



# Queensland Branch News



20<sup>th</sup> May 2014

## SPECIAL MEETING - BRANCH MONTHLY MEETING

A Special Meeting followed by the Branch Monthly Meeting will be held at the Union office, 73 Southgate Avenue, Cannon Hill on **Tuesday 27 May 2014, commencing at 9.00a.m.**

In accordance with Rule 20, the Special Meeting will seek membership endorsement of Rule changes as endorsed by National Council on 9 May 2014.

These Rule changes are as a result of resolutions from the National Council Conference in 2012 and are summarised as follows:

- Renaming of the Northern NSW Branch to the Newcastle Branch
- Provision of one (1) full voting Women’s representative on National Council
- Notice of proposed resolutions for National Conference
- Nominations for elections in the quadrennial election
- Roll of voters (quadrennial election)
- Election procedures

The full Rule change proposals are available on the MUA website [http://www.mua.org.au/notice\\_of\\_special\\_meeting](http://www.mua.org.au/notice_of_special_meeting)

At the conclusion of the Special Meeting and Branch Monthly Meeting a BBQ will be held. All available members are urged to attend.

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## PRIVATISATION

QCU and affiliated Unions attended a “round table meeting” with the Qld LNP Treasurer. Acting Queensland Branch Secretary, Trevor Munday, attended on behalf of the MUA. The LNP Government is pushing the envelope associated with debt reduction based on the Peter Costello led Commission of Audit.

### PORT OF BRISBANE

Sold in November 2010 for \$2.1 billion + \$200 million to upgrade section of Port of Brisbane Motor Way.

There were a number of investors under the Banner of Q Port Holdings, including Global infrastructure partners. They paid \$575 million for 26.7% share. On 28 November 2013 they sold their share for approximately \$1 billion. (Source: *The Australian* – Business)

In April 2013 Shipping Australia Chairman raised concerns regarding privatisation by the NSW Port Botany and Port Kembla. Those concerns being that two of the investors, Industry Funds Management and Tawreed Investments now have a 65% stake in NSW Ports and 46% of Brisbane. He also raised a concern that some rents had been increased by 33%.

In 2010, the then duopoly terminal operators in Brisbane introduced an infrastructure charge per container, they say because of “unsustainable cost increases in the Port of Brisbane” the rates were as follows and the table compares current charges.

| Company  | 2010     | March 2014 |
|----------|----------|------------|
| Patrick  | \$17.75  | \$29.06    |
| DP World | \$ 18.30 | \$30.80    |

Therefore the terminal operators have increased charges by two thirds in three and a half years. These “infrastructure charges” are not absorbed by Transport operators, they are passed on to the shipper and the end result is the consumer pays.

## GLADSTONE

The City of Gladstone is a Port City, the Community feel like they have ownership of the Port, in fact the GPC have the motto Growth, Prosperity, Community.

The 2012/2013 Annual Report refers to the following:

- \$57 million dividend provided to the State up from \$48.1 million the previous year, despite increase of operation expenses of \$45 million
- SMIT Towage to expand tug fleet from six to ten. This highlights the increased shipping traffic along with six additional berths for coal export
- Almost \$3 million invested in community infrastructure and activities

## TOWNSVILLE

Annual Report shows - Dividend of nearly \$16 million  
Capital port related infrastructure completed - \$85 million for berth 10  
- \$40 million for berth 8

This equates to less forecast expenditure and therefore improved future dividend.

## MEETING

The LNP have put forward three possible outcomes to reduce debt in the State:

1. Increase taxes and charges
2. Reduce services
3. Sell public assets

During the course of the meeting, the MUA highlighted that the Ports earmarked for privatisation, being Gladstone and Townsville, have been revenue producers for a significant period of time. Further after Tim Nicholls relayed that they did not want to see the sale of assets mean an increase cost to business or Queensland consumers.

The MUA provided information explaining that is exactly what has occurred with the POBL, highlighting a 66.7% increase in Stevedoring terminal operators charges (as mentioned above) that are simply passed on to consumers. I also stated that if the MUA pursued a 66.7% wage increase over three and a half years it would be front page news in all forms of written media. We indicated that Gladstone in particular was to be in a position to produce additional revenue and therefore a larger dividend to Government coffers.

Based on the experience of the PORT of Brisbane, there are real concerns regarding any proposed 99 year leases for other QLD ports. There will only be a shift of a GOC monopoly from the Public Sector to the Private Sector. This is not only a concern of the Trade Union Movement, it is also a concern of Port operators. Shipping Australia has also raised concerns regarding eastern seaboard Port ownership. The ultimate result of the outcomes is that Exporters of commodities pay, In relation to imports consumers pay.

The Qld LNP Government have spent over \$6 million on advertisements and a **website called "Strong Choices"** – most 'punters' who have utilised the website have called it "**NO CHOICES.**" Further the MUA registered to be informed of community events and were not provided with any information in relation to the same. Coming meetings of the Branch Committee and membership will highlight this issue further.

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## DELEGATES TRAINING COURSES 2014

The Branch needs members to register their interest in the Delegates 2 course (19<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> June) **as soon as possible** as it is necessary to make application for Trade Union Training leave at the members applicable enterprise. Your early response would be appreciated, as there are only a couple of spaces left.

Course dates are as follows:

| COURSE  | DATE   | LOCATION |
|---|--|----------|
| Delegates 2                                       | 19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> June       | Brisbane |
| Delegates 1                                       | 26 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup> November   | Brisbane |
| Delegates 3                                       | 15 <sup>th</sup> - 17 <sup>th</sup> July       | Sydney   |
| Development Program for Women Members & Delegates | 30 <sup>th</sup> July - 1 <sup>st</sup> August | Sydney   |

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