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Maritime Union of Australia

MUA Branch News



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Branch Secretary Jamie Newlyn will be on leave from 31 August returning 14 September. Honorary Deputy Branch Secretary Clem Clothier (ph: 0423 550 561) will relieve Jamie Newlyn from 31 August to 6 September followed by DP World Delegate Brett Larkin (ph: 041116 7775) Please offer them your every assistance.

Merchant Navy Day September 3

See article and website www.mua.org.au

MUA TShirts & Caps \$20

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

ALP National Conference

Branch Secretary Jamie Newlyn attended the recent ALP National Conference along with other representatives from the MUA including National Secretary Paddy Crumlin. ALP Conference sets the policy direction for the Labor party as directed by resolutions from the rank and file. Our unions involvement with the ALP has been to primarily influence policy through practical participation, results of which have been demonstrated since Labor was in opposition. The ALP conference again provided our union with an opportunity to influence policy in the form of the unanimously endorsed ALP shipping policy which will tighten up the unfettered use of single voyage permits and allow greater incentives for shipowners to fly the Australian flag and be Australian manned. This is an extremely positive development considering the willful neglect of Australian shipping in the Howard Government. National Secretary Paddy Crumlin moved the resolution and spoke on the critical need for a vibrant Australian Shipping Industry. National Secretary Paddy Crumlin also spoke on strengthening the regional economy through training workers of our nearest neighbours such as PNG and East Timor, particularly as Australian companies and multi nationals seek to exploit the natural resources of this region with little regard for the local communities. The conference was devoid of any conflict over policy which was an unusual feature considering the factional based operation of the ALP, however there were moments of dissent when silent protesters holding placards made there way to the front of the auditorium during Minister for Climate Change Penny Wong's address. This only served to fire up the Minister in what turned out to be a spirited contribution. In the area of industrial relations the overshadowing form of the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) still forms part of the alp Industrial Relations Legislation much to the chagrin of unions. A lunch time rally was held by building workers and attended by MUA Sydney Branch members to send a message to PM Rudd and Deputy PM Gillard that workers are not content with these laws remaining and as the slogan goes "one law for all" was loudly reverberated around Sydney's Darling Harbour. While the conference was very much a stage managed affair the unity and determination of delegates including MUA delegates to deliver policy outcomes for all Australians and maintains an important point of difference between the ALP and the Conservative Liberal Party particularly on progressive issues.

Retirements in National Office

Deputy National Secretary Jim Tannock and Assistant National Secretary Rick Newlyn have advised the national secretary of their intentions to retire this year at a time of the unions choosing. Jim Tannock began his waterfront career as a clerk in Melbourne and became Secretary of the Clerks Union and then an official of the WWF before the birth of the MUA. As members would know Jim is a numbers man and decided to challenge for a position in the WWF National Office of which he was successful and went on to become the Deputy National Secretary of the MUA. Jim has been a tireless advocate for workers and his major contribution to the waterfront has been the introduction of rosters a feature of the Australian waterfront that member's would not exchange. In fact at most negotiations the claims are about improving the roster and Jim has to work his magic to deliver which inevitably he does. Minister for Transfers was a title reserved for Jim particularly in days when permanent transfers between ports was a more common practice. For those not familiar with Jim he is about solutions, getting a "deal". Jim sometimes got offside with members because he would tell it like it was and wouldn't sugar coat anything. If it was unachievable Jim tell's you. It is this pragmatic approach that has ensured Jim's longevity as an official with our great union. Jim's experience in Stevedoring will be hard to replace, as the old saying goes "he knows where the bodies are buried" but his advice and mentoring I am sure will not be too far away if required. Rick Newlyn would be known to nearly all South Australian members being a former South Australian Branch Secretary of the WWF and MUA. Rick was a seafarer for a few years where the hotbed of shipboard political life shaped his union views. After a short seagoing career Rick got a start on the Sydney wharfs in 1974 a vocation he has followed up to his imminent retirement. Rick transferred to a number of different ports including Fremantle, Port Kembla and finally Adelaide where he developed lifelong friendships & networks. His time in Port Kembla in particular cemented his Trade union beliefs and developed his skills as a delegate. As a wharfie Rick was known to be "idle" and pioneered the "Nick System" however as an official his work ethic is tireless. Always on the phone Rick is well known for returning calls and happy to advise members. Rick became Branch Secretary of the WWF in 1992 prior to amalgamation with the SUA to form the MUA. Rick served SA members for ten years before filling a temporary vacancy in the national office in 2002 as Assistant National Secretary a position he has held to retirement.



Industrial rounds

I'm sure all members join me in wishing both Jim and Rick a happy, safe, healthy & fulfilling retirement.

As with all retirements some consequential vacancies need to be filled and a special National Council was held on 20 August where the following vacancies were filled.

Mick Doleman promoted from Assistant National Secretary to Deputy National Secretary
Warren Smith promoted from Sydney Branch Secretary to Assistant National Secretary
Ian Bray promoted from Western Australia Assistant Branch Secretary to Assistant National Secretary
I'm sure all members join me in congratulating Mick, Warren and Ian in their respective new positions and will offer all assistance where needed.

Merchant Navy Day September 3

The now annual Merchant Navy Day is fast approaching and progress is underway to ensure a successful day is held once again in South Australia. Members may recall that in 2008 the Rudd Labor Government proclaimed September 3 as Merchant Navy Day in Australia and the date symbolises the first merchant ship sunk in World War 2. In Adelaide last year the biggest gathering in Australia occurred to commemorate the day and this year we are hoping for an even bigger event. The Navigator Memorial Sculpture that marked the entrance to the former Ports Corp building has now been relocated to a more prominent position on the Port Adelaide waterfront and will be the focal point of the September 3 celebrations. The Navigator Memorial pays tribute to the loss of 89 lives on the SS Admella in August 1859 on Carpenters Rocks. Merchant Navy Day is recognition of the importance of the Merchant Marine in war time and in the building of Australia's economic independence and of course the loss of life in war and peace time tragedy's. It is common knowledge that 1 in 8 merchant seafarers died in World War 2. Recognition of which has been neglected for decades until recently.

Members are encouraged to attend the celebrations on Thursday 3 September commencing 11am, corner Commercial Rd and St Vincent St Port Adelaide (Port Adelaide Workers Memorial) followed by a short march to the Navigator Memorial where some short contributions will be made by the local MP, Mayor and Assistant National Secretary Rick Newlyn
Special thanks to Keith Ridgeway and the MUA Veterans for their tireless efforts in organising the event and also to John Williams from the Merchant Navy Association for coordinating and promoting the event.

For more info check out the new web page www.mua.org.au

DP World: the branch has been to the new Fairwork Australia (FWA) (ex AIRC) in recent times for conciliation conferences as part of dispute resolution procedures regarding the selection criteria for crane training positions.

A number of issues arose from the initial selection process that the company utilized including no measurement for years of service, cognitive testing which turned out to be psychological profiling which doesn't demonstrate who can drive a crane. FWA Senior Deputy President O'Callaghan encouraged the parties to seek resolution through further dialogue. DP World and Union representatives worked through a number of options following conciliation and have agreed on a new criteria and selection process which; removes the cognitive test, allows for all irregulars (VSE, GWE, SUPPS) to apply for next round of training in November based on the new criteria which will look at general work ethic, availability etc and a practical assessment at an independent training centre. This outcome is far superior to the process that was originally put into dispute. Permanents will be eligible for the subsequent rounds of training in 2010 or as required after November 2009.

POAGS: the global financial crisis has had an enormous impact in bulk & general stevedoring in Port Adelaide in particular which has resulted in permanents and VSE not reaching hours or guarantees for the year. For permanents this has resulted by agreement in the rolling over of half the owed hours into this financial year, meaning permanents need to work up to 2000 hours in some instances. Recently the VSE's were advised that they were behind in guarantee significantly, meaning they had been paid in advance for work not done. POAGS called a meeting of VSE to discuss how to recoup the money so as to avoid drastic changes that could include redundancy or cuts to the guarantee. A number of proposals were discussed including, taking of excess annual leave and the possibility of 1 month transfers to Port Hedland where there is a critical skills shortage. All members were in agreement with the propositions put forward.

SWS: the second round of SWS e/a negotiations occurred on 5 August where the parties worked through the current agreement in an effort to establish what needed to be changed, added or removed.

A working document is now in circulation to delegates for comment before the next meeting. To date negotiations have been cordial however SWS members are entitled to be wary of ABB grains motives during negotiations as this agreement is ultimately about SWS members' survival. It is clear ABB grain is intent on integration between silos and SWS bulk loading plants (BLP) on their terms. With the consequences being that ABB personnel could come on to SWS BLP and work at a lower rate with worse conditions.

In other SWS news a dispute currently exists over whether ABB grain can compel SWS members to train ABB grain terminal employees in various BLP & Stevedoring functions. We have used the SWS agreements definitions of employee to lodge

the dispute in conjunction with the training clause. The dispute has been to conciliation and now SWS have advised that they want to negotiate an outcome rather than go to arbitration. While the motives are vague we believe this is a positive development.

Constellation Wines Australia (CWA) (Formerly Maersk)

A log of claims has been submitted to CWA in advance of a meeting to renegotiate the wine warehouse agreement. CWA recently took control of the warehouse through a transmission of business. CWA's Hardy Wine products have been exclusively packed at the warehouse since inception and CWA wanted full control of the warehousing rather than utilize a contractor such as Maersk. This is the 3rd company name of the facility in its young history. Already the manager of the warehouse has been made redundant creating a little uncertainty. The only certainty is that the MUA has been involved in every agreement and regardless of owner or manager we will continue to do the best we can in the interest and with the involvement of members. The first meeting is scheduled for Thursday 27 August.

Svitzer Adelaide and Whyalla

Svitzer management and unions have met to discuss implementation of the new enterprise agreement and Port operation procedures. In Adelaide the meeting centred on a new roster to accommodate the equal time roster achieved in negotiations. Svitzer recommended that if an agreement can't be reached then the resources of an independent company shiftwork solutions who specialize in rosters and fatigue management be engaged to offer assistance. The Adelaide members will consider this option on a without prejudice basis. A further meeting will be held in coming weeks to discuss port operation procedures.

Whyalla, with project magnet becoming increasingly busier than first anticipated the need for an equal time formulated roster was the major imperative of the combined unions when they met Svitzer on 18 & 19 August. An implementation meeting was held followed by discussions on an updated port operations procedure including the predictable leave roster. The company claimed they are losing money and as such could not commit to a full equal time predictable roster. However they did offer to increase crews to 14 that would provide more predictable leave and less leave in running.

STCW 95 & Integrated Rating Training in SA

Members would have seen reports in the most recent Maritime Workers Journal regarding opportunities for wharves and port workers to train for a seagoing career in STCW 95 and or integrated rating. This is a fantastic opportunity with only 1 hurdle remaining before we can accept applications for these courses. The Australian Fishing Academy needs to get AMSA accreditation for these courses to ensure the training can be completed in South Australia and meet the requirements of the funding grant the Union were able to secure. Additional training in dogging and crane will also compliment STCW 95 & IR courses. The branch will SMS members when training is confirmed.