

THE ACTIVIST



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Message from the Gen Sec

Our RMTU Biennial Delegates Conference will be held in Wellington October 20 – 22.

Our Conference theme this year is “Take Action – kōkiri tonu”

Conference packs were sent to all RMTU Branches prior to the AGM's in August.

These packs included remit forms for Branches to submit remits for Conference. The close off date was August 31st. We have 11 remits from two Branches. At conference there will be the opportunity for Conference Delegates to submit ‘notices of motion’.

At the 2024 Conference, some new attendees wanted to understand the role of a Conference Delegate and Observers.

The conference delegates are elected by the branches and attend as voting delegates on any remits submitted by branches and any notices of motion tabled at conference. The Observers have speaking rights but not voting rights.

The Observers are expected to report back to the branches after conference.

I managed to attend 12 of the Branch AGM's this year. It is encouraging to see many new delegates being nominated.

We appreciate the hard work our delegates, past and present, do on a daily basis to support our RMTU members. We must also recognise the Branch Executive teams, H&S Reps and active members – A huge thanks

We have added information, in this edition about two recently released TAIC investigation reports. These two incidents had the real potential for dire outcomes. We need to take action on how these incidents can be prevented.

Inadequate communication and assumptions feature.

Stay safe out there.

Todd Valster



C3 worker fatality

The RMTU is deeply shocked and saddened by the death of a port worker, employed by C3 in Wellington on 1 September. The tragedy will be felt hard by all rail, port & maritime workers. We offer our deepest sympathy to the worker's family, friends and workmates. Maritime NZ are investigating the death.

Concerns raised over new mobile radio warning system

Mobile Radio Warning System (MRWS) trials for adjacent line working (ALW) in the Auckland metro for KiwiRail are being trialed to improve crew safety around running adjacent lines, with MRWS, fencing, machine avoidance and the site safety controller controls showing some positive results.

However, recently an incident near Wiri has highlighted some potential holes in the safety system, particularly with the Lookout Operated Warning System (LOWS) element of the trials. The Union has asked KiwiRail to expedite their investigation of the incident to understand the root causes.

The union urges all members working in the trial to be vigilant whilst working with the new system. Crew should be trained and be with someone competent. They should know their role comprehensively before work starts, equipment checks should be consistent, and all work needs one clear method. Members should raise safety issues early through observations, reporting, and discuss with delegates and organisers.

Important: If the LOWS are not working properly or is unsuited for the task or area, stop and do not restart until the issue is understood and the protection is confirmed safe. Worker's safety is the priority. The Union will always support your decision to stop unsafe work.

If you do stop the task, inform your manager as soon as possible and ring your RMTU organiser.

Neurodiversity at Kiwirail

The RMTU has asked Kiwirail to work with the Union to review and improve the process for how Kiwirail communicates with and supports members with neuro diversity such as ADHD. Members have contacted the union for help after being stood down from work by the rail medical officer pending further assessment such as by a psychiatrist. Affected members say the long stand down time waiting for assessments, lack of communication from Kiwirail or the medical officer have caused members uncertainty and distress. Particularly if their condition is well managed and there hasn't been any operational issues. Kiwirail has agreed to address the issue with the union. A small working group has been established and updates will be provided via the Activist.

C3 Port Chalmers members see red over proposal to replace hatchperson with spotter

Hatchpersons and crane operators have called out C3 for failing to engage properly on a proposal to remove dedicated hatchpersons and replace them with spotters.

Hatchpersons/crane operators have told the company the risk of harm is too high to accept. C3 has agreed to work with the members including H&S Reps and delegates to risk assess the issue.

Long-awaited: Its finally here!

After years of anticipation, Auckland is finally celebrating the opening of the City Rail Link (CRL), the city's most significant public transport project in decades. Aucklanders have been waiting for this transformative rail connection for over a decade, making the CRL's completion a historic moment for the region.

We are proud to share that the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU) has been invited to attend the official opening of the CRL on 11 September. This invitation recognises the vital role our members have played in bringing this long-awaited project to life. We are genuinely excited for the opening and the opportunities it brings for Auckland's transport future.



Aviation workers warn about fatigue

Air NZ engineers in Nelson have warned their employer that proposed changes to their roster will cause fatigue and potential accidents, as well as being detrimental to work-life balance. The issue was reported in The Post newspaper on 11 August '26. Air NZ members told their employer the proposed 4 nights on, 2 nights off roster would raise the risk of fatigue for workers. The workers said a 72-hour break following night shifts would provide sufficient rest and recovery following consecutive night shifts, rather than the 2 night break proposed by the company.

The RMTU is advocating for a similar arrangement for KiwiRail LEs' relief link roster. LE's recently trialled 3 nights off following 3 A (night) shifts rather than only 2 nights off. The trial was well received by KiwiRail LEs, and was seen as a genuine fatigue buster. The Union is working with KiwiRail to address the issue for relief links and the construction of the master roster.



If you've moved house or changed your email or phone number, please update your contact details with the RMTU so you receive important union information. [Click here.](#)

Please note that the RMTU's required method of communication, for voting, is phone or e-mail, voting will be electronic and we will be utilising electronic media.

TAIC issues two more more investigation reports highlighting rail protection issues

Freight train Collision with hi-rail vehicle, near Kaimai Tunnel 06 April 2025



TAIC released its final report on the incident that happened on 6th April 2025. Two work groups were doing track maintenance inside the Kaimai Tunnel in two separate hi-rail vehicles. There was a misunderstanding between the two Rail protection officers (RPO's) of two different work groups about who was included in the safety-critical protection arrangements. As a result, one of the work groups entered the tunnel and conducted work without any form of protection for two hours. The freight train collided with the HRV at a speed of 19 km/h. The worker in the leading vehicle saw the train around a bend, jumped clear just before impact, and suffered no injuries. TAIC recommended that KiwiRail clarify its ambiguous protocols, upgrade safety-critical communications, and improve radio coverage around the Kaimai Tunnel.

Near miss with track workers Plimmerton 8 May 2025

The Transport Accident Investigation Commission published its final report about a near miss incident on the 8th May 2025 involving a passenger train entering the worksite of a track maintenance team at Plimmerton. The track team included a Kiwirail rail protection officer and two contractors. They were on track to repair a trackside grease dispenser. It was extremely fortunate the LE of the northbound passenger train saw the track workers approximately 230 metres away and was able to stop the train to avoid a collision.

The TAIC report identified multiple systemic failures and human factors that led to the wrong type of track protection being used, which contributed to the incident. TAIC said the level of management and oversight by KiwiRail of contractors working within the rail corridor was inadequate. Including incomplete verification of competencies of the contractors during the planning of the work, and non-current medical certification.





Delegates whose unions are affiliated to NZCTU Te Kauae Kaimahi can join us for one-hour free online sessions designed to support and strengthen their work.

September 15th	Understanding misinformation and how to deal with it	Webinar	3:00pm-4:30pm	https://understanding-misinformation-online-session-1
September 16th	Campaigning Skills (<i>Leading in Campaigns Session 3 online</i>)	Webinar	6.30pm-7.30pm	https://campaigningskills
September 23rd	Understanding misinformation and how to deal with it	Webinar	9:00am-10:30am	https://understanding-misinformation-online-session-2

The Future Is Rail ➔

The pro rail group, 'the future is rail' have launched a campaign for "reviving passenger rail in nz". Speaking at a public meeting in Wellington in July, spokespeople for the group made a compelling argument for investment into passenger rail in NZ saying NZ's under investment in passenger rail transport is out of step internationally. They recommended 7 relatively low-cost actions to build a stronger, popular rail network that is achievable within 3-5 years. You can find their presentation on their website by clicking [here](http://www.thefutureisrail.org/reports). Or visiting their website. www.thefutureisrail.org/reports

Suffrage Day 2026

133 Years of Women's Right to Vote in NZ



Event Details

Date: Thursday 17 September 2026

Time: 12.00pm – 1.00pm

Location: Central Wellington

Dress: Purple, green and white for suffrage or bright and colourful if this works better for you!

The event will begin at Midland Park, Wellington followed by a procession of 133 women—symbolising the 133 years since New Zealand women won the right to vote—to Parliament. At Parliament, political parties will speak about their commitments to advancing gender equality and delivering for women, including on issues such as pay equity.

Whilst we're talking about the right to vote, will you and your whānau have the right to vote on 7 November?

The rules have changed since the last election where you could enrol to vote as late as election day. To be eligible to vote you need to be registered on the electoral roll with the correct address by **25 October** before the advance voting starts.

That is soon!

If you're not sure, it's easy to check your details on the NZ electoral roll, you can: visit www.vote.nz or call 0800 36 76 56 .



Note: You need to update your details every time you move house.

Celebrating Te Wiki O Te Reo Māori 14–20 September.

Tēnā koutou katoa.

On behalf of Te Kupenga Mahi, we warmly invite you to join us in celebrating Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori through three 30-minute lunch-and-learn sessions taking place during the week of **14–20 September**.

Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori is an opportunity to celebrate, learn, and strengthen the use of te reo Māori across Aotearoa. This year's Kaupapa (topic) encourages everyone to help make te reo Māori visible, valued, and part of everyday life, including in our workplaces.

These short sessions are designed to support confidence, curiosity, and respectful engagement with te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori. Each session will focus on a different kaupapa and will feature different speakers from our Māori network.

The sessions will cover:

- Tuesday 15 September – Pōhiri Process: An overview of key parts of the pōhiri process, including karanga, whaikōrero and waiata tautoko, to help participants understand the purpose and flow of this important tikanga Māori. **To attend online click [HERE](#)**
- Wednesday 16 September – Pepeha: An introduction to what pepeha is, why it is important, and how it can be used respectfully in a professional context. **To attend online click [HERE](#)**
- Thursday 17 September – Waiata/Haka: An exploration of the history and evolution of haka and waiata, the growth of Māori performing arts following the first World War, and how kapa haka continues today as a powerful expression of identity, language, storytelling and cultural pride. **To attend online click [Here](#)**

We look forward to coming together to learn, wānanga and celebrate te reo Māori. Ko te reo te mauri o te Mana Māori (The language is the life force of the mana Māori) – Sir James Henare

Ngā mihi nui,

Te Kupenga Mahi

TE KUPENGA MAHI PRESENTS
LUNCH & LEARN
TE WIKI O TE REO MĀORI 2026
14 – 20 HEPETEMA 2026

Tiheti ki te rangi, mauriora ki te whenua.
Join Te Kupenga Mahi for three interactive 30-minute online sessions celebrating te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori.

SESSION 1
PŌHIRI PROCESS
Understanding karanga, whaikōrero and waiata tautoko.
Tuesday 15 September
12:00pm – 12:30pm

SESSION 2
PEPEHA
Building confidence to introduce yourself and connect through whakapapa and place.
Wednesday 16 September
12:00pm – 12:30pm

SESSION 3
WAIATA & HAKA
Exploring the history and evolution of haka and waiata, the growth of Māori performing arts following World War II, and how kapa haka continues today as a powerful expression of identity, language, storytelling and cultural pride.
Thursday 17 September
12:00pm – 12:30pm

AKO • WĀNANGA • WHAKANUI
Celebrate Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori and strengthen your confidence using te reo Māori in your everyday mahi.

Microsoft Teams
Register via the Outlook invitation

Ko te reo te mauri o te mana Māori

Te Kupenga Mahi
KiwiRail

Fight back against the Health and Safety Amendment Bill

The disastrous changes to the Health and safety legislation have been delayed until April next year. Sign the open letter to stop the passing of the Health and Safety Amendment Bill.



Show your support to ditch the Health & Safety Amendment law by signing the petition here

Union Representation



Reminder, if are required to attend a meeting with your employer, BRING a union support person!

Workers helping workers one cup of coffee at a time



Solidarity coffee by Good fortune coffee. \$10 from every 500g bag of **Solidarity coffee** sold goes direct to UnionAID for project work. unionaid.org.nz



In case you missed it you can find the Transport Worker magazine and Activist montly newsletters on the RMTU website.

www.rmtunion.org.nz



Stay Safe out there

