

Southern Queensland Branch News

5 February 2010

WORKERS COMPENSATION

The *Branch News* has contained many articles regarding WorkCover over a number of years, it is a complex area that has changed and evolved over the last decade.

- The predominant areas of change have been the increases to weekly benefits to employees who obtain a benefit based on the calculation of Normal Weekly Earning (NWE).
- The Ability for an injured worker to lodge a claim directly from the treating Medical Practitioners Surgery.
- A fundamental about-face in stevedoring employees adopting return to work and rehabilitation practices.
- Adoption of Privacy Laws, whereby the Branch need authorisation from the injured worker to act on the workers behalf.

The Southern Queensland Branch has a long instituted process whereby we recommend strongly that members attend the Branch Office to either complete or provide copies of their claim. We will then hold copies on our Members file for future reference and get the Member to complete an authorisation as previously mentioned.

The Member will then usually attend their respective workplace to lodge their claim with the employer.

Rehabilitation –

Below is a direct extract from the WorkCover Queensland Act 1996:

Worker must participate in rehabilitation.

- 249. (1)** *The worker must satisfactorily participate in rehabilitation—*
- (a) *as soon as practicable after the injury is sustained; and*
 - (b) *for the period for which the worker is entitled to compensation.*
- (2)** *If a worker fails or refuses to participate in rehabilitation without reasonable excuse, WorkCover may, by written notice given to the worker, suspend the worker's entitlement to compensation until the worker satisfactorily participates in rehabilitation.*
- (3)** *If WorkCover suspends the worker's entitlement to compensation, the worker may have the decision reviewed under chapter 9.*

Many companies have introduced Return to Work Policies and as members can ascertain there is an obligation for an injured worker to participate. Whilst an employer may seek to have an Occupational Therapist or other Medical Specialist make an assessment of an injured worker, the treating Medical Practitioner (the doctor that the Member gained the original QComp Medical Certificate from) should approve any changes that appear on the QComp Certificates associated with recommended changes by other medical providers.


The approval of the treating Medical Practitioner should be in writing, as a verbal agreement is not worth the paper it is written on.

Any member who is unsure of their obligations or their Rights regarding Workers Compensation should contact the Branch.

PATRICK TERMINAL COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Last weeks *Branch News* called for nomination for the Terminal Committees. The article did not mention the closing date, which is Friday 12th February 2010.

PUBLIC RALLY TO OPPOSE SALE OF QUEENSLAND PUBLIC ASSETS



QUEENSLAND.


PUBLIC RALLY AGAINST PRIVATISATION

The Bligh Government has arrogantly proceeded with its privatisation plans despite over 80% of Queenslanders opposing the decision.

The government's original reason for the sell-off - to plug an alleged hole in the budget due to the Global Financial Crisis - just doesn't stack up anymore.

Come to the rally and help send a message to the State Government that you don't support its privatisation plans.

- **Tuesday 9 March, 2010**
- **10:30am**
- **Roma St Forum**
(followed by a march to Parliament House)



www.queenslandnotforsale.org.au

No government has the right to sell-off our kids' future

Authorised Ron Monaghan, Queensland Council of Unions, 16 Peel St, South Brisbane 4101

The State Government continues to push ahead with the sale of a range of publically owned assets including the Port of Brisbane. The Premier has in fact indicated the sales will now be fast tracked, in spite of the fact that the vast majority of people in this State disagree with, and are opposed to the sale of these assets. Channel 7 recently ran a poll with approximately 95% of those polled disagreeing with the State Governments plans to sell.

It has also come to light that the State Government did in fact know of and discuss the sale of public assets before the last State Election. The Premier has initially stated that voters were told of the proposed sale before the last State Election. The story seems to keep changing, with the Treasurer making comment about a Treasury Discussion Paper, but refusing to release the full document on the basis it was confidential to cabinet. The paper has been deemed exempt from release for the next 10 years, it appears the truth remains locked away and the intent is to continue with the sales. Your participation at the Rally on 9th March is sought to assist in continuing to expose this debacle for what it is and join the vast majority of Queenslanders who oppose the sales.

PATRICK GENERAL STEVEDORING

Nominations are called for the Base Committee Elections. The National Bulk and General Conference attendees will be drawn from the Committee. This will also be an important year as the renegotiation of the Enterprise Agreement.

Nominations are called for the following:

Base Committee	Representative
Permanents	2
PGE	2
Supplementaries	1

Alternatives will also be required for the above positions. Nominations should be forwarded to the Branch Office and close on Friday 19th February 2010.

Authorised by Mick Carr, Branch Secretary and Trevor Munday, Deputy Branch Secretary. Maritime Union of Aust.
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