looking at how we can do things better but I don't imagine that we will see anything from them for a number of months.

With the new CEO, Kevin Winders settled in, a new strategic plan is in play and there are a lot of plans on the table. First one

that comes to mind is the restructuring of the company's health and safety committee. This could mean up to 30 staff in the mix with a member of the board and a Work Safe member sitting in each time. Will be interesting. Watch this space.

One of the first health and safety projects that have been put on the table is Project Orange – keeping the worker safe and seen. Project Orange plans to get all staff into the same clothing, to be smart and be seen. All the clothing is to be off the shelf and hi-vis orange. The CEO has set the testing to be complete by March 2018. Five months start to finish.

Over the last four months the port environment has been busy with cruise ships, container ship delays, weather Gods and the wharf extension.

Talking about the wharf extension here is an extract from Port Otago's e-Bulletin (issue 8)

"The Board of Port Otago (POL) has approved the \$21 million extension of the multi-purpose wharf which will add 140m to the existing multipurpose structure. Marine specialist HEB Construction has been appointed as the contractor and will be on site from September 2017.

During construction, there will be some



volume constraints with reduced storage space in the terminal as J block and the northern third of K block will be used by the contractor to build the extension. Storage will therefore need to be managed carefully. There are several options under consideration including more intensive utilisation of Port Chalmers wash/pre-trip inspection facilities and utilising POL's off-wharf depot South Freight more.

Due for completion by end 2018, the extension will cater for new generation container vessels."

South freight's yard and office, smoko room and toilet upgrade have just been completed and staff have now moved in.

This is great news for the staff as they have been working out of portacom's for the last seven years. The yard also has now got that smooth black stuff (asphalt) all over it. Up until now most of the storage and road way areas have been gravel. No more dust.

We send solidarity to our brothers and sisters in Lyttelton as they continue their fight to reach a settlement to their CEA.

We were saddened to hear of the resignation of Kaisia Beech, but really happy that she is following her dreams and we wish her well for her new adventures!

Stay safe out there, if it's not safe don't do it. 🌐

## SOUTHLAND RAIL

**K**IA ORA from the deep south. Please join us in celebrating an outstanding achievement for the new year. At the time of writing, we've had nine days, where there were no late trains into Invercargill. And on the tenth day – it all went wrong.

I know, there will be the sceptics out there pouring scorn upon this significant milestone, and yes, some of those days were public holidays when trains didn't run, which means that trains only actually ran on time for fewer than nine days, but we are a positive bunch here, so let's not have any of this negativity. We are proud of our achievement, and we are looking forward to equalling, if not improving on it, this time next year.

Aside from this we've been dealing with all the challenges that former tropical

cyclones throw at us by way of floods and an unprecedented heatwave that has had the locals sweating in historically high temperatures up to 32 degrees.

The track members have been working hard ensuring the railway is safe to run on and our freight members were adamant they were not going to drive trains in situations where they might need rescuing. Sometimes we have to be the ones who take the initiative in looking after our well-being. We can't always rely on the employer, as one driver found out last year after being sent out into a flood to relieve 930, only to be abused by the regional fire safety officer who was highly irate that KiwiRail was the only company stupid enough to be operating in flood conditions.

In other news there appears to be a renewed interest in fatigue management down here. It seems the bureaucracies that monitor and enforce the health and safety

legislation are all taking a very close look at us and KiwiRail has to do something.

Management recently called a meeting and the question we posed was what are the cognitive effects of fatigue? Apparently KiwiRail is very aware of this and because of the new Health and Safety at Work Act the company is going over the work Professor Philippa Gander did 20 years ago and have reengaged her. There was talk of napping being encouraged, that rostering will need to be looked at and trains may have to stop to allow the LE more time to nap. There's even talk that a quiet room was being set up in Dunedin, bunks included.

One thing we've learned down here is that being silent and doing nothing achieves nothing. The game is changing and we need to get involved in managing this hazard.

Excuse me while I return to my Ray-bans and sunscreen as I go and herd the penguins off the front garden. The bloody icebergs have melted and they're all seeking shelter under the palm trees. 🌐

# Union women cause stir in Brisbane

**W**IMDOI (Women In Male Dominated Occupations and Industries) was held in Brisbane, Australia this year and I was lucky enough to be invited – and I'm so glad that I went. WIMDOI has been going for 24 years! This year had the most women so far attending, 140 of us! Well done ladies.

The WIMDOI panel were fantastic. All strong women and strong in their unions.

There were 23 different unions at WIMDOI this year and some of the occupations were: meat workers, electricians, shunters, cargo handlers, wharfies, traffic management, cleaners, fire fighters, dogmen, refrigeration, vessel planner, electrical safety observer, ambulance, industrial officer/organiser, water/sewage plant operator, and more.

The three days of conference were lots of fun and very informative.

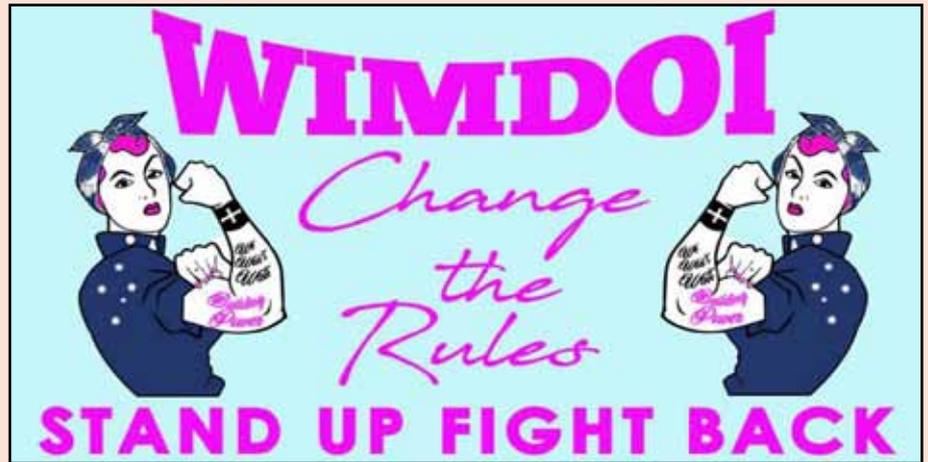
Aunty Valda Coolwell kicked the conference off with the acknowledgment of the country and the ancestors. Such a beautiful woman.

After we all stood up and introduced ourselves, Ruth Blakely and I spoke on behalf of 'the sisters across the ditch'. We highlighted the issues with Transdev and the ongoing struggle, Pike River and the newly elected Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and some of her planned policies.

Other topics discussed throughout the conference were superannuation in Australia, family and domestic violence leave, workshop gendered violence, inequality in the workplace and how it affects women, issues of indigenous women in the workplace, how to get more women on union organising and bargaining agendas, training and skills development in the workplace as

we'll as other open discussions and our own experiences as women in male dominated work places.

We were lucky enough to get out and about in Brisbane for a couple of rallies. Pauline Hanson and Tim Nicholls were running for state elections in Queensland, so we all went along to see what it was all about and to hear what the Aussies had to say.



(above) The WIMDOI banner and effigies of Pauline Hanson and Tim Nicholls – the but of a Conference protest. (1) Dunedin Hillside member Rebecca Hauck joining the action and (below) hitting the local headlines.

The other rally we marched to was in support of Papua New Guineans who work at a container terminal in Port Moresby. A new recruitment outfit has signed a 25 year agree-

ment to operate the Ports of Lae and Motuka in Port Moresby. More than 1,000 jobs will be lost. Each of the workers supports a large extended family. So we told them how we felt about them outside their flash offices and over rated Armani suits and ties.

The WIMDOI Conference for me was an eye opener more on an International level. It doesn't matter where you come from, the

colour of your skin, ethnicity or gender, union women and men need to stick together. We are stronger together. And regardless of where you work we as unions need to protect the working people for ourselves and for our children – the future.

**WE ARE UNION**

We stand united as part of a great movement of workers

Our diversity is our strength

Our solidarity is our power

We respect and take care of each other

Prejudice and discrimination including misogyny, racism, homophobia, have no place in our movement

We rise together

Today and everyday we commit ourselves to achieve justice, fairness, equality and dignity for all workers

**SOLIDARITY FOREVER!**

– Rebecca Hauck

