



Southern Queensland Branch News

16th April 2010

NATIONAL COUNCIL

National Council met in Sydney on 12th and 13th April. The agenda included :

- The Global and National Political Industrial Environment
- Improving Stevedoring Safety
- Improving Offshore, Diving and Shipping Safety
- The national Industry Skills and Training plan (METL Business Plan)
- Offshore Industry bargaining negotiations, analysis of campaign(training contributions to METL) Gorgon project
- Extending Union membership services to health care (presentation on RT Health Care)
- Membership appeal matter
- Labor's Second Term Agenda - key objectives
- Political and Industrial Issues, re-election of a Federal Labor Government
- National Shipping Policy Reform issues and campaign

Key Points of the NSCOP campaign

Fatalities on the waterfront at Port Adelaide in June 2006 and Melbourne in January 2007 were the catalyst for the Union commencement of the campaign.

In April 2007 Work Safe Victoria established the Victorian Waterfront Safety Project with the objective of developing guidance material for container and steel loading/discharge operations. The MUA Victorian Branch and National office were involved along with AMSA, ASCC and the NOHSC and stevedoring employers.

The Union, with the support of the ACTU sought the support of the ASCC in progressing the Union's call for a regulated NSCOP. In 2008 the ASCC established the (STG) Stevedoring Technical Group to address safety, due to the high fatality rate in the industry; the Union was represented on the STG. The ASCC could not be convinced to support a regulation, but it did support the nationalization of the Victorian Waterfront Safety Project outcomes and the establishment of a nationally consistent Memorandum of Understanding between AMSA and State OH&S regulations to assist the interface between MO32 and State OH&S legislation.

The Union wrote to all major stevedoring companies seeking support for NSCOP which was generally forthcoming.

All through 2007 the Union continued to progress commitment to the project including National Council endorsing a Branch campaign to analyse an issue documents, with officials being designated responsibility to work with OHS Committees/HSRs.

The campaign continued through 2008 including resolutions from the MUA National Conference.

The Deputy Prime Minister committed to support the initiative in response to the National Secretary proposing that the Victorian Waterfront Safety Project outcomes be the basis of National regulation in the area of Stevedoring OHS. The Union also engaged expert OHS personnel to draft detailed regulation that could be adopted by the States and NT for inclusion in State NT/OHS regulations.

This initiative however was not supported as an enforceable regulation by the Government despite our efforts in a targeted lobbying campaign.

The Government however agreed to nationalize the outcomes of the Victorian Waterfront Safety Project.

National Council in October 2008 again resolved to continue to work toward implementation of NSCOP and on 29th September 2008, DP World committed to an ongoing process to improve safety and to commit its goal by supporting the development of a National Code of Practice.

On 1st October 2008 Asciano agreed to continue to participate in the process of working toward and agreed NSCOP. Asciano however put conditions on its support being that it wanted the NSCOP to be within a non legislative framework in producing guidance as to what compliance would look like.

On 16th October 2008 POAGS stated it was premature to consider a standard in advance of harmonization of OHS Laws announced by the Federal Government, but would continue to support implementation of National Stevedoring Guidelines.

In November 2008 the ASCC agreed to the publication of 2 booklets, one in relation to general cargo and one in relation to containers which nationalize the Victorian guidance material.

In April 2009 the MUA and other stakeholders provided final comments to AMSA on review of MO32. As at 7th April 2010 AMSA has not signed off on a revised MO32.

In 2010 the campaign continues with the full commitment of the Union in attempting to grind out an outcome that will see a regulated NSCOP where safety standards are enforceable through integration of the different agencies.

One death is one too many, the fatalities on the waterfront between 1998 and 2010 numbering 8 are a clear indication that safety must be addressed by all stakeholders and be enforceable. All of these fatal accidents are devastating for families who face a life sentence of loss.



WORKERS' MEMORIAL DAY

The QCU extends an invitation to you to participate in this years Workers memorial Day and unveiling of the monument in honour of dead and injured workers:

- Wednesday 28 April 2010.
- Gather at 10.00am – ceremony to commence 10.15am
- Emma Miller Place (Roma Street)
- Monument to be unveiled by Attorney-General & Minister for Industrial Relations Cameron Dick.

Workers Memorial Day is an international day when unions, workers and their families and communities join together to remember and mourn those who have been killed or injured at work and to fight for the living.

MAY DAY T-SHIRTS

May Day T-shirts are now available at the Union office - \$20. each. Colour White and Maroon sleeves.

VIGILANCE ON THE JOB

All members are obviously aware of recent fatalities in the stevedoring/seafaring industry. All Companies must provide a workplace free from injury and illness.

Therefore it is an absolute right of any worker to return home the same way they left.

BE VIGILANT - WORK SAFE

If unsure, consult an OHS Representative/Delegate on the job.

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