



RAISING STANDARDS FOR DOCK WORKERS



Bulletin

3RD Issue/May 2011

GLOBAL NETWORK TERMINALS CAMPAIGN UPDATE

This third issue of the GNT campaign bulletin keeps you up-to-date with the latest news on the global network terminals (GNT) campaign and deals with issues faced by dockers in GNT ports every day.

About the GNT campaign

As part of the ports of convenience work, ITF unions are leading the fight to combat exploitation and job losses in the workplaces they represent. With the support of the ITF, they are working to ensure that acceptable standards apply in all ports and terminals worldwide.

The big four global network terminal (GNT) operators – APM Terminals, Dubai Ports World (DPW), Hutchison Ports Holdings (HPH) and PSA International – own nearly half the ports in the world. The GNT campaign aims to tackle the big issues faced by dock workers in those ports. These include health and safety, casualisation, job security and trade union rights. The campaign also aims for dialogue with the GNT operators to push for global framework agreements – umbrella agreements with employers that enforce labour standards in their operations around the world.

Health and safety in ports

A new international code of practice on cargo safety will come into force soon and dockers' unions are contributing to the debate so that recommendations can be made to the International Labour Organization. It has been agreed that international guidelines on container packing need to be revised and upgraded.

'They said the equipment was unsafe so the employers had to make adjustments to fix it'

Container safety is one of the key issues in ports, but it is not the only one, as the dockers we spoke to have highlighted. They told us how they were tackling unsafe conditions through their unions. Here's what they said:

Juma Renson Thoya of the **Dock Workers' Union** in **Mombasa port, Kenya**, says:

"Accidents vary from section to section. At the container terminal, dockers are hit by mobile equipment, such as gantry cranes, forklifts, moving vehicles and winch cranes. They are also at risk of falling from heights and being crushed by falling objects or buried by cargo. It's also dangerous when people handle hazardous cargo without personal protective equipment. In the workshop, risks include electrocution, eye problems and cuts.

This bulletin is for sharing with workers – if your union isn't distributing it, start today. GNT workers' support is crucial for the success of this campaign – ACT NOW to get them on board!

Continued >



Raising standards for dock workers

GNT CAMPAIGN UPDATE *continued*



“The Dock Workers’ Union has established a health and safety policy and, to ensure these efforts bear fruit, a safety committee has been put in place to educate and ensure all operations are carried out in compliance with the Government Operational Safety and Health Act. The Kenya Ports Authority also has a health and safety policy and has established a fully fledged health, safety and environment department.”

Steve Biggs of **UNITE**, who works at a **DPW** terminal in **Southampton, UK**, said:

“Several serious physical conditions were identified as a result of unsafe equipment in the terminal. These included whole body vibration and neck and back complaints. We carried out a survey to get employees to tell us how these affected them. The survey highlighted issues and any work-related accidents they had had. We then contacted the Health and Safety Executive, which monitors workplace safety in Britain. They said the equipment was unsafe so the employers had to make adjustments to fix it. Anyone who has been injured as a result will be taking a claim to court through the union.”

Geert Kuintjes from the **FNV** union, who works at the ECT terminal in **Rotterdam** in the **Netherlands**, owned by **HPH**, says:

“At the terminal in Rotterdam all employees get health and safety sessions on a regular basis. Every year we are tested to make sure our knowledge and skills are up-to-date. All accidents are reported and discussed with the union

representative. We regularly get a leaflet on how to prevent accidents.”

“Every year, our union carries out an inquiry into safety in the workplace and asks workers if they think things are OK or not. Then they make an evaluation.”

Dockers’ Port Intelligence training course

Dockers’ unionists from Australia, Belgium, India, Kenya, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Philippines and the US, learned how to navigate a new port database when they attended a two-day course in London, UK, on 4-5 and 6-7 April. The database, known as the “Dockers’ Port Intelligence” (DPI) contains information about the four GNT companies AP Moeller Maersk, DPW, HPH and PSA International. This means we have another group of enthusiastic activists on our network sharing information about their work and their union. Register on the DPI and put yourself on the map.

Michele Myers from the Maritime Union of Australia said: “The global network terminals database that we’ve been working on is a really important tool for all unions around the world. It can help you analyse what one port’s got compared to our ports so that we can use that in bargaining and negotiating for agreements to ensure that we’ve got a better standard of agreement across the board, to make sure that the minimum standards are equal to each other.”

Patrick Duijzers from the Dutch union FNV outlined how he would be using the database: “I will use it to learn about other people, how they work, what their working conditions are, how we can help other unions and give them our support to grow.” He added: “After this training I will show my community the database, I will make sure that they get access and I will open up the discussion to find out what they think about it and what’s in it for them.”

To see a video on the DPI training, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtQptx6bWiQ>

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Raising standards for dock workers

GNT CAMPAIGN UPDATE *continued*

From revolution to union rights

New unions have sprung up in GNT ports since the uprisings in the Arab world. Bilal Malkawi, ITF regional secretary for the Arab World, delivered a presentation in London, UK, on 12 April. He described how workers at the APM terminal, with assistance from the ITF, had won union recognition in Egypt following the revolution there. The union now has a collective agreement. "A few months earlier, this wouldn't have been possible," said Malkawi. The ITF, he said, was also helping in the fight to win back the jobs of 30 APM terminal workers in Bahrain, who were dismissed for their role in the protests. "We are working hard to make sure that the government doesn't punish workers for taking part in demonstrations," he said. Malkawi and the ITF are now working hard to provide a training programme in these ports to equip new activists with the skills they need to improve working conditions.



Workers in the Egyptian port of Said who recently won a recognition deal

News from GNT dockers around the world

Agreement for dockers in Morocco

Members of the Union des Syndicats UMT des Transports, based in the Moroccan port of Tangier, signed an agreement with APM Terminals on 31 March. The deal gives workers a number of benefits including: an increase in their basic salary, backdated to 1 March 2011 and an annual bonus. A health and safety committee and a technical committee will also be established to look at rest time and leave for religious holidays.

First ever deal for Bahrain port union

The Port Workers' Union of Bahrain has for the first time won an agreement with APM Terminals in Khalifa bin Salman port

in Bahrain. The deal was reached on 6 April and provides port employees with a one-off payment and those without access to company transport with a transport allowance. Salman Alsaad, head of the Port Workers' Union of Bahrain, said: "This is a significant win for the union – it's the first time the company has ever agreed to sit down with the union and negotiate. That's why getting them to sign the agreement with the union was a particular achievement."

Dockers' action in Dutch port

Workers who lash and secure cargo, who are members of the FNV Bondgenoten union, went on strike on 8 March in the port of Rotterdam in the Netherlands over pay and conditions. They distributed leaflets to those employed in HPH's ECT terminal and in the APM terminal – the terminal operators are customers of their employers ILS and Matrans Group, which provide lashing and securing services. The workers' demands include: equal pay for equal work and job security for all. Through taking collective action, the dockers have now won their demands.

Bargaining in Costa Rica ports

Members of the Costa Rican union Sindicato de Trabajadores de JAPDEVA have reached some points of agreement with port company JAPDEVA. The union and the company have agreed to increase productivity and profitability and have established a working programme to look into modernisation plans. It is expected that a full agreement and working plan will soon be reached. The deal is a major achievement, particularly because, during the union's fight against plans to privatise the ports of Moin and Limon, it suffered rights violations and violence.

GNT poster

The GNT campaign poster template and the campaign logo are now available for you to download. You can use the poster in ports to advertise your campaign activities. The logo can be used on any correspondence or communication materials. Visit:

<https://www.itfglobal.org/ports/campaign-graphics.cfm>

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Raising standards for dock workers

GNT CAMPAIGN UPDATE *continued*

Latest terminal operator and port news

The four big terminal operators are always looking to develop their business, often by opening new terminals or taking over existing port operations – all of which will have an impact on your members.

We'll keep you up-to-date with the latest news in this bulletin. If you would like more information about any of these items, look on the DPI database or contact <mailto:gntdockers@itf.org.uk>

News from the industry

DPW

Dubai Ports World announces its adjusted net profits are US\$450 million for 2010, up 35 per cent from US \$333 million the previous year.

HPH

HPH has pulled out of its joint preferred bid with the Carlyle Group to operate a 75-year master lease at Galveston, the US Gulf of Mexico hub.

PSA

Container throughput at Singapore increased two per cent in the first three months of 2011 to seven million TEU.

APM

The International Finance Corporation is lending US\$679 million towards the cost of building a new container terminal in Santos, Brazil's busiest port. This is a joint venture between Terminal Investment and APMT.

Where are you?

The GNT campaign has a dedicated email address:

gntdockers@itf.org.uk

Please use this to:

- send us your news about local actions, port issues or disputes
- send us your photos so that we can use them on the GNT website and elsewhere
- report any health and safety issues or accidents to the dockers' section
- ask any questions about the GNT campaign.

You can also visit <http://www.itfglobal.org/ports/gnt.cfm> for the latest campaign information.

Campaign materials

Download your GNT campaign materials, including a blank GNT poster for local union messages, actions and meetings, as well as a GNT logo here:

<http://www.itfglobal.org/ports/campaign-graphics.cfm>

GNT campaign – union news

The five DPW Australian ports are currently in the process of bargaining for collective agreements. The agreement negotiated nationally presents significant challenges for the MUA and Australian wharfies. There are huge challenges in the Port of Brisbane specifically where DPW are about to introduce an automated operation. This mode change will create up to 50% redundancies in the terminal. This development is to be taken in the context of the introduction of another GNT operator, Hutchisons as a third operator in the ports of Sydney and Brisbane. The threat of further competition does not stop there with the port of Melbourne being reviewed as to the viability of a third operator. The decision on Melbourne is likely to be taken on the basis of ideological grounds, not with a realistic consideration of the fact that the current two operators can easily deal with the volumes in that port. Competition is being utilised by DPW as a means of leverage during this round of negotiations. Competition inevitably is used as a means of erosion of worker's right and conditions and the MUA will be vigorous in ensuring that this position is combated.

Bargaining with DPW is at a very early stage but clearly there are significant issues that face the MUA and its members at DPW. The company is seeking as its core claims; flexibility, reductions in labour costs and improved efficiency. The MUA is seeking outcomes that will ensure safety on the job for workers and improved training standards including certification for wharfies as well as protections for union members. These claims come from the union on the back of a series of fatalities across the Australian waterfront and a campaign by the MUA to ensure safety is governed by a regulatory approach which guarantees the safest possible operations in Australian ports.



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