



# Southern Queensland Branch News

10<sup>th</sup> December 2009

## QUEENSLAND ASSET SALES

Yesterday afternoon, Premier Anna Bligh, made further announcements regarding Queensland publicly owned assets including a partial float of Qld. Railway and a 99 year lease for the Port of Brisbane.

The QCU has been campaigning for 6 months and will continue to campaign and agitate the Government to overturn, what we say is a short term fire sale, which pays scant regard to the future prosperity of this State.

A 99 year lease, compared to an outright sale – what's the difference ? ? ?

I say nothing – especially that none of our members will still be at work at the expiry of the lease.

The Government has announced a competitive bidding process. Whoever is successful will have to seek a return on such a significant capital expenditure; that is after all, how the capitalist system operates.

The bidder seeking a return is the “at risk” process that confronts all of our members i.e. the successful bidder increases charges. Current leaseholders may have to outlay more capital to maintain their business. They will seek to maintain their margins and as such the labour force will be expected to introduce “new flexible” arrangements to allow for “their company” to achieve a viable return for their shareholders.

We have heard it all before, but no doubt we will hear it again.

Members will be updated regarding further activity after upcoming meetings. In the meantime, you are reminded of the website - [www.qldnotforsale.org.au](http://www.qldnotforsale.org.au)

## VETERAN'S CHRISTMAS FUNCTION

A well attended Veteran's Christmas function was held at the QCU on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December. Many a vessel was sailed and unloaded during the course of the day.

The Veterans were many who fought the hard yards to ensure a 35 hour week in the stevedoring industry or the current leave system for seafarers.

Morrie Jones provided the catering services and a tremendous lunch was enjoyed by all who attended. Many thanks to current members from Patrick Terminals – D. Holman, P. Bruekers, T. Williams and S. McKell who provided bar services and waited on tables for the Veterans.

## BRANCH CLOSURE

The S.Q. Branch Office and Credit Union (MMPCU) will **close at 12 noon on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December**. This coincides with the last Branch Committee meeting of the year and traditional Christmas luncheon.



# MUA YOUNG WORKERS CONFERENCE 2009

To the Rank & File MUA members,

My name is James Crookall and I am a proud young member of the MUA. Recently I attended the 2009 National Young Maritime Workers Conference held in Brisbane. I was immensely proud to represent the Southern Queensland Branch of our Union.

I was overwhelmed with the size of the delegations sent from other States and countries to take part in such a meeting. I found that young maritime workers who arrived from all corners of our country and abroad were employed in many areas of the maritime industry new and old. Many members came from different races and ethnic back grounds.

It was a great privilege to also have met a few of the great retired members of our Union and to hear some of the struggles in which they took part only 50 years ago and to see how far we have come, also what we could lose. It was an eye opener to me personally to respect how many conditions I took for granted and to listen to people like Gordon Horn and many before him, working in terrible conditions at the time. Work such as shovelling asbestos with no PPE and working in vessels carrying fish meal with no uniforms provided and maggots crawling through workers boots. I wondered to myself what would happen if members didn't care about issues in their work place and what would happen if members didn't front the boss on issues and just rolled over. We could quite easily be back shovelling asbestos with our bare hands.

Many of the areas covered at the conference where as follows:

- Violence against women
- Work shops on Roles of the Union
- Drugs and Alcohol
- Women in the workplace
- Work place injuries and your legal rights
- International Transport Federation – Flags of Convenience, Ports of Convenience
- Speakers from Miscarriage of Justice organisation – Gilford 4 and Birmingham 6
- New Maritime Industries – Gas, hydro carbon and ROV diving
- International campaigns – Cuba revolution, East Timor and Irish Dockers
- Resolutions for Future Youth conferences and clear out comes
- and many more....

It was a very informative and educational experience to have met so many young maritime workers where I have made many friends and comrades to whom our Union traditions will carry on, not only in the future but now. This is the only way we stand a chance of retaining all our conditions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Branches for the support in bringing this conference together; to the Southern Queensland Branch for hosting such a great event; to Mich-Elle Myers, Adam McArthur, Paul McAleer and the Youth Committee for all their tireless efforts; to all the retired volunteers for their involvement; to the International Unions and guests for their attendance; and special thanks to all Union Branch office staff for getting us organised and on the planes. None of this would be possible with out the sponsors and especially our financial members. On behalf of the Young Maritime Workers we thank you.

P.S: And yes we did have a beer or two!

Walter J. Crookall  
MUA Delegate, South Queensland Branch.  
Australian Amalgamated Terminals (AAT)

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The Branch would like to especially thank those members of the Veteran's Association who rendered their assistance in making the MUA Young Workers conference a success.

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