



# QUEENSLAND BRANCH NEWS

NEWSLETTER of the QLD Branch of the MARITIME UNION of AUSTRALIA

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## 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the IDC – Miami – MUA Crew in dramatic rescue – North Queensland Report – Other reports

THE QUEENSLAND BRANCH has sent a delegation to the 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the IDC consisting of Bill Ross (Queensland Maintenance Delegate), Aaron Johnston (DP World), Joseph Tipene from BCT as well as Organiser Paul Petersen and Bob Carnegie Branch Secretary. The IDC 7<sup>th</sup> Assembly has brought together 400 delegates from 26 countries dedicated to defending the rights of Dockworkers everywhere. It is a wonderful expression of working class solidarity.

The first day of this general assembly was taken up with very deep analysis from economists and labor historians on this most pressing of issues for Dock Workers World Wide. Also union leaders from around the world and more importantly rank and file wharfies spoke on their shared experiences.



Out of this will come a document which unions around the world will commit and fight around. The two photos are firstly a photo of Bob Carnegie with a terrific group of Belgian Dockers and the Labour Historian Raquel Valera who gave one of the keynote addresses and is a wonderful person who works tirelessly for working class people. The second photo is one of the General Assembly.



International Solidarity is an absolute cornerstone of our union. Dockers/ Wharfies are interlinked by their work and indeed by the company's they get their wages from. Whilst we expect no one to fight our battles for us, if Dock worker unions are to survive in this period we need to stand together, share our experiences, and defend each other.

A more complete report on the Assembly will follow in the next Branch News.

### MUA Crew in Dramatic Rescue of Round-the-World Solo Sailor

THE MUA CREW of the emergency response vessel Coral Knight knew they had to move fast when they saw the stricken yacht of round-the-world solo sailor Martin Dolecek last Friday.

After sailing around the world solo for 9 years the 32-year-old Czech issued a cry for help after running aground on The Great Barrier Reef off Barrow Island, Queensland. When the Aussie rescue crew appeared at first light on Friday 16 September, his yacht Alya 11 was being pushed further onto the coral reef by strong tides.

Dolecek told his Aussie rescuers: "It was like sitting inside a washing machine."

Coral Knight crew member Gudge Richardson said conditions were so woeful, the stranded sailor was forced to abandon his yacht.

“The previous evening her keel had cracked and she had begun taking water and pretty soon the yacht washed completely over the reef and was destroyed,” Mr Richardson said.

Dolecek had already made for shore in his two-metre rubber dinghy, spending a harrowing night on the beach with saltwater crocs, wild pigs and sandflies.

“We rescued him at low tide and he was overjoyed to join us,” Mr Richardson said.

“The bosun had made him up a cabin and he was provided with a hot meal, then headed straight to his much appreciated bunk.”



When MUA delegate Dave Barenger took Martin ashore on Thursday Island he had no money and just a few belongings and was shattered he'd lost his sailing vessel. Customs didn't want a bar of him and told Dave to take him to the local shopping center to see if anyone would take him in. This wasn't good enough said Dave so he decided they would take him back to sea for another week until they made sure he was going to be ok.

Queensland Assistant Branch Secretary Paul Gallagher said Dolecek spent several days on board the Coral Knight which dropped him on Thursday Island today.

“The MUA crew not only fed him and took care of him, they gave him \$500 from their rolling fund to pay for a flight to Cairns,” Mr Gallagher said. Then from Cairns they arranged for Martin to be taken to immigration and back to Mackay where he has friends.

“The MUA we will always be there for there for stricken mariners and their welfare.”

## **NORTH QUEENSLAND REPORT**

**By Assistant Branch Secretary Paul Gallagher  
Cairns**

THE UNION HELD a General meeting at the Brothers leagues club on 31<sup>st</sup> August which was well attended by members from the tugs, offshore industry, ETV Coral Knight, Seaswift, retired vets and others. The meeting was a huge success and it was determined the meeting would continue every 5 weeks to coincide with the crew change of the Coral Knight. As word gets around we are expecting larger numbers at these meetings where the National Office report will be discussed along with local issues and

campaigns. The next meeting is at 7pm Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> October at Brothers.



Cairns delegates are in the process of setting up an official Port Committee with reps from all sections of the union. They will meet every 5 weeks and report to the Cairns General meetings.

### **Townsville**

TOWNSVILLE DELEGATES FROM NSS, Port of Townsville, TBSH and Bowen tugs met to discuss the way forward in the Port for our Union after the Queensland branch restructure. It was determined they will set up an official port committee to discuss issues around the port on a regular basis. The committee would also look to run local campaigns and take care of local commitments such as May Day preparations

### **NSS**

AFTER LOSING A large contract, NSS management have gone into damage control and have taken the typical slash and burn approach to their workforce trying to negotiate EBA conditions now, based on what they foresee will be the situation in 6 months.

### **Port of Townsville Ltd.**

EBA NEGOTIATIONS STARTED positively last week and the two parties came together on a lot of issues in the first two sessions setting the scene for a quick settlement. The only possible hold up could be the fact all negotiated outcomes have to go through State Government Treasury approval as they are a public owned company. Delegates Shane Ralph, Geoff Baker and Peter Hogan are working through some new proposals with Paul Gallagher and Glenn Desmond is leading the talks. The next meeting is 5<sup>th</sup> October.

### **TBSH**

Townsville Bulk Storage and Handling have recently won the contract for Incetec fertiliser which has created an increase in their workload. There is an experienced and staunch union workforce there that are nearing completion of their enterprise agreement with only a few minor issues to sort out.

## OTHER REPORTS

### Brisbane linesman campaign

MUA QLD BRANCH, through Fair Work Commission, secured a secret ballot for workers at non-union lines company ES Randle for a majority support determination to get them on a new EBA. The ballot was defeated by 12 votes to 8 leaving this company to continue its poor form of racing the lines industry in Brisbane to the bottom by slashing rates and undercutting decent pay and conditions. Meanwhile at Ausport the union members there voted up a protected action ballot showing a united front and subsequently the company and the branch are now in an principled agreement for a new EBA after a four year campaign.



### Coral Knight

ON THE CORAL Knight the company Gardline are making a joint announcement with the clients AMA about what it seems is a problem with the new build vessel which was to be picked up this month from China. A relief crew were to be picked up for a transition period and a TIR once the new Coral Guardian came into service. For now we will have to wait and see. On the last crew change the MUA crew donated \$500 to the Queensland Branch Fighting fund. Many thanks to those comrades.

### Svitzer Brisbane operations base

EBA TO START on October 10<sup>th</sup>. We have five out of six members who run traffic for all Queensland tugs on a 24/7 basis. The Brisbane EBA is superior to other ports and the first one up for negotiation.

### Queensland Bulk Terminals

EBA ON GOING. Company has rejected members log of claims that attempted to address the relatively low wage of these seven members in a small terminal saying they won't accept anything that is not cost neutral. Bob has come in to negotiations.

### Queensland Branch Office

AT THE BRANCH monthly meeting this month, Ann Gray presented the departing Branch Manager Lyza Rooks with some beautiful flowers on behalf of the work Lyza has done for the Women's Committee. Lyza finishes at the Branch on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2016. Carol Conlon will be taking over the role.

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