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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Monthly Union Meetings

Last Tuesday of the Month
28th July, 9am
"Your Union Your Say"

NEW MUA Website

Check out the website
<http://www.mua.org.au/>

Changed Address or
phone numbers,
got an email address
Notify the Branch and advise

Celebrating the Introduction of Fair Work Australia

1st July saw the implementation of the first phase of the new Federal Industrial relations laws "Fair Work Australia" (FWA).

Unions are celebrating the introduction of these new laws that restore some balance and improve collective bargaining processes and rights for unions and their members. The change in laws is a direct reflection on the thousands of union members and activists who actively campaigned in the "Your rights at work" campaign to get rid of the Howard government and those draconian Workchoices laws.

The ACTU said this on July 1
Women, young people and low-paid workers are among those who will benefit the most from the new laws, said ACTU President Sharan Burrow.

"From today, all Australian workers have a greater sense of security and more respect for their rights at work because of these landmark changes to industrial relations laws," Ms Burrow said.

"These laws are the result of an unprecedented campaign by Australian workers based firmly on the Australian belief of a fair go, who demanded the return of their rights at work after those rights were stripped away by the Howard Government's 'WorkChoices' laws.

"Under WorkChoices, there were countless cases of workers losing pay and conditions, being sacked unfairly and having their basic rights denied.

"At the last federal election, the Australian community said enough was enough.

"These new laws are the culmination of that campaign.

"They will deliver better protection and rights for workers and the ball is now in employers' court to treat their workers with respect and operate within the spirit of the new laws."

The new laws will deliver:

- Genuine rights for workers to collectively bargain and be represented by their union.

- Unfair dismissal for all workers, including about 4 million workers who had no protection under WorkChoices.
- A robust new safety net of awards and national standards, along with a fair and transparent process for setting minimum wages.
- An industrial umpire with teeth to safeguard workers' rights.

"Unions will ensure the new laws take effect in the community quickly and effectively, and will use the Fair Work Act to continue their work representing and improving the working lives of Australians and their families," Ms Burrow said.

ILWU Convention & Caucus

Branch Secretary Jamie Newlyn attended the ILWU Convention & Caucus along with MUA rank & file members and officials. The ILWU covers around 42,000 dock workers on the US West Coast, Alaska and Hawaii and has a strong and historic relationship with the MUA. It was founded in thirties by one time Australian seafarer and US Longshore worker **Harry Bridges**.

The ILWU convention is the democratic process for determining ILWU Rank & File Policy for the next three years similar to our own MUA National Conference.

ILWU President "Big Bob" McEllrath commented in his opening remarks on the issues confronting ILWU members in spite of the Global Financial Crisis and eight years of George Bush he reminded delegates and members of the legacy of 1934 and the difficulties Longshoremen confronted in gaining better conditions in times of great employer and Government hostility and encouraged his members to use that as inspiration in our struggles today. The role of international solidarity featured heavily and convention heard from a number of guest speakers including MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin, ITF Dockers Secretary Frank Leys and MUNZ Assistant National Secretary Russell Mayn. The ILWU also formally renewed their Unity Statement with Japanese Dockers Union Zen Kowan.

This year the ILWU commemorates the 75th anniversary of the Great Strike of 1934 and the ILWU and commemorated the leadership of Harry Bridges



The overwhelming feature of the convention and caucus was the preservation of jobs, conditions and entitlements such as pension & health care in the context of the Global Financial Crisis.

Convention delegates were broken up into 4 committees to discuss Rank & File concerns.

Each committee was responsible for determining which resolutions went before the convention based on the committees

All resolutions were then presented to the convention for discussion, debate and endorsement. All members had an opportunity to speak for or against any resolution put before the convention. The need to organize and grow the union was seen as fundamental to the union's ongoing success and reports were presented on the successes and long struggles that have occurred in the fight to be union.

Other issues of significance and again with great similarity to Australia are the ILWU opposition to the Transport Workers Identification Credentials (TWIC) card which is similar to our MSIC and workers have to pass all the background checks. At the Longshore caucus the Coast Committee reported on the drastic decline in container volumes. The fourth quarter of 2008 delivered the single largest drop in volumes seen since 1975. The employer association PMA is cutting working hours and sending Steadies (permanents) back to the hiring hall.

Of course the PMA are trying to implement cost saving measures that have a direct impact on ILWU members, by way of breaches to the contract & jurisdictional issues i.e. bringing in or contracting out traditional ILWU work

The ILWU can be proud of their Democratic Structure and Militant & Progressive Values as demonstrated at their Convention and caucus. An Injury to One is an Injury to All
A full report can be read on the MUA web page under news items and a full transcript of National Secretary Paddy Crumlin's speech to the ILWU convention can also be downloaded

DP World Clerical

A positive result was achieved in regard to Clerical redundancies as reported in the Branch news, with no members being made compulsory redundant. Other positions were found within current clerical functions. MUA members in the clerical area thanked the union in the following letter:

The DP WORLD Adelaide marine clerks wish to express our gratitude to the MUA for their handling of the recent Compulsory Redundancy situation involving 3 of 8 permanent and 1 PPT marine clerks following the centralization of ship planning by the company. The company's stance of making compulsory redundancy the first option prior to consultation with either the workforce or Union was unfortunate and caused undue stress on the clerks involved and it was reassuring that we received immediate positive support of the Union.

Even though it drew out for what seemed an inordinate length of time due to the company's procrastinations on the issue, common sense prevailed and after being prompted by the Union to offer voluntary redundancies to others in the workforce 3 permanents and 1 PPT accepted and all remaining marine clerks were either redeployed or retained in their positions.

All involved would like to thank the Union in particular Jamie Newlyn and Jim Tannock for their professional handling of the situation which culminated in a positive result in difficult times reinforcing the importance of being a financial MUA member.

Yours in Unity

John Engelhardt, David McGrath, David Heaft, Gary Wallage, Shaun Mousley, Darren Beswick, Ryan Munns

DP World Crane Training

A dispute exists where DP World have initiated training for Portainer Cranes that the MUA claim hasn't followed the appropriate selection criteria as described in the EBA. Numerous meetings have been held and a result was pending however the members at a yard meeting rejected the proposal and the dispute has escalated. A dispute notice has been lodged with the AIRC to hear a conciliation and if necessary Arbitration. A conciliation conference has been set down for 29 July. The Branch has indicated to DP World that training should cease until such time as a ruling has been determined by the commission. A 2 Hour Yard meeting will be requested to report back on the commission's decision either after conciliation or failing a result there the commission's arbitration. An unpaid meeting for interested members to convey any current concerns will be arranged in the near future at the MUA rooms.

SWS

Southern Wharf Service members are still under attack from their principal owner ABB Grain. The MUA contend that ABB Grain are trying to undermine wages and conditions of SWS members

by introducing Grain terminal employees onto SWS sites at lower rates of pay and conditions. This will undermine stevedoring conditions if ABB are successful. ABB grain lodged a dispute in the commission seeking to get a ruling allowing SWS to train ABB employees in their respective job functions. The members have rejected this and the subsequent conciliation conference in the commission failed to produce an outcome, as a result an arbitration hearing has been set down for 4 August. In other news SWS (ABB) Management have called for an EBA meeting on Friday 17 July. Delegates will be attending from all SWS ports and the Branch has requested that delegates be available the day before to develop our strategy. The Branch and members anticipate a long and protracted battle with this anti union employer.

ABB Grain Outer Harbour EBA:

The Branch has been trying to negotiate a Greenfields agreement for the new ABB Grain Outer Harbour facility. Due to the constant attacks on the SWS members by ABB the branch was reluctant to sign off on the agreement as the future of SWS employees was not confirmed. However as 30 June approached ABB Grain indicated that they would be seeking an employee agreement as of 1 July. This created a great deal of uncertainty for the union where there may not have been union members employed at the new ABB site. This would have left the MUA without coverage in the area and with no ability to organise or be part of the agreement. It was decided after seeking legal advice that we would sign off on the Outer harbour Agreement and seek to organise the workers in that area.

Maersk Logistics Warehouse

A meeting was called by Maersk Logistics last week to inform members that Constellation wines CWA (Formerly Hardy's) would be taking over the business to have a more direct responsibility for the facility. CWA have indicated that all entitlements would be protected and that years of service would be recognised and all employees including casuals would be maintained in the transition. CWA have indicated that they will be responsible for negotiating the impending EBA. CWA currently have Collective Agreements with other unions and have acknowledged our jurisdiction of the Outer Harbour Warehouse. A further meeting was held on July 6 with the labour to develop a log of claims for the upcoming EBA. The EBA also provides for a good organising opportunity to increase union density at the site and improve workers power.