



Bob Carnegie - Branch Secretary | **Jason Miners** - Deputy Branch Secretary

Paul Gallagher - Assistant Branch Secretary

Paul Petersen - Central QLD Organiser | **Glenn Desmond** - North QLD Organiser

Dear Comrades

I am in receipt of this powerful message of support to our union from a shop steward of the British National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT). It comes from the RMT National Secretary. Please read this magnificent message of support and spread it far and wide.

In Unity

Bob Carnegie
Branch Secretary

TO ALL BRANCHES & REGIONAL COUNCILS.

HO ref: S14/9/16
8th February 2016

Dear Colleagues

RE: Attacks on Australian seafarers

The Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and the ITF have alerted the union to the outrageous attacks on Australian seafarers which have seen ships boarded by private security and police in the early hours of the morning to remove MUA members and in order to replace them with seafarers paid \$2 (£1.27) per hour.

This shocking turn of events is the result of the right wing Australian Government's decision to scrap Cabotage legislation, enacted in 2013 by the previous Labor administration which protected Australian seafarers' jobs and collectively bargained terms and conditions from exploitative social dumping by employers in the Australian shipping industry.

Following the scrapping of these protections, shipping companies in Australia have been quick to set about replacing Australian crew on routes between Australian ports with seafarers from low cost countries. In January five MUA members on the MV Portland were hauled out of their bunks at 1am by 30 private security guards hired by Alcoa and just last week over a dozen police boarded the CSL Melbourne at night in Newcastle, New South Wales to remove five MUA crew members protesting against their sacking by Pacific Aluminium.

In both cases, the ships continue to work routes between Australian ports but the jobs on these vessels have been taken from Australian seafarers. Their replacements, mainly Chinese seafarers are being mercilessly exploited, with rates of pay as low as \$2 (£1.27) per hour, well below both the collectively bargained rate and the international minimum agreed and enforced by the ITF.

The union has sent messages of solidarity and support to MUA members on the frontline in the battle against social dumping and Flags of Convenience vessels and RMT Branches are encouraged to send messages of support to MUA members to this email address: muano@mua.org.au

Branches are invited to make a financial contribution to the hardship fund MUA has set up for the MV Portland, CSL Melbourne and other seafarers and their families who have lost their livelihoods as a result of this sustained attack on their jobs and employment rights. Donations will be treated as a legitimate form of Branch expenditure and can be sent here:

Account Name: MUA-General Fund

Bank: Commonwealth Bank BSB: 062 006

Account Number: 1001 0464

Swift Code (for overseas transfer): CTBAAU2S

Address: George Street, Haymarket, New South Wales 2000

Please note in the reference field “Hardship Fund RMT”

RMT stand shoulder to shoulder with the MUA in the face of these outrageous and systematic attacks on Australian seafarers, who have been sold out to private interests by their own Government – an experience far too common in the shipping industry. We will continue to work in any way we can to assist the MUA and ITF in defeating and reversing these attacks.

I would appreciate it if you could bring this circular to the attention of all Branch members and you will be kept updated with further developments.

Yours sincerely

Mick Cash
General Secretary