

THE

DECEMBER 2017

TRANSPORT WORKER

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

Wellington picket



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COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Wellington's Metlink workers on the picket line in front of Wellington Railway Station last month.

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Wayne Butson
General secretary
RMTU

Battles won and some in progress

THE Union membership, delegates and staff have been under huge workloads and tension since the last issue of our Union magazine and this issue details some of the underlying reasons.

We have seen a Labour-led Government take office over the Treasury benches and it is clear that we are on the crest of a major political shift. Rail, coastal shipping, public transport and regional development will see real gains during this parliamentary term. Late 2017 is a great time to be an RMTU member!

As I type this, my mind is a jumble deciding what to write about as there is just so much to tell.

First up, Stuart Johnstone has resigned his position as our Auckland regional organiser and is moving back south to Dunedin to take up a position with the Dairy Workers Union. Most of you will know that Stuart's wife has cancer and so a move south, nearer to family, will be very helpful. So, whilst we are sad to see Stuart leave we are glad that he will have an improved support base down South and he will be remaining within the Union movement where he will be able to demonstrate and use all of the skills and knowledge he has picked up in Auckland over the last four years. We wish them all well in their move. We have advertised for a replacement and look forward to the successful candidate starting as soon as possible as Auckland is a hot bed of activity at present.

Transdev has demonstrated behaviours in Auckland and Wellington which have seen it characterised within union circles as the 'Talleys' of the rail industry.

In Auckland we are currently conducting a strike ballot for Transdev and in Wellington we have seen members within Hyundai Rotem vote in two strike ballots at 100% and in Transdev Wellington at more than 90% in both.

The Wellington strike action is the first stoppage of the Wellington trains since 1994. In a mere 15 months these two foreign multinationals have driven the Wellington workforce to distrust and dislike them. There is coverage of both of these disputes within the magazine and on the branch Facebook pages. In both Auckland and Wellington branch have loaded member cellphone details and group texts have proven to be a great way of keeping members informed as well as relaying new notices, newsletters and Facebook posts. Your Union is communicating at unprecedented

levels and members are highly engaged.

KiwiRail and high performance/high engagement (HPHE) continue to be a major contributor to organiser and delegate workload. KiwiRail is in a high state of change and so this translates into a whole lot of groups working on consensus building toward agreed change on many fronts within the various sectors of the workforce. The operations, mechanical and networks and industrial councils all have at least three projects on the go. We have seen HPHE principles used to reinvigorate the KR MECA pay scale 7 review which has been struggling along for a long time. As I write this we are making real and meaningful progress and have a MECA variation postal vote underway.

Then, of course, we have the tireless efforts of members to reopen the Main North Line (MNL) north and south of Kaikoura. Our track worker and loco engineers – members and delegates – have been miracle workers in this and some scenes are captured on the back cover of the opening celebration.

On December 1 we have the launch of the first major steam locomotive hauled train operating on the Main Trunk Line (MTL) without the use of KiwiRail staff. This has been a watershed moment for us all. The RMTU has negotiated and signed a collective agreement for the operation and ex-KiwiRail trained and

qualified LEs will be manning (they are all blokes) the Ab locomotive. Part of the heads of agreement provides for the future training of other KiwiRail staff in steam operation and I look forward to some local members putting their hands up for training. I wish Steam Inc and Pounamu Travel every success in the venture.

On behalf of the Union president, NMC members and staff, I hope and trust that all of you and yours get through the Christmas/New Year holiday period safe and sound. Please, can all of you who are either having a break or are working to keep your place of work operating, make sure you are around to share a happy, healthy and – under a Labour led Government – I know it will be a prosperous 2018.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to each and every one of you and to your families! 🇳🇿

STOP PRESS

STRIKE AVERTED

Further strike action called by Wellington rail workers for Friday Dec 1 was called off at the last minute when Transdev/Hyundai Rotem agreed to withdraw its claim against penalty rates for weekend work.

"This shows the power of working people standing together to protect good jobs and fair working conditions," said RMTU general secretary Wayne Butson.

Resignation

Dear Editor,

I started in 1965 as a cleaner at the Frankton loco depot and sat my boiler's ticket, then fireman's and transferred to the Huntly depot. After three years, due to downsizing, I was transferred back to the now new Te Rapa depot where I remained until transferring to Westfield in 1979.

I have been a driver/minder driver ever since and finally after 52 years and nine months have decided that it is time for me to call it quits. I will miss the whanau atmosphere that we all enjoy in KiwiRail.

I am on annual leave until November 27 and therefore tender my resignation from the RMTU from that date.

Wishing all members the best and to stay united and proud.

E noho ra

Alec Buzeika, LE.



(l to r) Aubrey Wilkinson, Pare-Ana Bysterveld, Ray Brown and Wayne Butson attending the NZCTU conference in Wellington.



Auckland Transdev members rally outside Britomart Station.

Auckland's latest battleground: the fight for rail safety

AUCKLAND has become the frontline in the fight to keep passenger trains safe in New Zealand and the RMTU is at the forefront of that struggle.

Rail safety isn't just under attack here – our comrade unions overseas are also campaigning against what is a global issue.

So, given that passenger rail has been around since the first station opened in Manchester in 1840, why is it in the 21st century that we are still battling to keep the public and our members alive and well?

The answer can be summed up in two words: technology and neo-liberalism.

Technology is making the idea of an

ALL aboard!
Staffed trains
are
safe trains

automated railway more of a practical proposition. The ultimate manifestation of this will be driverless and crewless trains.

Neo-liberalism, that type of capitalism that targets organised labour in the relentless pursuit of profit, provides the ideo-

logical motivation to drive through technological change at the expense of public safety.

In Auckland the introduction of technological innovations like closed circuit television in the cab makes it theoretically possible for the locomotive engineer to control the operation of the doors and "observe" whether it is safe to close the doors, lock them and to move the train from the station.

This innovation doesn't provide the motivation to actually make the passenger and train operation safety entirely the responsibility on the driver however.

Running a railway as a business, instead of a service, where the primary purpose of



RMTU members pledging to stand united in this bargaining round and opposing DDO.

the rail operator is to make a profit to generate a dividend for the shareholder provides that incentive.

Driver only operation (DOO) creates the opportunity to dispense with the other members of the train crew – train managers and ticket inspectors in New Zealand, guards and conductors overseas. Thus, creating a rail operating model that gives the job of actually running Auckland's railway to a private multinational company.. This permits Auckland Transport (AT), the body that should be accountable to the ratepayers and voters of Auckland, to build a layer between itself and passengers and instead, inserts a player in the game that has every

reason to strip costs out of the system in the pursuit of profit.

Transdev Auckland, a wholly owned subsidiary of Transdev Australasia, itself a wholly owned subsidiary of the French company Transdev, is that player in the game. They are merely the latest in a series of operators which have won contract and aim to squeeze as much profit out of the bureaucrats, ratepayer and passengers for the duration of that contract.

Our members in the Auckland branch of the RMTU are employees of Transdev but wear AT uniforms.

At the time of writing Transdev is seeking approval from the rail regulator,

the New Zealand Safety Authority, to be permitted to introduce DDO. At the same time, and after amendments to legislation, AT are introducing 'Transport Officers', directly employed by themselves, on buses, trains and ferries.

These transport officers will have very limited powers in relation to the travelling public and there is no guarantee that one – or any – of them will be on every train, bus or ferry at any given time.

However, AT is spinning that this de-crewing of the trains will be a boost for safety. At the same time Transdev and AT are discussing moving train managers and ticket inspectors off Auckland trains and



RMTU Transdev bargaining team: (l to r) Rob Evans, our late sister and comrade (the late) Ani Te Namu, Leighton Mosese, Bill Sweeney, Andy Ward, and Rachel Barrett.



Centre is the national secretary for First Union Robert Reid supporting the RMTU at Britomart Station.



RMTU Auckland members united against Transdev plans for driver only operations.

re-employing some of them as transport officers on yet to be specified pay rates and conditions.

The potential consequences are not hard to imagine.

Staffed trains are safer because trained and uniformed crew deter criminal or anti-social behaviour, provide a first responder to manage emergencies and play a critical role in ensuring all passengers safely board and disembark, including the disabled.

More uniformed staff on the transport network are to be welcomed, but as an addition not an alternative, to current crews.

The RMTU would go further: It believes a dedicated body of railway police, with powers of arrest and detention, is also necessary. The unholy alliance of AT and Transdev however, is hell bent on slashing the number of uniformed on-board staff on the railway.

This is the logical result of the so-called 'Public Transport Operating Model' sponsored by the previous National led government, and opposed by the RMTU.

On September 27 we launched our campaign 'All Aboard' to keep Auckland's passenger trains safe.

Auckland councillor Mike Lee and Jon Reeves from the Passenger Transport Users' Group addressed a rally at Britomart Station.

Online and paper petitions have garnered thousands of signatures from the travelling public. Members set up stalls at suburban stations and public support for our campaign is overwhelming.

Media interest is building, and as we go to press, demonstrations are planned in tandem with the unions representing Auckland bus drivers to take the message to AT.



(above and right below) Members gathering public signatures and support.



(l to r) Rachel Barrett, the late Ani Te Namu, Nolene Peacock, Gyladys Pourewa, Carol Bennet and Diane Locker.



Auckland members at the 'All Aboard' campaign launch at Britomart Station.

Members have visited Auckland councillors and MPs and it has been gratifying to receive their support.

Lobbying hasn't just been confined to politicians.

The RMTU has spoken with women's advocacy groups, the disabled community

and students' associations. All of them back our fight for safety on rail.

The Union is also in collective bargaining with Transdev and have a claim on the table for no driver door operations in the term of any re-negotiated collective agreement. This means that we can take industrial

action as a means of applying pressure to Transdev in order to achieve that claim. By the time you read this we may well have balloted members on industrial action.

Our members are confident and united and we have broad public support.

What is happening in Auckland is no different to what is going on elsewhere where a neo-liberal ideology is being imposed on rail passenger services.

Our comrade union in Britain, the RMT, is in dispute with more than half a dozen train operating companies and has embarked on sustained industrial, community and publicity campaigns.

They too have the broad support of the public.

The RMTU has a proud history of being the champion for rail in New Zealand and the flag bearer of health and safety in the industries we organise in.

We now have the responsibility of leading the fight for public safety on Auckland trains.

It is not a battle we will shirk! 



Are you too fatigued to work safely?

NINETY percent of port delegates who participated in an RMTU survey on fatigue earlier this year said they, or their workmates, had been fatigued at work to a point where safety was, or could have been, compromised. However, less than half reported the fatigue to their managers.

Delegates said the way management deals with reports of fatigue is inadequate. In some cases workers were sent home to sleep, in other cases they were told it was just the nature of shipping or that fatigue is up to the individual to manage.

In June delegates attending a ports forum discussed the findings of the survey. It found that while 96% of survey responses said that fatigue was a health and safety risk, 79% said that the employers' management of fatigue was either dismal or poor.

Delegates gave examples of fatigue-related incidents such as crane operators driving erratically, turning too soon into roadways, losing concentration and falling into micro-sleeps whilst operating heavy machinery.

Causes of fatigue

At Lyttelton Port, members said the



rostering practice known as rolling 8s is a source of fatigue. Rolling 8s require container terminal staff to work eight hours on, eight hours off and eight hours on. This means workers can work two shifts within a 24-hour period. One port worker said: "It's difficult to get more than two to three hours sleep between the first and third shift, which means you are working in a hazardous work place for potentially 16-hours in a 24-hour period with only two to three hours sleep."

Maintaining a life outside of work is extremely difficult with a rolling eight rosters.

Members report splitting sleep to have a few hours sleep before a third shift (starting at 11pm) and a few hours sleep after 7am when the shift is finished, before going back to work again at 3pm to do another shift.

Commuting time reduces the window of opportunity for sleep between shifts even further.

Breaks between shifts

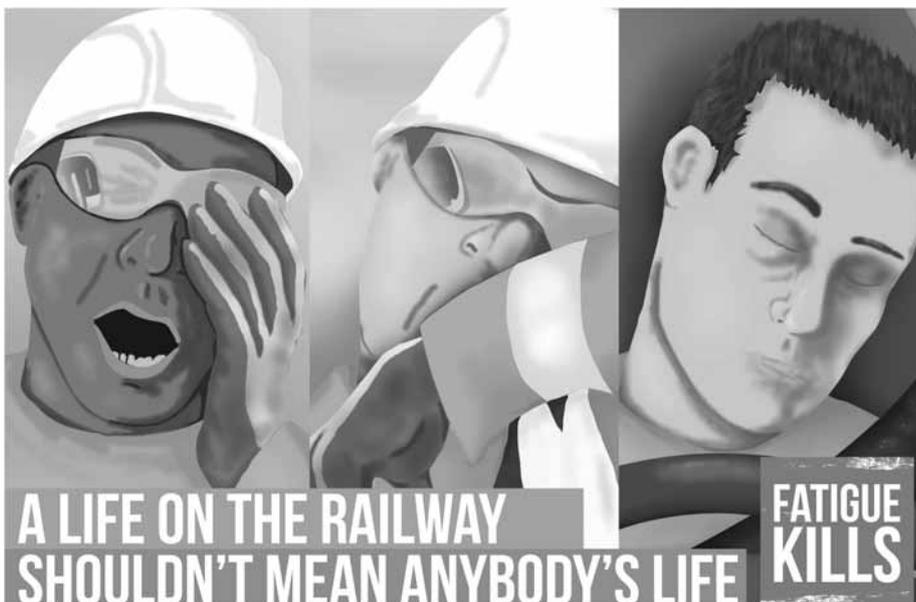
An adult between the ages of 18 - 64 years requires on average of seven to nine hours per sleep per 24 hour period. The Department of Labour (now Worksafe NZ) guidelines (Managing shift work to minimise workplace fatigue) says the length of break a person needs to ensure they get enough sleep depends when the break begins.

A 10-hour break starting at 10pm will allow much more sleep than a 10-hour break starting at 10am.

The length of break a person needs to get enough sleep will also depend on how much time they need for getting to and from work, eating, washing, dressing, and socialising.

The implication for rostering is that the minimum break times between shifts should provide enough opportunity for a person to achieve seven to nine hours sleep.

In addition the guideline recommends



at least two consecutive full nights' sleep (with a normal day between) in each week.

Micro sleeps

The effects of fatigue are cumulative and extreme fatigue may cause a person to 'disengage' briefly in a so-called micro sleep. If this happens at a critical time, an accident may result. Micro sleeps have been observed in train drivers and airline pilots during periods of critical operations, with the drivers and pilots often being unaware it was happening.

At the ports forum delegates were asked to identify what safety systems could be put in place to reduce the likelihood of a person lapsing into a micro sleep whilst operating a straddle crane.

The delegates identified the following controls to reduce the risk of a micro sleep fatigue,

- Regular and predictable shift patterns.
- Regular breaks, for example two hours on one hour off.
- Increased staffing levels.
- Positive culture to self-report when fatigued.
- Two nights' sleep between shift rotation.
- 12 hour breaks between shifts.
- Facility to nap onsite during breaks.
- Education and training to recognise fatigue both individually and collectively.
- Nutrition advice to support alertness for shift working.
- Realistic production targets.
- Engineering controls such as:
 - Air conditioning to keep a comfortable temperature,
 - Dead man switch,
 - Vigilance alarms, and
 - Improved lighting.

Fatigue is a hazard

In a work context fatigue is a state of physical and mental exhaustion which reduced a person's ability to perform work safely. The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 requires workers to be given the highest level of protections against harm to their health, safety and welfare from hazards and risks arising from their work. Shift work is a known source of fatigue. Therefore the potential consequences of fatigue must be identified, assessed, controlled and monitored by the employer. The employer must engage with workers and where there are elected health and safety reps. The engagement must include them.

Worker engagement

Elected H&S reps can request health and safety information including a copy of the company's fatigue management policy, or information relating to near misses associated with fatigue. Workers and their representatives have the right to be involved in how the risk of harm associated with fatigue is assessed and what systems are put in place to reduce the risk of harm.

The H&S rep can also write health and safety recommendations under the Health and Safety at Work Act which could include a recommendation to review the fatigue risk management process, or develop a fatigue management policy. They may also issue a Provisional Improvement Notice (PIN) or call in the workplace inspector to review the situation. 🌐

VALE Halina Adamiak

8/11/69 – 21/10/2017

It is with great sadness that we report the death of our Palmerston North immediate past rail branch secretary sister, Halina Adamiak who died as a result of a motor bike accident on Saturday October 21 near Turangi.



Halina held many roles in rail spanning over decades. Her latest challenge was driving the lube truck on the main line in the central region. Halina will always be remembered for her big smile, hugs and positivity about people.

Nigel Wilson, the internal communications manager for KiwiRail wrote in the last issue of *The Express* that many of her colleagues would miss her cheerful presence.

He added that though his connection was much more fleeting she had left him with a "lasting imprint of her energy for life and passion for rail".

RMTU general secretary Wayne Butson agreed and said she was a valued member of the Union.

"She had great potential and we had high hopes for her role within the union. It is a terrible loss and an awful shock to everyone who knew her."

In 2016 she was the Palmerston North branch secretary.

Self nick named, Halina was affectionately known as 'Slick Chick' and described herself to Wilson as: "a closet foamer. I'm the lube operator for lower North Island and otherwise known as 'Slick Chick'."

Halina drove a hi-rail truck and distributed graphite grease to curves to reduce rail wear. She had worked in rail since 1986 where she started in the refreshment rooms, went on to the booking office then to train manager on the Capital Connection. She later moved to the Northern Explorer and lately as one of the Peruvian decayed sleepers' inspectors, on track gangs and lube operator.

Butson said she was gaining a wide and varied experience within KiwiRail and was readily adaptable accepting new technology easily.

He adds that her colleagues have contacted him telling how much they will miss "her cheerful disposition and warm smile".

"Our thoughts are with her family, including her two teenage sons," he said. 🌐



Branch prizewinners for Bay of Plenty Port AGM.



A packed Onehunga Community Centre for the Auckland rail branch AGM.



GS Wayne Butson addresses members at the Port Timaru AGM.

Branch AGMs



Newly elected MP Tamati Coffey addresses members at BoP Port AGM.



Aubrey Wilkinson, Hal Upton and life member Paul Corliss at the Lyttelton port AGM.



Dunedin rail members pledge solidarity with Auckland and Wellington metro colleagues in their struggle with Transdev..

Grenfell – the fire that should never have happened



MATT WRACK, (pictured above) general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union (UK), electrified the UK Labour Party conference when he spoke about the fire at Grenfell Tower, saying the tragedy was the result of political decisions made by people in power locally and nationally.

He said Wednesday 14 June 2017 is a dark day in modern British history. A nightmare date of death and destruction.

"I am sure everyone reading this will share my sense of horror at the appalling loss of life at Grenfell Tower that night," he wrote in the ASLEF Journal.

"The accounts of the victims are painful to read and listen to. Accounts of loved ones speaking to their families for the last time knowing they could not escape the flames are heartbreaking. The terror of people not knowing whether their friends and family made it out of the building in time.

"But how was this atrocity allowed to happen in one of the richest boroughs in the heart of the capital of one of the richest countries in the world?

"We appear to be a country unable to keep people safe in their own homes. Now it's time for the tough questions.

"We demand a vigorous, thorough, and robust public inquiry with the survivors, victims and local residents all involved to hold to account the people who made the decisions which allowed this atrocity to occur. They say don't politicise this fire, but behind Grenfell lies a chain of political decisions made by people in power, at local and national level, who deregulated public housing and the fire and rescue service, creating a perfect storm for the atrocity we now call simply 'Grenfell'.

"Firefighters were sent to fight a fire that should never have happened. The normal procedures they would follow for a tower block fire, developed over decades in order that firefighters can deal professionally and effectively with this kind of fire, could not be put into practice as the magnitude of Grenfell was unprecedented.

"Firefighters became split from their teammates whilst navigating the burning building, with fire crews re-entering the burning building multiple times, breaking procedure at great personal risk to themselves. They did this to save as many lives as possible.

"I am proud that practically every firefighter who responded to Grenfell is a member of the FBU and I am honoured to represent them. The next time trade unions come under attack by the press and politicians for the audacity of asking for a fair pay rise, we need to remind people of the queues of firefighters in breathing apparatus waiting to be sent into Grenfell Tower. Because that is what a trade unionist looks like."

Reprinted with kind permission of ASLEF.

The final toll

The final death toll from the fire that destroyed the Grenfell Tower housing block in London in June is 71, after five months of painstaking search and recovery operations.

Police previously said about 80 people died in the blaze, which tore through the 24-storey tower in West London in the middle of the night, but officers now believe all those who died in the fire have been recovered and identified.

The figure has come down because some people were reported missing several times, some were found to have been elsewhere on the night and some were falsely reported dead by fraudsters hoping to receive financial compensation.

The final toll includes a baby stillborn shortly after the heavily pregnant mother escaped from the 21st floor. She survived.

The tower was home to a tight-knit, multi-ethnic community in a deprived social housing estate within the wealthy Kensington and Chelsea borough that is also home to large numbers of millionaires.

The tragedy has prompted political debate about London's stark social inequalities and whether neglect of social housing estates and the communities living in them played a part in the fire.

A criminal investigation is under way that could result in individuals or organisations being charged. A separate public inquiry aims to shed light on any flaws or irregularities in the design, construction or maintenance of the tower. 

Tokyo Forum 2017



I was luckily enough to be invited to the International Centre For Labour Solidarity (ICLS) 2017 Forum held in Tokyo, Japan on September 28/29, 2017, where 112 workers from 11 countries had lively discussions on many different topics. The main theme was "Growing union power with young workers to fight inequality through improved organisations".

It was clear from the discussions and report backs from each member unions that workers from all represented countries are fighting to retain and improve worker rights, peace, safety and democracy due to oppression by governments and capitalists.

I soon learnt that all groups within the ICLS, but not limited to, are in fact going through the same problems within their respective countries. Realising that so many nations are facing exactly the same issues as the RMTU saddened me immensely. We live in 2017 and to know that human kind is regressing is extremely unacceptable and that is why it is of the utmost importance that my generation and younger generation make activism and the rights of workers a priority in their day to day lives.

Attending this forum gave me great insight into what is going on with our comrades around the world and how we, the RMTU and us individually, can be of assistance to aid foreign unions in their fight for improving the conditions of workers, their rights, safety and general quality in life. 🌐

- By Emmajane Craig



Emmajane respects the shrine of JREU/JRU leader Akira Matsuzaki.



(l to r) Sam Simonetis (RTBU Australia), Wayne Butson and Liu Tsung-Han (TRLU Taiwan).



(Right) Wayne with Myanmar Railway Workers Union GS Ye Min Kyow.



Delegate training

DELEGATES and active members from Invercargill, Timaru, Nelson and Christchurch who work for KiwiRail and Nelson and Lyttelton Ports expressing their solidarity with RMTU members in Wellington and Auckland who are in dispute with Transdev. This concluded a delegate training

session on October 16 where members learned the principles of organising and representation. An active and interested group, these members are a credit to our Union. Their willingness to step up on behalf of our members is further evidence of the high calibre of the RMTU's activist base. 🌐



RMTU members on the Rail Operating Manual Section 3 review working party (l to r) Ged O'Donoghue, Tim Kerwin, Mike Williams, John Keenan and Mike Fleck.



(l to r) Liz Lester (new Welfare manager), Chris Ball (retiring manager), Edgar Spark (Union trustee group B), Paul Ashton (employer trustee), Linda Judd, Karen Burt (staff trustee), Wayne Butson (RMTU trustee), Helen Rodgers (employer trustee) and Howard Phillips (RMTU trustee).



Bay of Plenty Port branch president Kelven Martin handing over cheque to fund the methyl bromide protest group to becoming an incorporated society.



Life member Paul Corliss (l) presents an appreciation certificate from the RMTU to retiring LPC member John Beardsley.

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 five fund managers.



Ports
Retirement
Plan

Download a copy of the
Investment Statement and Application Form at:

www.portsretirement.org.nz

What future for train drivers?

BY 2050 children will no longer grow up wanting to be train drivers, according to artificial intelligence scientist Professor Toby Walsh.

"By 2050, the year 2000 will look as quaintly old-fashioned as the horse-drawn era of 1900 did to people in 1950," he told the Australia Broadcast Corporation. "Autonomous vehicles will arrive quickly – within 15-20 years."

In 2016 the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia started trialling the Intelibus, an 11-seat shuttle bus.

In November 2016 Brisbane City Council revealed it was considering using driverless vehicles for the planned Brisbane Metro.

In June 2017 G:Link light rail operator Keolis Downer began trialling a driverless bus in Melbourne.

In July Rio Tinto announced its Pilbara freight rail operations would be totally driverless by 2018.

In August NSW Government ministers literally climbed aboard a driverless shuttle bus being trialled at Sydney Olympic Park.

What does this mean for the jobs of drivers of trains, buses and light rail here in Queensland?

Driverless transport systems have been with us for longer than most people realise.

Showcased at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley England in 1924, the Never-Stop Railway was the world's first driverless transport system. It operated for two years moving visitors around the Exhibition site.

In 1967 the London Underground opened the Victoria Line as an automated system although it requires a driver to be present.

Disneyland began operating the PeopleMover in 1967. The small trains operated on elevated tracks so visitors could take in the views at Tomorrowland.

Although it closed in 1995, Disney's term "people mover" lives on in small-scale automatic train operations (ATOs).

People movers include shuttle buses being trialled in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth.

Larger systems are mostly urban metros with one or two lines and up to 20 or 30 stations.



ATOs come in three grades:

- Grade 4 can operate fully without staff
- Grade 3 requires a staff member for some functions such as opening doors but can operate without a staff member
- Grade 2 requires a driver in the cabin but can operate without a staff member.

There are literally hundreds of these systems in operation across the world with many more in the pipeline such as Sydney Metro due to open in 2019. It is a typical size with one line and 13 stations.

While Google might have a small fleet of driverless Waymo vehicles being tested on American roads, at the present time fully-functional driverless transport systems use tracks or dedicated roadways and most of the systems are relatively small.

The scale of the transport system and the nature of what is being transported have a huge impact on the complexity of introducing automated systems.

Obviously, a train full of iron ore requires far less management than a bus full of excited sports fans.

Even so Rio Tinto's driverless train project looks like taking three years longer than expected and costing \$A30 million more than budgeted to become operational.

The difficulty with that system is communicating between the base station and the trains operating on 1,300 kilometres of remote railway track.

Nevertheless, Rio Tinto remains a world leader in driverless technology. Trucks and other vehicles on its mine sites are operated from Perth.

It is likely mass transport systems will

become hybrid systems. The London Underground has been a hybrid system for 50 years.

Imagine converting Australia's largest bus fleet to driverless? Brisbane has more than 1,200 buses, hundreds of bus routes and a road network based on pathways used by Aboriginal people.

CityTrain is poised to transition to new generation rolling stock but it looks likely to have higher staffing needs than the previous generation.

One innovation which might happen sooner rather than later is the introduction of small driverless shuttle buses.

These are likely to be an addition to the public transport mix moving people that "last mile".

The "last mile" concept is about getting people from a train station or bus stop to the door of their house or the airport terminal.

So where driverless transport is really likely to make a difference in our lifetimes is at either end of a journey – with metros moving people around city centres and other hubs while shuttle buses taking us that last mile.

The sad truth is that driver jobs will almost certainly disappear over time but that time is still a very long way off – almost certainly well beyond the year 2050.

All technological change results in some jobs disappearing all we can hope is new jobs will emerge. 🌐

Reprinted with kind permission of the RTBU Queensland branch.

Unanimous decision to strike

THE actions of employers Transdev Wellington and Hyundai Rotem forced Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) members to wholeheartedly endorse a call for strike action last month - the first time since 1994.

The RMTU, which represents Transdev Wellington and Hyundai Rotem staff on Wellington's passenger rail network took this action in defence of their terms and conditions of employment.

"The RMTU has been in collective bargaining with Transdev since May this year and this week we reached the end of the line," said Butson on October 13.

"This is a clear message to these foreign multinationals that we won't bend to their unfair demands and definitely won't be party to lining the pockets of foreign owners to the detriment of our members," said RMTU general secretary, Wayne Butson. "Since taking the decision we have received messages of support from every branch within the Union, from the CTU and trade union organisations around the world. There is little doubt that unless the employers back down this could turn into a prolonged and nasty stoush."

The Union issued the strike notice shortly after a mass meeting at Westpac Regional Stadium which took place over 24 hours on October 16 from 0200hrs, affecting all passenger train services in the Wellington region operated by Transdev Wellington through to 0159hrs on 17 November 2017.

This followed the breaking down of talks with French owned Transdev and Korean owned Hyundai Rotem on October 15.

"The sticking points are that the employer will not shift from wanting to take away longstanding terms and conditions of employment of members despite it only being just over a year since they agreed to employ them on their same or more favourable terms and conditions of employment" said Butson. "The new owners show no respect nor any



The mass

consideration of those established terms and conditions. Many of our workers, under this collective contract, earn minimal wages. They rely on those extra pay rates when working extended hours."

He added that when Transdev Wellington and Hyundai Rotem made their bid to take over Metlink from KiwiRail they were given full disclosure of those terms and conditions.

"Nothing was hidden and they made their bid. It was lower

than any other bid and the Wellington Regional Council accepted it, though only on condition that those terms and conditions were rolled over.



by Wellington rail members



meeting of Wellington rail staff when the vote was taken.

Our position is clear, our members will not lose their hard fought for terms and conditions of employment to improve the financial return to foreign multinationals."

He made it clear in a full page advert in the *Dominion Post* that the dispute was not about more money but fighting to retain what they had.

"We are deeply disappointed that this attack on our core conditions is being sanctioned by our regional councillors and mayors who make up the regional transport committee," he said. "There will be accountability at the next local body elections."

"Hopefully this action will get the message to the two foreign multinationals that rail workers in New Zealand will not be ridden roughshod over. We call on them to withdraw their claims and focus

on providing the world class passenger journey they promised in July 2016," said Butson

He added that unless there is a change in employer attitude it will not be the last action.

In fact their attitude didn't change until the Union called another strike for Dec 1 after further talks broke down. Then, less than 12 hours before the strike was due to commence Transdev/Hyundai Rotem come back to the table.

Butson said this last-minute mediation resulted in the employer agreeing to withdraw its claim against penalty rates for weekend work, meaning the union cancelled its strike action.

"This shows the power of working people standing together to protect good jobs and fair working conditions." 🌐



PROFILE – RMTU WOMEN

Roz Muir

Job title: Ship planner

What is your Union role and why did you become active?

I became the Napier Port branch women's rep in the hope of making a difference for all workers in our industry. Parity of incomes, and terms and conditions, is extremely important to me. I think we as New Zealanders often underestimate our contribution to our employers, and I mean this in terms of social sacrifice as well as the fact that we often work harder and longer than we should.

What does your job entail?

I plan the workflow of discharge and load boxes on container ships. Prior to this I was working as a logistics planner here at Napier which involves managing the workflow and storage of containers in the terminal - it's a prerequisite for ship planning.

Why did you decide to become a planner?

I had road-tested the job in the form of work experience towards my degree in logistics and transport management which I studied at tech in Sweden (in Swedish). With yard planning you can actually see what you've accomplished when everything's in the right spot. I'm a bit of an environmentalist and like to ensure boxes

are moved as few times as possible.

What's the best part of your job?

The camaraderie amongst the operational staff is fantastic. We have a lot of good times at work. Not having to wear make-up is a huge bonus. I should probably mention meeting that special someone here as well, although it's still early days so we'll see how that pans out.

What's something that bugs you about your job?

Sometimes there's a lot more drama than there needs to be. Planners are a special bunch - I'm sure we're probably all on the spectrum. Management like to work with statistics and averages but for us the devil is in the detail so it can be quite challenging attempting to explain elements of the job that don't exist on a spreadsheet.

What were the barriers to being a logistics planner at Port of Napier?

There was a bit of the classic, "Oh look, a girl, what would she know" but I'd been through all that in various jobs in the past. I was massively underpaid when I started and got stuffed around on temporary con-



tracts despite having already done three months of unpaid work experience in the role, which I'm convinced was all down to my gender.

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

Danger is real but fear in a construct. "Yeah but what if..." is not helpful. If you really want to do something, just do it! 🇳🇿



Lyttelton Port City Depot members showing solidarity with Wellington and Auckland.

SOUTHLAND RAIL

GREETINGS from the warm and balmy South, where we have had an pretty active few months. The general secretary attended our branch AGM on the first Sunday in September (coincidentally Father's Day) and spoke of the revitalisation of the branch since his last visit a couple of years ago.

Of course, the major catalyst for us was the use of the 'Red Card' in relation to the Dongwha siding and the DL locos.

The latter issue resulted in the branch being awarded a judge's special recommendation at the National Health and Safety Awards.

The locomotive engineers' patience with the abuse of our roster has finally snapped. For some time now we've been covering a nine link roster with eight staff and the recent retirement of the local manager, an experienced LE who covered much

of the resulting gaps, has been the trigger for much discontent. Instead of moaning and doing nothing about it, our LEs have been asking themselves why they should perform beyond normal duties when KiwiRail isn't living up to its rhetoric about safety – because ultimately that's what rostering is about. When we can't get H&S reps to critical meetings and when people are routinely being called while on much needed annual leave there comes a time when enough is enough. The reality is the railway will not be a success if we don't have enough safety critical staff to run it – 9 into 8 does not go!

With the accession of the Labour led government there is much talk about the revitalisation of the regions. The South has done well out of the diary boom in recent years – or rather some of the people down here have done well. Cockies and unionised workers like us have little in common

except our position in a strategic part of the economy – that's why we and the diary workers have secured above inflation pay increases through the wasted nine years of the previous National government. The same cannot be said for those precariously employed in the hospitality, tourism and service sectors.

We await Labour's much vaunted new industrial relations policy to give those workers the opportunities we have enjoyed through being organised.

Finally there is once again talk of the Southerner being reincarnated. Let it happen say we – what a great symbol this would be of the re-vitalisation of rail and the regions in our country.

Best wishes for the holiday season and kia kaha to our fellow members in Wellington and Auckland who are locked in a struggle with their employers and regional transport authorities. We stand with you!



OTAGO RAIL

IT has been an interesting few months politically. If nothing else, the election campaign led to plenty of debate around the smoko rooms to test whether the resurgent Labour Party could or would make a substantial improvement in workers' lives. Thankfully now they get to have a go, along with their coalition partners. Many of us think early signals are good. It seems a settled and united line up with a genuine brief to address inequality – something the last mob ignored with an almost complete lack of morals. Of course within the boundaries of capitalism, any improvements will be limited and not a systemic change. Regardless of people's political views, it is obvious that this change is very good for rail, and by printing time this branch will have been in touch with the offices of Clare Curran and David Clark – the two Dunedin based ministers – to continue our good relationship and communication. It will be interesting to see if any personnel changes happen in the boardroom, and whether investment

in electrics is back on the table, among many other projects. Hillside Workshops (ed: Labour promised to reopen the workshop at the time of closure and it is also current Labour Party policy) is never far from our thoughts.

Freight operations is winding up to the peak and it's only taking one or two unplanned events before operations are scrambling for locos and/or staff. The crew at Hillside, though, have put in a fantastic effort on the DC loco cab refurbishment, which has got some of the DC class back into service with more to come. Much appreciated guys by your LE workmates along the track!

Our members at the CT site had a successful move earlier in the year, moving base from the Toll building to the old crane depot, which has been fitted out fit for purpose. This means the office and base is now in the right place where the loading takes place and a much better fit for our members there.

On a grumpy note, once again in I&A there have recently been at least three

individual D&A tests and mass testing of a whole track gang under the 'reasonable cause' clause. It seems that the now legendary MOP (member of public) or an insider gave upper management cause to test this work gang based on confidential information. Under our Just and Fair Culture policy it seems to us that a few pertinent questions would have cleared this up, rather than mass testing which has led to a lot of grief, resentment and looking over shoulders at others. This slash and burn approach causes people to second-guess their workmates and sows distrust as they try to find out who has attempted to get their group in trouble. Under natural justice, one has the right to know who their accuser was. The reply from KR management has been to neither confirm nor deny whether the accusation came from an employee. This has also had an effect on the relationship between management and staff, which is a shame as that relationship is normally very good. Local management, for the most part, is seen as fair and co-operative by our members and the workplace has a real family feel to it. Moral of the story? Not only should the

◀ company stop putting groundless rumours from MOP or whoever above their trust in the workers, so should we as members,

and learn to trust the people we work so closely with! Oh by the way, same as last time, nobody failed the D&A tests.

Wishing all our comrade RMTU members around Aotearoa, a safe and happy Christmas break! 🌐

PORT OTAGO

WE are well into our low season and all batteries are being recharged for the busy times ahead which are going to be so much more interesting as our multi-purpose berth extension has started and this work has resulted in a temporarily big reduction in our footprint. Apparently we are almost at maximum MT TEU at the moment and we are not busy yet. There will be interesting times ahead over the next two years while this is happening.

We are seeing more and more that the Port Company cannot find suitable candidates for vacant positions and are filling these with people that require visas, etc. We don't believe there is a skill shortage for these positions and have asked why Kiwis are not getting first option. We are yet to receive a suitable answer. Apparently, if you have worked for Silver Fern Farms you are quite likely to get a job here.

As I drove to work the other day I was astounded at the number of log trucks on the port road. On my 15 minute journey I counted 17 trucks. Why the hell are these

not being carried by rail? It would make absolute sense and most importantly stop the trucks from breaking up the highway!

Another election is over and thank goodness we ended with a Labour/New Zealand First/Greens coalition.

Not ideal but the best outcome we could have hoped for. Let's start educating people now about the importance of keeping Labour there and with a bigger majority. I'm still appalled that Hutt South went BLUE. How did this happen in such a RED area? The conversations need to start now! Dunedin got it right on all counts and both our Labour MPs increased their majorities and party votes. Congratulations to both Clare and David on being re-elected and for securing ministerial roles.

The branch recently farewelled two long standing RMTU members, Willie Shum and John Lydiate. John served a number of years as branch president and was very active until he left us in August. We

will miss seeing John and Willy around the port and wish them both a long and happy retirement.

Geoff Plunket officially retired at the end of September and although the reins had been handed over a lot earlier, it was really interesting and appalling at his farewell. It appeared that there were only three people responsible for making this company the success that it is today. Yeah Right!

Kevin Winders is very much in control now and is into open plan working so we are seeing walls disappearing all over the place. Will this lead to one big happy workplace? Time will tell.

We send solidarity to our sisters and brothers in Wellington and Auckland in their continuing fight with Transdev, Hyundai Rotem and Veolia. "United We Stand". Stay strong we are all behind you!

On that note, almost another year has gone. From down south we wish each and every one of you a very merry Christmas and happy 2018. 🌐



John Lydiate receiving his Union loyalty certificate.

TIMARU PORT

HERE at Timaru port we've been dealing with all the bad weather that everyone else in this part of the world has had to cope with. It's made little, if any, difference to shipping but has certainly made it difficult for some of us to get to work as roads have been closed due to flooding.

Our members directly employed by Prime Port, who provide marine services and civil and mechanical maintenance, as well as Vicky in administration, are currently renegotiating their collective agreement. The key issue, apart from money, is fatigue management and how we reconcile terms and conditions of employment that provide

management with their much vaunted flexibility and allow us to work safely and have some balance between our lives at home and at the port. Hopefully we'll have made progress on both fronts by the time you read this.

One hiccup which may lead to a delay has been the sudden resignation of our operations manager Keith Michel. Keith has been here for too many years to count and decided it was time for a break. We all know him well and respect him as a straight shooter and someone who is both fair and compassionate. He's had a job to do and we've not always liked the direction the port or the industry has gone in over the years but Keith has always been someone we could do business with.

Murray Cadigan and Naylor Young attended the RMTU Ports Forum in mid-June and the importance of fatigue management was a key issue discussed. Management's obsession with drug and alcohol screening, which, to be fair, is a national phenomenon and not confined to Prime Port, could usefully be extended to the impact of fatigue on workers in an industry such as ours.

Aside from the above, our little branch is ticking along. We appreciate the support we get from the wider union, particularly around health and safety, and so we have no hesitation in adding our voice to those backing our members in Auckland who are fighting to keep guards on trains and keep passengers and the public safe. Stay strong – we are all thinking of you. 🌐

TIMARU RAIL

WE'RE a small branch but we like to think we make up in quality what we lack in quantity. One of the benefits of being small is everyone knows one another and there is not the same silo effect that can occur in some larger centres and branches. On that note our terminal staff members wish to thank network services members for the continuing new and replacement work being done in our yards.

This all has benefits in terms of improved conditions for safe working and we value the work our brothers in network services have done.

Progress has been made on the extended leg over Queen Street in our south yard and we're told work should be finished over the next couple months. Well done to all involved.

Our Union puts a great deal of emphasis on having trained representatives and this is something our branch supports with deeds as well as words. We are encouraging mem-

bers to put themselves forward for education and recently Aaron McAuliffe attended delegate training

in Christchurch and our branch chair Doug Blakie completed his level two H&S representative training.

Well done guys and we look forward to more of you stepping up for this sort of development.

Our AGM was held a little late this year but we achieved a good turnout and there was good support for the work our officials and the wider union does.

There was some debate about the time it has taking to get pay scale 7 reviewed and some questions were asked about what the final document will look like. Will it include incremental progression as per the LE pay scale?

We look forward to further information and ratification meetings of whatever is finally presented.

As we move into the warmer weather and peak freight volumes, nature is taking her course and heat restrictions are underway and causing some train delays. Once again, it is our networks members

who are playing a key role in keeping the railway safe.

One recent development has been that Oamaru yard is very busy with new Fonterra tonnage and a thank you to Jim and Ross for helping make this work.

As the rake of wagons gets bigger we hope KiwiRail management invests in improving ground conditions along Beach Rd to allow for rakes of up to 15 wagons to be serviced by the swing-lift.

The Oamaru container transfer terminal site was never designed for large numbers and this sort of thing is one of the implications of growth.

Finally it was good to see the new government being formed. Given the range of political views the alliance of NZ First, the Greens and Labour express we are confident that a consensus can be built that will reflect the majority of New Zealanders that did not vote for the Nats. And of course the outstanding common feature of the new government's constituent parties is an affinity for rail. A very positive development and one which we applaud here in New Zealand's regional heartland. 

WEST COAST RAIL

WITH the new Labour-led government taking up office as we write, Pike River is once again in the news. After years of being given the run around by the previous National government the families that campaigned for a manned re-entry into the mine and the recovery of the bodies of their loved ones are at last beginning to see progress.

Former EPMU secretary Andrew Little is now Minister of Justice and also of Pike River re-entry and is committed to a manned re-entry in autumn next year. This is important not only for the families and their supporters but because once again it throws into sharp focus both workplace health and safety and the dependence of our region on extractive industries like coal. We are looking forward to seeing how the new government's policy to re-vitalise the regions will play out in our part of the world. It has certainly been a roller coaster

of a ride over the last decade, with more downs than ups, so

we have great expectations and will hold our representatives in Parliament to account.

The vagaries of the market economy is once again playing its role in causing uncertainty in the rail freight sector with the loss of the Westland milk contract. The TranzAlpine's customer base appears to remain buoyant however, and our track and networks members are busy assisting with the continuing post-earthquake rebuild of the MNL. We are still having debates with management around rosters, both in freight and in track. In the latter, management need to understand that while sending a gang away for a ten day shift is within the black letter of the MECA, it can and does impose a strain on the well-being of workers and their families.

Sticking to track, our newly elected track inspector Kevin Gubb will have been

to Wellington for the final industrial council meeting of the year by the time you read this. We know Gubbie will be a vigorous advocate both for track inspectors nationally and the wider membership here on the West Coast.

On the health and safety front Bob Broadhurst is doing sterling work raising issues and ensuring they are followed up. Bob is relentless in his advocacy and brooks no nonsense with bureaucracy if it is not doing the job of protecting our members and the public. Bob, your work is greatly appreciated by our rank and file members and we are sure that some more enlightened managers also admire your industry and forthright approach to safety.

As we approach the end of the year we wish all our fellow members all the very best – especially our brothers and sisters in Auckland and Wellington who are fighting major industrial battles. Don't give an inch – we're all behind you! 

LYTTELTON PORT

LYTTELTON PORT COMPANY has recently released its annual report showing record container volumes and increased profits. Apparently for the first time Port Lyttelton has surpassed 400,000 TEU (20 foot container) and both imports and exports are up.

The Kaikoura earthquake and the disruption to the Main North Rail Line has certainly played a part in this. It remains to be seen how much of this freight will permanently remain with shipping and how much will revert back to rail over time.

The fact that the company is doing well is good news for our region and Christchurch, in particular as LPC is 100% owned by the Christchurch City Council.

RMTU members of the Lyttelton branch will also be expecting that the company won't forget who made these results possible and reward them in the current pay negotiations.

We will also be watching very keenly what employment legislation the new Labour-led government enacts in the coming

weeks and months. We can certainly expect that the climate will be more favourable towards working people than it was under the out-going government.

Many thanks to those members who helped get out the message for change and congratulations to our local MP for Port Hills, Ruth Dyson, on retaining her seat.

Ruth has long been a friend of the RMTU and has supported us on many occasions over the years when we have needed political support. Ruth spoke at our AGM in August just after Jacinda Ardern become the new Labour leader. The optimism that she expressed in her speech at that time wasn't misplaced.

The ongoing bargaining for the main



From a recent bargaining session with LPC. (l to r) standing: Mike Shrimpton, John Kerr, Bruce Baldwin, Andy Kelly, Glenn Arthurs. Seated: Malcolm Walker, Brian Gilkison, Stu Marsh, Tony Wornall.

\$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 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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port CEA continues to dominate the activities of branch officials at Lyttelton. On the whole, negotiations have been amicable and constructive in most areas, but the sticking point continues to be the mechanical maintenance roster which LPC is adamant needs to change. Although the company has now backed away from the 12-hour roster model that they were initially proposing after its unanimous rejection by RMTU members in the workshop.

We are still working on devising a roster that both management and workers can live with. Our workshop representatives have been working hard to develop a roster that meets LPC's criteria. Unfortunately at the time of writing LPC hasn't embraced our proposal and their latest counter-proposed doesn't really live up to what LPC wants to achieve.

Management seems to suffer under the delusion that a major roster change can be cost neutral and that increased coverage can be achieved without increased manning levels. They really need to decide what they

want, otherwise our members will simply be sticking with the existing roster.

We will also be initiating bargaining soon for the logistics officers at LPC whose CEA expires in January 2018. Already we are getting wind of significant changes that LPC may want to introduce, although we will have to wait and see what actually transpires when we exchange claims. If the current negotiations for the main port CEA are anything to go by, bargaining could be a long drawn out affair this time and not short and sweet like it was last time.

A big change for us at Lyttelton has been the departure of industrial relations manager Sally Williams who has taken up a similar role at Airways NZ. Her replacement is still being recruited and realistically the role probably won't be filled until early next year. Although from time to time we had robust disagreements with Sally, she was someone we could work with and she can perhaps be best described as an admirable adversary. We hope that her successor is as diligent and proactive in dealing with the

unions on the Lyttelton waterfront.

We have an active network of delegates and several Lyttelton members attended delegate training in October with South Island organiser John Kerr. I encourage anyone who is interested in being a delegate or becoming a union activist to put their name forward for this training. It is always important that we have people who can step into the role of delegate when someone leaves or decides to step down. This is exactly what happened at City Depot recently when Simon Gillard stepped down as head delegate. But before he stepped down, he had identified Brad Roberts as a possible successor and put his name forward for delegate training. In the space of two months Brad is now actively recruiting new members and ably representing his members. This is what effective succession planning is all about. And the more members we have who become actively involved the stronger we are as a union.

Wishing everyone a great Christmas and may we all have a stunning 2018. 🌐

CANTERBURY RAIL

GREETINGS from Canterbury where, at the time of writing we are looking forward to a long, hot summer.

The big news is, of course, the formation of the new government, being formed as it is by one party to which our union is affiliated - Labour - and another - the Greens - to whom the RMTU made a considerable political donation. And of course the third leg of the stool is New Zealand First which has consistently made all the right noises about the future of rail for many years.

We look forward to rail being put on a firm financial footing in the years ahead and the purging of the right-wingers on KiwiRail's board. It's about time the foxes were stripped of any authority over the chicken coop. We also look forward to the application of a bold vision for Christchurch and for rail to play a part in that. Let's see commuter rail in our fair city and let's see the return of long distance passenger rail on the Main South Line. In short, let's see rail play a historic role in the regeneration of the regions, just as it played such a role

in building our country all those years ago.

Our friend and political ally Megan Woods MP is now Minister for All Things Christchurch (we paraphrase, but you get the idea). What a refreshing change that will make from Gerry Brownlee. Megan has been a good friend of the RMTU, attending our branch AGM in August, where she gave an excellent speech - short and

to the point. We know you'll be busy in the months ahead Megan but you also know we're right behind you and your government as you seek to make good the wasted opportunities of the Key/English years.

Our delegates and officials have been extra-busy this past three months as our regional organiser has been drafted into assisting with the battle our comrades in Auckland are having with foreign owned



RMTU bridge gang members at Arthur's Pass.

multinational Transdev and Auckland Transport. The value of having trained and active delegates really becomes apparent at times like this and we were pleased to be able to send even more active members on a delegate training session in October. Members, remember, if you have a question about your rights at work or if you need advice your delegate is your first port of call. But don't be surprised if he or she points you to the place where you can find things out for yourself. Teaching people to look after themselves is part of the delegate's job. However, rest assured that if you need help or representation our branch has a pool of trained and skilled people who are on your side.

The Main North Line continues to be a challenge. The re-opening was a huge achievement and one that our members, and those from other branches, can be justifiably proud of. The work that has been done since then keeping the line open in the face of bad weather and slips hasn't

made the headlines but has been equally remarkable. We pay homage to our health and safety representatives who have been tireless in their advocacy to ensure our members and the public are protected as this vital piece of infrastructure remains open.

We have a close relationship with our brothers and sisters in the RMTU Lyttelton Port branch and we've been watching their pay negotiations with interest. As we reach the end of the year we remember it was three years ago that the port workers were embroiled in a major dispute over safety which culminated in the first use of the Red Card. That dispute made legal and industrial history and the power of just being able to say "no" to unsafe work is one that we have never forgotten here in Christchurch and never will.

Best wishes for the holiday season and solidarity and support to our comrades in Wellington and Auckland Metro. We stand beside you in your struggle. 🇺🇸



NELSON PORT

THIS has been a year of progress for the Nelson branch – we are more organised, we have grown our numbers, we are more relevant and have made considerable progress in our relations with our members and PNL. Special thanks go to Todd Valster our organiser and John Kerr, both of whom have given significant help in setting us down the right path. It is great to have the knowledge that they are part of

something bigger and to be backed by not only a national organisation but an international one too.

RMTU and Port Nelson LTD were able to successfully conclude the latest round of negotiation for the collective agreement which was ratified by the members at our AGM on October 5. The negotiations were quite drawn out and reflected a significant change in both PNL and the needs of its workers, a large amount of work was put

in by both parties. It took some months to achieve a settlement. This however was well received by the members.

This year's negotiations were overwhelmingly focused on conditions and some significant head way has been made on addressing such issues as fatigue management and career pathways. We finally have the beginnings of getting some structure in to our working lives especially for cargo handling.

Importantly, a lot of time was spent



Port Nelson members pledge solidarity with their Transdev Auckland and Wellington brothers and sisters.

◀ looking at the law changes around availability and cancellations. With a lot of focus on correctly worded clauses in the CEA to include these new laws in our collective. This represents a notable change in our conditions.

We were able to get a deal that benefited many departments, whilst the majority of claims were centred on cargo handling and stevedoring we were able to get significant deals for R&D and marine too. This will hopefully encourage other departments to submit remits for the next range of negotiations in about 18 months' time. Recognition of those that drive heavy plant, their extra skill and responsibility has been rewarded,

this will hopefully encourage those who do not have these skills to up skill.

We have also had a significant move to reduce the number of people on casual contracts and move them into permanent positions. The company has recognised that those who are not in the highest skill brackets are still important to operations and the company needs to address their own vulnerability as well as those of the workers. This still remains an issue not only in Port Nelson, but nationally as casual workers have little legal protection, they are less likely to rock the boat, report near misses, or complain about conditions because they are essentially unemployed at the end of

their shift. While casual employment is a situation that suits some employees, for many it is a stressful and difficult arrangement dealing with irregular income and lack of information. It is a situation that puts all the employment liability on the employee and little on the employer.

Whilst our deal was significant it has still left plenty to do. We can now see a clear path towards the next wage round. There is significant work to be done through upcoming consultative meetings to review and monitor the changes that have been made. We look forward to next year being another positive and progressive time for both our members and our employer. 🌐

MARLBOROUGH PORT & RAIL

MARLBOROUGH members had their combined branches AGM late September. After many years of leading the branch, Murray Burgess has stood down and Grant Herbert is the newly elected president and Justine Riach the new secretary. Murray has been a solid union leader on day to day matters

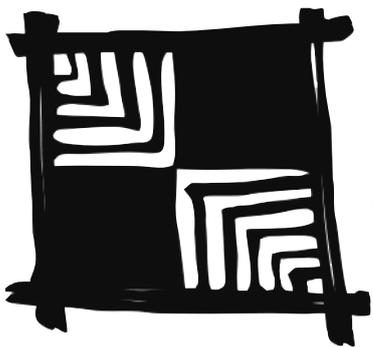
and also the many bargaining sessions during his term. A huge thanks to Murray and we look forward to the new team carrying on the tradition.

At this meeting members also sent solidarity messages and pics to our sisters and brothers in Auckland and Wellington with

their current disputes.

It has been a difficult year for Marlborough members since the November 2016 earthquake and the subsequent closure of the Main North Line. Rail delegates and members have got stuck into the re-opening of the line, which occurred well ahead of the state highway – a tribute to all involved.

All the best for Christmas and New Year.



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CENTREPORT



It has been a big year at CentrePort since the earthquake. The port was extensively damaged but assurance was given by management that there would be no loss of jobs while it was rebuilt. Progress is continuing with the wharf container cranes now up and running and trade returning.

Negotiations for the renewal of the CPL/RMTU, MUNZ and Etu collective agreement have commenced. With a new management

team across the table, we are hopeful of decent outcomes to improve current terms and conditions.

Back in 2003, this port wanted to outsource work but not assist members to move with their work. This approach ended with two days of industrial action and the management team replaced. From then, regular monthly company/unions consultative meetings were put in place

and continue to today. Recently we had the 100th consultative meeting which was celebrated with a cake.

Port security officer, Tony Staley recently retired due to serious health issues. He is rehabilitating slowly but a return to work is unlikely. Port security members and management had a send-off for Tony with a few stories, food and laughs. All the best Tony.

WHERE ARE YOU?

Problems may be looming and we may need to contact you quickly. Please check we have your correct address and contact details.

<http://bit.ly/exmEyL> or 04-499-2066

WELLINGTON RAIL

THE Wellington rail branch executive organised site visits around the Wellington area with Todd Valster to update the noticeboards and to meet with members.

During these visits Todd updated mem-

bers on what was going on for Wellington and Auckland metro mem-

bers in their fight.

The photos below show the depth of solidarity among RMTU members here and the encouragement they give for the fight to continue.

Transdev/Hyundai Rotem members went on strike and it was great to see the support they received from within the wider RMTU, as well as from other unions in Wellington and the general public through emails and donations for the fund to help those who went on strike. Unions in Wellington are running a petition in support of the RMTU and the Tramways Union to present to the Greater Wellington Regional Council to ensure public transport workers are looked after.

We recently had Stage One delegate training led by John Kerr. The feedback from attendees was that it was a great day from which the new delegates gained a lot and enjoyed the opportunity to meet other delegates from other worksites. We are hoping for another training day to be set for the new year.

The next Wellington Rail branch meeting is set for February - we hope to see everyone there! 🌐



Sickness, accident & death



The New Zealand Locomotive Engineers' Sickness, Accident and Death Benefit Fund

In the last 10 years 230 locomotive engineers had to retire due to medical reasons. They received a total payout of \$4,737,097 from the above Fund. LEs who didn't belong to the Fund and who were forced to retire did not receive anything.

You could be next to miss out!

For as little as \$219 a year your future – or those of your next of kin – could be better assured.

Contact:

Debby Green, PO Box 813,
Wellington
Telephone: (04) 499-2066
Fax: (04) 471-0896
debby.green@rmtunion.org.nz

**Attention LEs
Join this Fund now for
your own peace of mind**

HUTT WORKSHOPS

WE hope you are happy with the change of government that so many people actively campaigned for earlier this year. By now the overview of the direction and strategy for getting there will be firmly in people's minds and we'll all be strapped-in for the ride! Regional development will be a crucial indicator of success of the new government especially if it stops the continued adding of problems to the Auckland situation.

Our AGM in late September saw a couple changes with Brett Sullivan, Dodi Joseph and Slade Pilcher elected to various positions within the committee. We are now a group of 11 supported by a membership of 151.

The beginning of spring isn't only marked by lambing, but committee members Ben Thomas and Manu Barclay are welcoming new additions to their families! Good luck to these doting new dads.

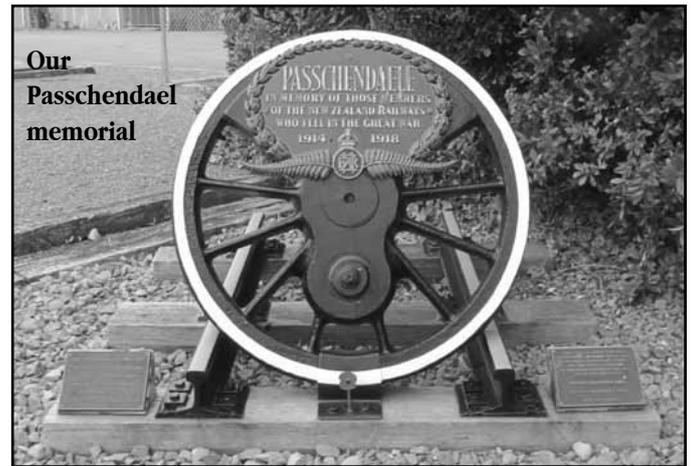
At the time of writing we were still awaiting board sign-off of the next tranche of money to support our upgrade and investment programme however the unseasonal weather affecting the main north line (MNL) caused them to focus their attention on the immediate financial impacts to the business. We, and other parts of the company, await similar considerations, maybe another month or so.

RailWeld is (still) coming. A large shipment of rail has arrived on site. The piles have been scattered around the site until we can consolidate the operation.



The new shelter for the fire wardens?

Passchendaele commemorations were held on Thursday October 12 with the traditional readings including the ode followed by the wreath-laying in our Memorial Garden. Keen observers will notice the works at the edge of our garden. The structure in the background was our former health clinic/ambulance garage/telephone exchange and (previously-demolished) apprentice training school and custodian's residence. This building



**Our
Passchendaele
memorial**

will be totally demolished to allow the RailWeld facility to be established once the communications services are successfully transferred into a dark shadowy corner of Plant 1. The visible cable pits are two of several new ones housing the underground

Rail & Maritime Transport Union Inc Statement of Financial Position As At 30/06/2017

| | Note | 2017 | 2016 |
|--------------------------------------|------|---------------------|---------------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Current Bank Accounts | 5 | 338,871 | 456,151 |
| Accounts Receivable | 3 | 21,440 | 54,484 |
| Interest Accrued | 4 | 75,929 | 52,968 |
| Tax Refund Due | 2 | - | 6,598 |
| Investments | 7 | 1,866,713 | 1,831,359 |
| Total Current Assets | | 2,302,953 | 2,401,561 |
| NON CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Fixed Assets | 6 | 142,111 | 133,698 |
| Investments | 7 | 2,509,792 | 2,270,118 |
| Total Non Current Assets | | 2,651,903 | 2,403,817 |
| Total Assets | | 4,954,857 | 4,805,377 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Accounts Payable | 8 | 123,088 | 147,656 |
| GST Payable | | 18,375 | 19,099 |
| Konemu Provision | | 6,452 | 6,452 |
| Income Tax Payable | | 1,914 | - |
| Provision for Leave | | 83,935 | 83,286 |
| Veteran's Reunion Fund | | 6,850 | 6,850 |
| Total Current Liabilities | | 240,614 | 263,343 |
| NON CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Non Current Liabilities | | - | - |
| Total Non Current Liabilities | | - | - |
| NET ASSETS | | \$ 4,714,242 | \$ 4,542,035 |
| Represented by: | | | |
| MEMBERS' FUNDS | | \$ 4,714,242 | \$ 4,542,035 |

Signed on behalf of the National Management Committee

General Secretary

Date

National President

Date

communications cables.

Spare parts for DLs appear to be coming to a head. We note that the odd loco or two sent to Hutt are missing some of their bits. It appears the depots are (understandably) cannibalising the locos for spare parts so they can keep their fleet availability statistics up and their headaches down. However, the downstream affects are to shift the problem on to someone else. If forensic checking of some records was carried out, we're sure a small horror story would be uncovered. This of course means that the proposed reliability centred maintenance programme (RCM) is at risk. If rolling stock depots (Hutt included) don't have the spare parts required, then RCM will falter. Whilst I'm sure the powers that be are fully aware of the issues, they need to communicate their thoughts and progress to the frontline to keep the troops in the communication's loop. There's nothing worse than everyone bitching about a problem because they're not being kept up to date with the proposed fixes for it. Whilst we acknowledge that several upper parts of RSAS are being restructured, this shouldn't impede the flow of timely communications.



Slade Pilcher and Connery McGarvey-Teobaere after the wreath laying.

On the good news front we advertised two vacant team leader positions and hopefully will have filled them by the time you read this. A funny observation of the advertising though was the position description not being consistent with the other positions at Hutt so we are left wondering if the push for 'standardisation' across the company has suffered a hiccup or two. At the time of close-off for these notes, we also had four apprentice candidates vying for two apprentice mechanical engineer positions and the interviews had finally commenced.

Also on the good news front would be the implied progress, and effectiveness, of the industrial councils. Hopefully this will

lead to another rollover of the MECA in the new year along with the appropriate cost-of-living raises across all pay and conditions.

Until next year, have a safe and merry Christmas. We need everyone back in one piece so we can do it all over again in 2018! 🇳🇿



(above and below) Locos getting an overhaul.



Tons of new rail with room for more.

NAPIER PORT

An anatomy of collective bargaining

AS delegates we have the honour and responsibility to negotiate the future terms and conditions and pay packets of our fellow members. We are fortunate at Napier Port to have a

core team of seasoned delegates mixed with a group of keen new comers and our first woman

delegate, all coming from a vast array of backgrounds, opinions, departments, skills and motives. In the wrong hands they could be a real powder keg.

However, this is led by our very capable and seasoned branch secretary Dave Marden who somehow maintains law and

order. Behind all this sits our regional organiser Phil Spanswick who moulds and guides this group into an effective negotiating team.

The whole process kicked into life two months before with our branch secretary seeking remits from the delegates. At the start it is like getting a union membership from an ACT supporter but as D day loomed closer, the remits started to flow, with some resembling more of a wish list than work-

◀ related topic.

One month out Phil sent the company a notice to initiate the bargaining process and the scene is locked and loaded for another round of bargaining.

We followed the five Ps of success – proper planning prevents poor performance. Once all the remits were in, the delegates had an initial meeting to fashion the remits into a legible document. This was followed by rehash and re-rehash which resulted in a final document of remits that could be swapped with the company.

One week out Phil conducted a one day training session to teach the newbies the roles and rituals of formal negotiations. This was followed by a review of the rules of the game and useful concepts. The Port Company also provided lunch and the boardroom which was greatly appreciated.

The session concluded with a preview of the bargaining process agreement (BPA). One of our provisions included the company providing lunches and the Union choosing the menu.

Ironically, this is where we experienced our first loss as we didn't get to choose the menu.

After another run through our remits, the session concluded with an overview from the company's lead negotiator, which gave the newbies a perspective from the "other side".

On the Thursday before negotiations we assembled to swap our remits with the company. The air was thick with anticipation as both sides revealed their hands.

Day 1: We assembled an hour prior in the boardroom. Phil led us in a final review of our remits and a recap of the order of events.

At 9am negotiations commenced with Viv Bull from the Port Company giving an overview of the last year and a forecast for the future. Phil outlined an agenda for the

day and the scene was set for negotiations to commence.

Over the next hour we presented our claims in detail. The company's response was fielded with their initial position of the claims.

The rest of the day continued to and fro with breaks in between as each side reflected on their position on each point.

Day 2: An early team meeting and at 9am we recommenced with both sides working to a preset agenda which continued through to lunch.

The company tabled a document - named 'the green paper' - which became a core issue to the negotiations as it effected a large group within the collective.

Day 3: At the early meeting it was clear that there was frustration in the air as many major points had reached a stalemate. Phil and Dave had a short time out with the company team. After an hour of discussion it was agreed we adjourn for two weeks and break into several working groups to workshop the major points into possible resolution to report back to the wider negotiation teams.

Day 4, two weeks later: During the two week hiatus there were many meetings and discussions on the key remits. The 'green paper' had gone public for wider consultation and valuable intel and feedback was gathered. This time had been used by both sides to gain a better understanding based on further research.

Day 5: The green paper and clauses around container packing were the main topics of the day.

Both sides reached agreement in spirit, with the challenge to morph expectations from both sides into a working agreement.

A further week's adjournment was agreed to allow for further discussion within the working groups.

Day 6, one week later: It became appar-

ent that the breaks between negotiations were bearing fruit as common ground and agreement became easier to achieve. The day concluded with the view that the end was in site.

Day 7: The morning pre team had now become a ritual. The pile of documents were growing at an alarming rate. Most documents had endured re write after re write.

However everyone's position was becoming clearer by the minute. What appeared on day 1 to be yawning chasm of divergence of opinion and position, was rapidly merging into a possible terms of settlement.

The large elephant in the room was the subject of money. Most of the previous six days were consumed by terms and conditions and the big one still lay on the table. At the beginning it appeared that no one wanted to challenge this head on, then bang – an agreement was reached.

On reflection, if we added up the time we spent on this subject it wouldn't have been 20 minutes. However, as all the peripherals that were tabled, argued about, crafted and agreed, would all have some sort of cost, so it was natural this was done last.

Subject to a few matters to be finalised, we had an agreement. The terms of settlement will be scribed and presented for ratification to the membership. Should ratification be successful we finally chalk up another collective and start planning for the next.

A very sad side note: For the first time in many a year, our main stalwart and life time RMTU member, Graham Hart (Harty) was not present due to his passing. His bargaining techniques, wisdom and leadership was sadly missed by all.

Merry Christmas to you all from the Napier Port branch. 🌐

BAY OF PLENTY PORT

FOLLOWING the last meeting between the parties involved in the renewal of the Port of Tauranga and RMTU collective agreement, it has been decided that there will be two report back meetings to discuss the negotiations.

The main question for members is the wage increase plus a small number of other issues to be resolved.

At the branch AGM Dallas Tamati, Jason Kuka and Neil Donaldson were elected on to the executive. Congratulations Dallas, Jason and Neil.

Unfortunately our long standing, tight-fisted treasurer, Ian Oakley has injured his right knee and will be off work for up to six months. Local fish are breathing a sigh of relief.

Wishing you and yours a great Christmas and an even better 2018! See you then. 🌐

BAY OF PLENTY RAIL

DUE to the departure of Darryl Hoare to Napier and William Lanigan to Danniverke, BOP members elected Shane McNae to the position of branch chair and Moses Moana and Conrad Wright replace William as vice chairs. Nigel Smith decided to stand down as secretary and was replaced by Alana Ranui from Kawerau. Congratulations to all of those

who were elected or re-elected.

Ross Burrows and Mike Marumaru Junior have both been medically retired, all the best for the future Ross and Mike.

The local industrial council of the Waikato/BOP met in the Mount union rooms on Monday November 6 with a full turnout of delegates in attendance. There was quite a debate over the Union's agenda items, which were: The Mainline RCO rate of pay;

scoping exercises at Sulphur Point; roster change methods; interaction between freight and networks regarding the state of the yards; how the D&A procedure should be used; the effect of the lack of loco servicing after midnight in Mt Maunganui and how it is affecting Kawerau freight; and staff shortages in Kawerau.

That's about it from us so merry Christmas and a happy, prosperous and healthy 2018 to you all! 🇳🇿

WAIKATO RAIL

THERE was a change of office holders at the Waikato rail branch AGM on September 22. Steve Peacock replaced Ray Brown who did not stand for re-election as branch chair, Simon Hughes replaced Tim Kerwin who did not stand as secretary and the rest of the branch officers were elected unopposed. Congratulations to all of those who were elected or re-elected.

There has been a reshuffle of man-

agement at Te Rapa, with the current manager shifting to Mount Maunganui, and the

LOM moving on to pastures new.

Rosters are the major talking point at the moment, in servicing, the CT site and LEs are causing much discussion.

Using GPS to identify speeding is a big issue in networks. Our point of view is that the original agreement on the introduction of GPS units was to improve the utilisation of KiwiRail's leased vehicle fleet and that specific individuals or vehicles are not the

focus of GPS reporting. It would seem that KiwiRail has moved away from the agreement which is causing confusion within the membership! The matter is being addressed at the KNIC, and hopefully this will be resolved.

George Tahapehi, our long standing Waikato delegate, has resigned from KiwiRail. We all wish George all the best in the future. Cheers George!

The Ixom Morrinsville collective agreement negotiations have stalled and the parties will be attending mediation on November 27 in Tauranga. 🇳🇿

AUCKLAND RAIL

THE Auckland branch is now in full battle mode with Transdev and Auckland Transport over proposed changes that would see ticket inspectors, train managers and other members' roles disappearing. Nearly 6,000 signatures have been collected on a petition and this has been delivered to AT in conjunction with First Union who are looking for a fair pay deal for bus drivers.

While on Transdev-related issues CA bargaining has broken down and balloting for industrial action is beginning, so we could be joining our Wellington brothers and sisters in our own action against the French multinational.

The support from other branches around the country has been a real morale booster for us. Our brothers and sisters in Wellington have our full support.

Toll members have recently been asked

their view on a finger print scanning clock on/off device that has been trialled for over two years. Toll's plan was to roll the Riteq system out across all depots once the trial showed it works. There has been next to no feedback on trial results, but hopefully this will be resolved by the time this magazine goes to print.

Meanwhile at KiwiRail we recently celebrated with Alex Buzieka on his retirement after 52 years 9 months on the job. After his arrival back at Westfield from his final trip while walking to building one, Alex received a standing ovation from those that had gath-

ered. Branch chair Paul Stirling thanked Alex for his loyal membership and involvement with the RMTU and presented him with an RMTU certificate. Members recounted fond memories of their experiences with Alex including those he had helped train.

Finally we would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year - however you like to spend it. 🇳🇿



Wishing all our Union members a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. From the president, general secretary, NMC and staff.



Job done - MNL opens again

ON September 15 loco engineer Wayne Sullivan finished the job he'd started a year previously, bringing home the first train on the re-opened Main North Line (MNL) from Christchurch to Picton. Wayne was driving on the Christchurch-Kaikoura section of the MNL when the big shake hit and it was a proud and emotional moment for him and his fellow RMTU members when he rolled into Middleton to be greeted by workers, management and dignitaries to mark the re-opening of the line. This was a culmination of an immense effort by RMTU members in network services to repair the track and a great deal of hard work and determined advocacy by our health and safety representatives and delegates in operations to ensure the trains could be run safely. Well done everyone - a proud day for rail in New Zealand and a proud day for our Union. 🌐



National vice president Howard Phillips with LE Wayne Sullivan.



(l to r) LE Alfie Wilson, his wife and Christchurch Labour MP and Cabinet Minister Megan Woods.



RMTU organiser Todd Valster (l) and national vice president Howard Phillips.



At centre are Green MPs Eugenie Sage and Associate Transport Minister Julie-Ann Genter.