

WA Rank & File Voice



TOUCH ONE - TOUCH ALL

Newspaper of the Maritime Union of Australia – Western Australian Branch Number 20 February 2011

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2011 West Coast State Conference



Together we stand in 2011



A big year for the wharfie

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Point Peron revived

DP World Wharfies Vinnie Clegg and Heath Schmidt addressed the November AGM about funding to rejuvenate the huts at Point Peron via a 50c per week levy for all Fremantle-based members.

The presentation included three quotes for the works and a passionate plea not to let it go. The levy was endorsed with 100 per cent support from the membership.

One of the issues preventing the branch spending any real money on the huts was the fact we have been running on month by month leases since 2003.

Despite previous unsuccessful attempts to get an extension, Vinnie took the opportunity to address the issue with WA state Opposition leader Eric Ripper at a national council dinner held in Fremantle in October.

Ripper took up the challenge and made contact with the minister for environment Bill Marmion, resulting in the MUA securing a new two-year lease.

The letter featured right is self explanatory. We will obviously need to prepare compre-



Back on track: The lease for Point Peron is now for two years and no longer on a month-by-month basis.

hensive submissions for the review at the end of the two years so that we can secure a longer-term lease again to enable us to allocate resources for further improvement of the facilities.

Vinnie Clegg, Heath Schmidt and Matt Congleton have been heading up workgroups to save money wherever possible and keep on top of the project.

Point Peron is a great and economical getaway for MUA members and their families and provides a fantastic opportunity for members to

socialise outside of work.

The camps are due to reopen mid year, but in the meantime there is a bit of work to do.

Our members have covered a variety of trades in their previous lives and we are looking for plumbers, painters, electricians and general handymen/labourers to help keep the costs down.

If you can help in any way, please contact the branch.

Congratulations to the Point Peron Committee for all their efforts in keeping the camps long history alive.



Hon Bill Marmion MLA
Minister for Environment; Water

Your Ref: 5386RC
Our Ref: 40-12995

Hon Eric Ripper MLA
Leader of the Opposition
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr Ripper

Thank you for your letter dated 29 November 2010 to the former Minister for Environment regarding a camp leased by the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) from the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) at Cape Peron in Rockingham Lakes Regional Park.

DEC has advised that it currently manages eight recreation camp leases at Cape Peron. The leases are for promoting the health and physical fitness of the members of the tenant organisations and their respective families.

I have been advised that the MUA leases two camps at Cape Peron, which were formerly held by the Waterside Workers Federation of Australia and the Seamen's Union of Australia. The leases commenced on 1 November 2001 and expired on 31 October 2003. The leases contain a 'holding over' clause enabling the MUA to continue occupying the leased area after expiry of the lease on a monthly basis.

Direction for the future management of the leases is provided through the *Rockingham Lakes Regional Park Management Plan 2010* which was recently approved and gazetted on 30 November 2010. The management plan states:

"Given the significant ramifications of the Mangles Bay Marina Tourist Precinct and its timing, the lessees of existing camps will be offered a new two-year lease term, from the gazettal of the Plan, for lease areas outside the 'Area Subject to Further Planning'. At the end of the two-year period, DEC will review the leases."

The management plan for Rockingham Lakes Regional Park is available from DEC's website at <http://www.dec.wa.gov.au/content/view/full/104/1931/>.

DEC has advised that the area subject to further planning represents the project boundary based on the documentation provided to the Environmental Protection Authority in 2005 as part of the Strategic Environmental Review for the project. As such, DEC is prepared to enter into a new lease with the MUA for two years from the date the plan was gazetted and will commence preparation of a draft lease document.

Should Mr Clegg require further information on the preparation of a draft lease, he should contact Brendan Dooley, DEC's Regional Parks Branch Manager, on telephone number 9431 6500 or email Brendan.Dooley@dec.wa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Bill Marmion

HON BILL MARMION MLA
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT; WATER

24 JAN 2011



Members sacked for refusing to stay on this vessel

Lives at risk: Members were sacked for refusing to stay on board this vessel. Read more below and on pages 18-19.



Boskalis, the curse of the dredging industry?

It seems that never a week goes by without there being some problem with Boskalis. Members are regularly complaining that the company doesn't stick by agreements that they sign off on.

We regularly receive reports that members are continually being harassed day in and day out.

Three members were sacked for refusing to sleep on a vessel that I wouldn't ask Laurence Robb to stay on.

Cramped conditions, putrid smells throughout the claustrophobic accommodation, no proper mess facilities, and our members were expected to live on board this heap of shit during a cyclone.

To be stranded on this vessel for a week would be a major safety concern.

They (Boskalis) know it! Worksafe know it! Chevron know it! Any seafarer would know it too!

The sacked workers are now being hassled by believe it, yes the "ABCC".

What a fucking joke.

Boskalis senior management wake up to yourselves! You are a disgrace! I have just heard that BK102 has just been beached with a couple of major holes in the vessel, on the Gorgon project.

I'm sure that Chevron would be looking very closely at this incident. Watch this space.

Patricks members solid!

Once again members at Patricks B & G are having to stand up and take more protected strike action (5 Days Fremantle and Kwinana, 6 Days in Albany) and after continued knock backs from Patricks our members have resolved to step up the strike action.

There have been seven months of negotiations and still Patricks bullshit, and continue to not bargain in good faith. So back to the commission we went, and our members have decided to up the ante, the commission granted more types of industrial action questions to go to ballot.

I am quite confident that our members will vote them up in the ballot and it was pleasing to see every one of them at the mass meeting outside the gates of the A.M.C.

Thanks must also go out to the massive support that we are receiving from all unions, and the normal punter off the street. Great solidarity, keep it up.

WE WILL WIN!

Touch one Touch all. Also congratulations to the boys at Webb Dock and Geelong, great stuff!

West Coast Conference.

Don't miss it!

The agenda is now complete for our West Coast Conference. I would like to congratulate all of the staff and members, who have been working tirelessly

to make this special event a huge success.

The logistics of this event is massive, and to the members who have given a lot of their time, I congratulate you all. The ball tickets are just about sold out, which means we are all going to have a great night. If you still need a ticket ring the branch ASAP.

Don't miss out!

AMMA Whinges again

How many times does this outfit need to be told? The MUA is here to STAY!

I have told all employers that they need to sit down direct with the union and work things through. Some do, some don't, but you all don't have to take my advice.

Most of the issues we have can be worked through, but there are some advocates within AMMA who are more concerned with pressing their own ideological agendas then sitting down and resolving matters for the benefit of all parties.

The bloody mindedness of some within AMMA is not only costing employers money but it takes up my precious time as well.

Employers wake up to yourselves, you can make them redundant, you know.

All employers need to understand that, we have rights in this country and its high time AMMA learns to respect those rights.

MUA - here to stay!



Welcome to 2011 - Year of the Wharfie

THIS has been dubbed the *Year of the Wharfie* following on 2010's *Year of the Seafarer*.

Collective agreements at Patrick B&G, Patrick Terminal, Fremantle Port, DP World, POAGS, ABS, Esperance Port, Patrick Ports, Mercantile, 3 Ocean Maritime and Mermaids will all be negotiated this year.

These involve the ports of Esperance, Albany, Bunbury, Fremantle, Kwinana, Geraldton, Dampier and Hedland. It is an exciting time to be a member of this strategic, militant and progressive union as we fight for proper wages and conditions that our members deserve.

Patrick Bulk and General Fighting from the Front

Patrick B&G negotiations have been going since July, without a single offer from the company.

In November, Fremantle and Albany struck the first blow in the campaign with a successful protected action ballot. This was closely followed by Webb Dock and Geelong with Darwin joining the fold in late January.

The first action was taken in Fremantle, being 72hrs from Boxing Day. Albany followed with 96hrs a few days later.

Webb dock was next, with stoppages of 72hrs and Geelong also took action in support of our claims.

Despite the action and a commitment from the company to table an offer at our last meeting in Melbourne (January 10-12) Mick O'Leary failed to deliver on his promise yet again and we were left with little choice but to ramp up our campaign.

New ballots, with a larger variety of action, were lodged for Webb Dock and Fremantle followed by a 5-day stoppage in Fremantle and 6-days in Albany as well as rolling stoppages at Webb Dock and Geelong.

There has been quite a lot of media attention around this dispute with Patrick copping a fair bit of flack for being fined \$180,000 for bullying an OHS representative.

There are a number of claims that focus on this area of safety and will force Patrick to deliver on their rhetoric of being a 'safe stevedore'.

There is no point making a statement and hoping no one gets injured, as it seems Patrick is doing at present. We need a change in mindset at management level if we are going to address the never-ending run of injuries in the workplace.

North West agreements

Patrick Dampier and Hedland, POAGS Dampier and Hedland and Mermaid supply base Dampier all have EA expiries of June 30, 2011.

The most important task in these negotiations will be delivering a North West allowance that provides workers a decent



Behind the scenes: Negotiations take place with Patricks.

housing allowance so they can live with dignity instead of living like sardines packed into single bedrooms under share arrangements.

With weekly rents nudging \$2000, workers are forced to rent a single room for \$500 per week. Working families can't afford to stay in the Pilbara. Doug Heath will be playing the lead role in these negotiations, with support from myself and Will Tracey.

Patrick Terminal

After many meetings at both national and local level, the terminal members around the country endorsed a revised log of claims that was put to the company as an offer of settlement on the February 7.

There were a number of subcommittees set up to try and work through our differences and a protected action ballot will have been lodged by the time this goes to print. The result of that ballot should be declared around the time of our next scheduled meetings in Sydney (March 8-10) which should get everyone focussed on reaching an agreement.

DP World

DP world start the EA rounds in Sydney between March 1-3 with the delegates from around the country meeting to formulate the national log of claims.

The first national meetings with the

company are set down for April 6-8, with local negotiations soon after.

ABS

ABS operates as in the ports of Albany, Kwinana and Geraldton. The agreement expires at the end of May and negotiations are due to commence shortly.

Members need to have their log of claims ready to go.

Mercantile

Mercantile has been operating out of Geraldton for some time without an agreement. We have signed up the vast majority of these employees and commenced negotiations with the company.

3 Ocean Maritime

A rebadged WA shipwrights is growing fast. A new agreement is needed to cover these new areas. Primarily operating out of Esperance, Albany, Kwinana and Geraldton, 3 Ocean Maritime is branching out to east coast ports.

New organiser Matt Elliot has been given the task of delivering an agreement in this growth area.

POAGS

Along with the NW ports, POAGS operate out of Bunbury and Fremantle.

There have been several meetings already in which Will Tracey has represent-

ed the branch. POAGS have dismissed the members' claims and put an offer of 2.5 per cent.

In return for that *generous offer*, they want 100 per cent availability, 4hr minimums on all shifts, ability to start the shift at any time - day or night - one meal break, compulsory shift extensions, removal of 51/49 per cent min perm/casual ratio, signifying their intent to increase casualisation and more.

They also attempted to dismiss our delegates involvement in negotiating their own agreement and have refused to pay their wages to attend.

POAGS have no respect for workers who deliver all the earnings for the business in a high risk environment - and that took three lives last year alone, two at POAGS.

Our members work all times of the day and night, in all weather conditions and every weekend and public holiday, while the perpetrators of this extreme agenda sit in their climate-controlled offices and go home to dinner with their families every night.

Their only risk to injury is either pulling a muscle picking up their wallets or a paper cut.

It's a disgrace and we won't cop it.



Rank & File turn out again in support

WA Conference – A time to celebrate

AS the third WA Branch Conference is upon us, now is a good time to reflect on and celebrate the achievements of the WA Branch of the MUA.

We are officially the biggest branch of this great Union of ours and our Rank & File involvement in all facets of the Branch has seen it grow at a phenomenal rate.

When looking at year on year growth, we are the fastest growing union in the country, not just the MUA, and have witnessed average growth of 20 per cent a year for the past four years or so.

We grew 14 per cent during the financial downturn, at a time when the Oil and Gas industry flattened out and many of our seafaring membership spent time out of work as the database grew to over 300 people.

Despite the evident downturn during this period, the Branch still grew as we expanded into new areas and increased density inside current areas of coverage such as the outports, construction and wharves.

We are on track to grow well over 20 per cent again for this financial year as our membership has just gone through 3650 (at the end of January). This has come off a base of around 1100 less than eight years ago.

While many Unions went backwards during the years of the Howard government, and still struggle to grow today, under the leadership of Chris Cain we have seen the Branch more than triple in less than eight years.

This continued growth in the labour movement is unheard of and continues to reward the great work of the Rank & File in this state. Our Branch is membership driven and owned and the reality is that workers want to join this Branch because we deliver.

Battles won

We have been involved in many campaigns and last year saw the hugely successful Offshore Oil and Gas EBA campaign set the benchmark for how we now campaign inside this Union.

There is now broad support for EBA campaigns that involve direct action and empowerment of Rank & File members and delegates inside their workplace. Campaigns of protected action in support of EBA outcomes have been standard fare for the WA Branch for three years now and have been hugely successful in all EBA campaigns we have run - not just in terms of outcomes, but importantly also in organising workplaces and allowing delegates and members to own their EBA campaign in their own workplace.

Membership run campaigns with full support from the Branch. As it should be.

We are a Rank & File driven Branch – membership owned and membership driven.

Stay organised

The view of the WA Branch is that we must focus on organising in a strong, militant and progressive manner that engages a fully participative and empowered membership.

Organising is simply about empowering members and activists in our Union. Giving them ownership of their workplace and of their Union and supporting them in setting the agenda for both their workplace and their Union. And nowhere is that more relevant and critical than during an EBA campaign.

An organising union encourages the members and delegates to determine what they want out of their EBA and facilitates them campaigning to get it; by providing resources and strategic assistance to pursue claims that are more than justified in the cur-



rent environment - an environment where we have a massive skills shortage, are experiencing the biggest boom this state has ever seen and have endured a huge increase in cost of living expenses.

Remaining strong

The WA Branch of the MUA will continue to use EBA campaigns and direct action to actively engage the membership and grow the Union. After all, surely this is bread and butter for strong, militant and progressive Unions.

A key element that has resulted in telling outcomes in the WA Branch in EBA campaigns has been the strategic use of the process of protected action. This is key to achieving outcomes beyond what the boss wants to give and more importantly what the membership wants to campaign for.

Having power and being willing to use it is the only thing that will get you beyond what the boss is freely going to give.

A strong, militant and progressive Union uses whatever tools are available, such as the Protected Action Process, to push for wages and conditions that are justified in this environment and that the membership are willing to actively campaign for. It is this process that ensures a fully participative and empowered membership.

Protected Action

The WA Branch has not held back in challenging employers in EBA campaigns through the use of Protected Action.

It is simply about giving our members and activists the tools to campaign hard, smart and strategic. It is about facilitating and empowering our membership and delegates to determine their own outcomes in their workplaces.

This can only make us stronger as delegates and members campaign both for better wage and condition outcomes and Union active workplaces.

EBA in 2011

And it is this approach that we will take into the big EBA campaigns this year; especially on the waterfront in the stevedoring EBA's that are going through the renegotiation process right now.

2011 is set to be a big year for EBAs and active campaigns around them and we will see the biggest push we have ever seen in the stevedoring EBAs as

well as Port Authorities, Inshore Marine, Diving, Construction jobs, Dredging and the ROV.

United we stand

When our membership demand outcomes in their workplace, especially during the boom times, we are going into, then the Branch leadership, site delegates and membership should come together and determine how we deliver that.

We should be getting good outcomes and also using these types of campaigns to win respect back in our workplaces, not shy away from the blue but use it to organise the workplace.

Retreating until the boss tells you to stop is not a strategy. There is no better way to get our sites into shape than through direct action on the job.

And when our sites are active, they are safe. They are worksites where we win respect that the boss begrudgingly gives.

Direct action is what we do in the WA Branch and it is something we should be proud of. It makes us what we are and it draws huge support from our membership.

None of the above can be achieved without the continued support and work of Rank and File members and delegates. The Rank & File involvement in our Branch makes us militant, progressive, strategic and responsive to the needs of our membership. Rank & File driven, Rank and File owned.

And the Rank & File ownership of the Branch is seen in the turnouts we have at rallies, monthly stop work meetings, AGM's and this year's conference.

And we should remember that the respect for the way we go about what we do is also responsible for the huge number of international, national and state guests we have attending our conference - from international and national trade union leaders through to state officials and politicians.

There is a huge amount of respect around the country and internationally for this Branch of the MUA.

The visitors this week, to watch, participate and share their views and experiences as our delegates and membership determine the next two years of the Branch's direction, is full testament to that.

Rank and File is not a slogan ... it is what we are, it is what we do. And this conference is the time to celebrate that. Rank and File – United we Stand.



Phone: 0427 303 005 Email: doug.heath@mua.org.au



Report by Doug Heath Organiser

New Year victories

THINGS have started well in 2011 for maritime workers in the Pilbara, with the signing of a new Enterprise Agreement with KBMES (King Bay Tugs) .

With Pluto coming on line in 2010, Woodside was anxious to have continuity of supply for both its North West shelf and Pluto gas supplies secured at the start of the New Year. This meant winding up the North West Shelf Agreement 12 months early and negotiating new towage agreements for both Pluto and the North West Shelf.

Being true to form, AIMPE got in first and had its own separate meetings with the company and announced it had reached an in-principle agreement with the company.

After discussing the engineer's wage settlement with members, the MUA made it clear that it was not going to settle and wanted to continue negotiations. With Woodside making record profits and boom conditions continuing in the resources sector in WA, MUA members wanted to ensure that they got a fair outcome – their idea of fair, however, was not the same as the AIMPE leadership view of a fair wage outcome.

With a lot of hard work by MUA delegates Dave Abbott and Jason Sullivan and rock solid support from the MUA membership, the Union delivered a 31 per cent wage increase over four years, 15 per cent superannuation paid on all hours worked and an increase in tax-free victualling payments to \$8200 per annum.

In fairness to the company, once it realised the MUA membership were going to go hard for a decent Enterprise Agreement, it settled the claim without drama. MUA members in Teekay had set the benchmark for wages and conditions in the Pilbara and their struggles for a new EA in 2010 made it a lot easier to achieve the outcomes delivered in King Bay.

Mermain Marine (MMA)

Enterprise Bargaining has also commenced with Mermaid Marine in Dampier where workers are seeking wage outcomes in line with national stevedoring standards and a North West Allowance that more realistically reimburses workers for the high cost of living in the Pilbara.

In its company publication *MMA Today*, it described its performance last year as: "In 2010, MMA had a record year of strong earnings and growth..." and that "the Dampier Supply Base performed exceptionally well in 2010".

The MUA has advised the company that the exceptional outcomes for the Supply Base should be mirrored by an exceptional Enterprise Agreement. We are currently working through a Log of Claims with 78 amendments to the current Enterprise Agreement and members are right behind the Union claims.

One of the claims the MUA is pursuing is the payment of the Gorgon Allowance. This was promised last year in the package put on the table by Chevron. Members at MMA haven't seen a cent and have upped their claim to \$200 per day to compensate for what they have missed out on since April 2010. On more general matter at Mermaids, I still have to deal with one of the management maggots who has launched (along with an equally horrible comrade of his) a two-man jihad against workers and their Union.

The modus operandi of this (I think)

former scout leader (that in itself raises a few questions) is to fly into temper tantrums when the words *workers* and *rights* are used in the same sentence.

The spit, froth, f*** and c*** and other vitriol which comes out of this little boy's mouth is a sight to be seen – makes you wonder how companies like MMA can become top 200 (in share value) companies when they employ people like him.

This is further evidence that the Supply Base is going ahead only because of the blood, sweat and tears of the Union members who work there.

On the Mermaid Vessels, the Union is working on addressing a PAB claim that has significant implications for not only the MMA membership, but for all members working in offshore construction. In mid 2010, Woodside, or MMA unilaterally decided that the Pluto 1 project had gone to commissioning and that the PAB (construction) Allowance was no longer payable to crew on the Mermaid Vantage, Mermaid Vision and other vessels.

The Union is currently in dispute with MMA in respect to this matter and believes the claim against MMA and Woodside will cost them well upwards of \$300,000 if we are successful – about half an hour's profit on a project like this and well within the budget on a multinational oil and gas conglomerate.

MOF in Dampier

On the MOF in Dampier, POAGs members have endorsed their Log of Claims for the upcoming Enterprise Bargaining negotiations. Members have learnt from the last round of Enterprise Bargaining negotiations that the company can't be trusted and are 100 per cent behind the Pilbara claim for a North West Allowance of \$1200 per week and a raft of other conditions.

The POAGs membership in Port Hedland are in a similar position, having been screwed by the company on their North West Allowance (POAGs refused to up the rates when Utah came on line).

The Union is also in the process of taking legal action against POAGs for underpaying Wharf Foreman (paid at G5 instead of G6 rates). The backpay claim runs into the tens of thousands of dollars for affected members.

The only saving grace for POAGs in Port Hedland is the replacement of the previous site manager – the bloke wouldn't return emails or phone calls and struggled to have safety committee meetings or EAC meetings with the workforce.

New management is at least having a go at fixing local issues – albeit with POAGs management in Fremantle calling the shots on pay and conditions. These are the same people who have made two completely unsuccessful attempts to have a crack at my Right of Entry Permit.

Ironically, the first time I met the Fremantle boss, Lee Cooke, he told me "Get the f*** off my wharf. This is my wharf and I will decide who comes here....".

The dopey git was unhappy that the MUA had pulled up his forklift, lifting gear and other plant that didn't comply and didn't understand that on a multi-user facility, such as the Port Hedland wharf, he doesn't own anything.

Another company that prides itself as being the POAGs of the inshore sector

in Port Hedland is Workboats Northern Australia. As bad as Total AMS is, it is made to look good in comparison with this mob.

Dodgy log books, safety gear and an almost contemptuous observation of safe working procedures by this company, has put the lives of our members in Port Hedland at risk, time and time again. I am dumbfounded that a company such as this can continue to operate on major resource projects in the North West.

It is pleasing to see BHP conduct a long overdue safety audit on this mob – McConnell Dowell, the principal contractor on the RGP5 project should hang their heads in shame for turning a blind eye (or being incompetent administrators of safety standards) to what is happening.

Workboats Northern Australia workers are the worst paid maritime workers in the North West, have the lowest safety standards and operate in a culture straight out of the Peter Reith handbook.

On the dredging project in Port Hedland, Total AMS has gone from bad to worse. Having made four workers redundant due to a 'lack of work'.

It then brought an extra six new workers back on the next swing. How is this redundancy?

Management then admitted one of the workers was laid off because he was a diabetic (perhaps they need to read the unlawful termination provision of the Fair Work Act).

With three workers then being reinstated (and the fourth in FWA), Total AMS Superintendent Chris O'Sullivan then spent the next week running around the job telling employees that it was him who got workers their jobs back. Nice try Chris, but next time start your story with 'Once upon a time....'.

Nautika Pride

I can't finish without mentioning OMS.

When I visited the members on the Nautika Pride to investigate a number of occupational, health and safety concerns, I found members were being forced to cook food and shower in water that was browner than the sludge from a septic system. It was worse than a refugee camp in the Congo. Furthermore the vessel was a pig, not to mention the complete contempt shown by Nautika and OMS for environmental standards.

There was no SOPED equipment for bunkering – this was happening right on the protected boundary of the Brouse Basin. I bet Woodside would be rapt to know that refuelling practices in an area it is saying won't be affected by its next major LNG project, were potentially creating significant risk to the local environment.

I hope that the Greens and other environmental groups can ask Woodside if the work practices of Nautika are those we can expect when the project gets underway. It is fundamentally wrong how companies like Nautika are allowed to keep operating on this project with no checks and balances – other than the actions of the MUA Rank and File.

Super payment

While on the subject of OMS and further to my last article about OMS employees on workers compensation not getting paid superannuation (they are entitled to it), members should also check to see if they have been paid at the updated EA rate and not the old one.

A number of members might find there is a bit of backpay owing.

Dare to Struggle, Dare to Win.

We deserve to be treated like humans!

Morning Doug

This is a photo of the shower of shit we have been having to shower and wash in for the past three months or more. From the right we are members Andre Capper, Peter Johnson, Andy Combrinck and Ken Hunt.

Regards Comrade - Andrew capper - Nautika Pride





Safety on the job... it's a bit of a joke!

Harmonisation of safety laws

An abortion of process

As part of COAG, the State and Federal Governments have, for several years, been looking at harmonising safety laws across Australia.

The good intention of this process was that Australian workers would have one set of laws across Australia that governed the safe conditions at work and that employers who worked across state boundaries would only have to deal with a single set of laws and a single set of regulations that governs and controls safety Australia wide.

The impending reality is far worse than expected.

Not only has the agenda been hijacked by a faceless bunch of high level state public servants who call themselves HOWSA (Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities), but they have reduced SafeWork Australia to the status of a toothless tiger who only has observer status in their meetings and have no ability to input into the discussions and decisions about what our national laws will look like.

SafeWork Australia was set up to become the lead agency in Safety in Australia and as a result of the actions of these public servants, who answer to no one except their ministers, has been reduced to a minimal appointed task of drawing up and reviewing Codes of Practice

The so called deliberative and cooperative decision making process that this committee embarks on when deciding what the laws will look like, is nothing more than the views of each States minister and the government of the day.

Those Safety Commissioners who sit on HOWSA are under clear direction from their government ministers as to what they will agree with and what they won't. This has resulted in several of the states stating that they will agree with some parts of the legislation, but not others. What a shambles and a shame when the intention was to have uniform safety laws across Australia and then have some State minister picking over the bones claiming a spurious argument of not allowing the federal government to impinge on states rights.

This very important issue should not be mishandled and abused as a States rights issue. At the end of the day, it is about a worker's right to go home after a days work.

The employers and conservative state agencies responsible for safety have used this process to dumb the proposed laws down, scrape the bottom of the barrel and put in place complex and unworkable legislation that protects their ability to do nothing when it comes to preventing people from dying at work.

While there have been some commendable changes in relation to High Risk Work Licenses, the majority of the changes have been to increase their ability to impose fines and help stuff the states coffers with revenue that is not passed on to the killed workers family.

The worst possible scenario to come out of this harmonisation process would be if your local Worksafe inspector is to have a similar function as your local parking inspector - no longer a safety professional trained to spot circumstances that may kill or injure people and prevent that from happening, but instead a highly trained safety professional designed to prosecute companies and workers for breaches of the OSH Act and Regulations.

You, as a worker, can expect to be on the receiving end of an infringement notice that have set financial penalties and a government who claims speed cameras are not revenue raisers.

The end result is a proposed significant reduction in the effectiveness of safety laws, a massive removal of workers rights to a safe workplace and the removal of the ability for criminal charges to be brought against an employer who is criminally negligent and by that negligence injures or kills a person at the workplace.

The consultative phase in respect to the Model Work Health and Safety Regulations is still open and the MUA WA Branch is contributing to the submission Un-



Stevedoring - Gorgon-style!

ions WA is preparing and the Branch will submit our own views for consideration.

The moral of this story is: don't expect a politician or a public servant to look over your safety at work.

They are not there for you and your right to go home safely. They are just there to mop up the blood and see who they can get to fine and build up state revenue.

The piano

Recently, the MUA WA Branch was approached by a lady named Felicity Hill offering the donation of a piano which she had discovered at an auction. The piano has significant historical importance to the MUA and is a wonderful example of anti-racism, women's rights and Union solidarity across international boundaries.

The piano was originally donated to The Fremantle Trades Hall in 1942 by Chinese seafarers and while it is not known why the donation was made, it would have been a powerful demonstration of solidarity from a group of workers, who as a result of the White Australia Policy, would have been exposed to the worst aspects of discrimination by Australian society at the time.

The piano was then obtained by the Fremantle Women's Branch of the Labor Party, who cared for it and used it over many years.

Ms Hill spotted it at an auction and because she was aware of the value to the history of Fremantle, the Union movement and Women's groups, she purchased it.

Ms Hill showed great intellect and foresight in realising she had a very important piece of this Union's history and understood that it needed to be where people can see it and respect it for what it is. She then approached the MUA and asked if we wish to take ownership of this beautiful musical instrument.

The piano took pride of place at the front of the hall at the January Monthly Stop work meeting and MUA WA Branch State Secretary Chris Cain spoke of the pianos' importance, history and relevance to seafarers.

Chris has asked all members to give thought as to how we can put in on display in our soon to be refurbished union rooms so that all members are reminded of the struggle, generosity and solidarity of seafarers around the world down through the last century and into the next.

Jump! Jump!

These words are probably still ringing through the ears of members who were coerced into attempting a crew change at sea under very dangerous conditions.

The swell was over 2m and the idiot driving the crew boat smashed repeatedly into the vessel he was trying to offload his passengers onto. On one of the collisions an engineer was plucked away from the colliding vessels, thrown to safety by experienced seafarers who saved his life.

Bad Enough? It gets worse!. The vessel was underway at the time and towing a barge!.

God help any poor unfortunate who is crushed between the crew boat and the vessel, who then drops into the sea only to get run over by the barge it was towing.

Why does this happen? We don't know what was in the minds of the Masters who tried this attempt to murder people in the obscene desire to do what the client wants but it is a terrible example of lack of care and regard for the people on the vessel.

We also can't know what was in the minds of the people doing the jump. We do know from witnesses that one crew member repeatedly said: "I don't want to do this" and she was told by the Master of the crew boat to jump.

We know the names of the Masters of both vessels who, in our opinion, breached their Duty of Care to these people and we know the companies who allowed, permitted or ordered it to take place.

We have raised our concerns with the company and demanded that they investigate this with a view to ensuring it cannot take place again.

It is also our intention to report the Masters to the appropriate Government regulator, in order that they are given an opportunity to demonstrate why they should continue to hold their certification as Masters.

Like most of these incidents where people are nearly killed the guilty ones will do their best to shove it under the carpet and pretend it didn't happen and the regulators look the other way but at least this publicity will remind all members and the groveling company sucks that this shouldn't happen in this day and age.

If its dangerous....don't do it and if the body hire company you work for tries to give you the flick because you refused ring the Union and we will fix it.

POAGS shame

A concerned member pointed out the other day that in a workforce of around 67 people employed by POAGS in Fremantle, around 16 are on Workers Comp and/or receiving medical treatment because of back, neck, shoulder reconstructions and other muscular skeletal injuries

That doesn't even cover the people who have left the company and the industry because they can't work on the wharf any longer without becoming injured.

What a terrible indictment on a company that claims in its publicity blurb that: "At POAGS safety, health and the environment are core values to the way we operate our business."

If that shameful statistic is correct and an indication of their core values, I reckon their values are rotten to the core and like most rot, needs to be cleaned out.

Where is the upper level management action to redress that? Where is the crisis meeting of the Safety Committee to do the root cause analysis of WHY?

Where is the manual handling training that hasn't taken place for many years in this dangerous workplace and why is the company trying to implement a so called "zero harm" Safety System without involving any of its workers or Safety Committee members?

If they think that the answer lies in a shallow and top down imposed "zero harm" Safety, Health and Environment Management System, they are fooling themselves.

Where are the safety regulators who claim that they are enforcing safety legislation that is supposed to ensure that persons at work are not exposed to hazards?

Asleep at the wheel, again

Shame POAGS shame! Stop contributing to the hospital waiting lists and imposing misery and pain on the people who work for you.



MUA members have simply had enough

Wharves

FIRSTLY Comrades, well done to the hundreds of MUA members from Patrick BnG, Patrick Terminal, POAGS, DP World, OMSA, Port Workers, Seafarers and the community who attended the gates at AMC (Australian Marine Complex) for the start of the five day 'Protected Action Stoppage'.

Congratulations on the great display of unity and solidarity for which this union is known for.

Patrick has refused to put an offer on the table in regards to their Log of Claims after months of negotiations. MUA Members at Patrick BnG Fremantle are more than fed up with their conditions (or rather, "lack of them"), the company's attitude towards the allocations of shifts, training, head picking (for both reward and discipline) and attempts to cause division.

They are fed up with the no permanency – with casual's having been working there for more than 10 years and not being able to get a loan etc - with management's attitude; if you don't like it, leave."

And they are fed up with the deplorable safety record of late – eg a member sustaining a broken neck, with two identical near miss incidence's happening only days later. This member was then told that Patrick's insurer, Allianz, is refusing to pay for ambulance costs off the job to hospital and then refusing to pay for his operation to fuse his spine.

This is on top of plates of steel coming down the hatch narrowly missing crewman, after which we believe our members queried the suspect procedure with management.

This is not to mention numerous other injuries/near misses.

Obviously, from some of management's point of view, nothing changes. We're still waiting to see the results of the many accident/incident reports and whether anything was done.

Again our members have had enough of Patrick and what we believe is its incompetent managers and their draconian selfish attitudes.

If it's a fight they want, it's a fight they'll get!

Thanks again Comrades, for the great turnout at AMC Berth, from all areas of the wharves.

Seafarers

SVITZER Offshore: A Consultive Committee meeting was held between the MUA, delegates and myself and SVITZER, MAERSK was without a rep present – no surprises there really.

Smart Shopper was high on the list of several issue's raised. It was made clear to management by the delegates present that the Smart Shopper System (although in its infancy) was far from perfect and needed to have other Australian products placed on it and more communication needed between our members/company and provider.

These and other issue's minutes from the Consultive Committee meeting were forwarded to SVITZER vessels. Thanks to the delegates who attended, and did a great job for their fellow Comrades.

Tidewater offshore

Tidewater has several vessels lay up at present, hopefully short-term. It appears the antics of one of their beloved international (we believe) lunatics has subsided, hopefully now taking a common-sense rather than a knee-jerk reaction to issues.

With the demands and safety concerns our members face on the job, working together for long periods in adverse conditions, weather, noise, confined space, physical demands, round the clock over-lapping shift-work hours, being away from loved ones and the uncertainty of future plans and the pressure from urgent decision making events, the last thing they needed to content with was an extreme example of authority justifying their existence. Other issues are consistently coming up, for example,



stores. We must remain vigilant and protect our hard fought for conditions.

Comrades, again thanks must go out for the solidarity and continued effort dedication to the Rank and File membership from the Tidewater Delegates.

As the Rank & File Voice goes to print, a situation has arisen where a certain Tidewater Company rep (no surprises here) has bobbed up again and not shown the due respect to an MUA delegate doing his job.

We'll keep you posted as to where this goes.

Perkins/Kimberley Queen:

Myself and organiser Matt Elliot visited Kimberley Queen while the vessel was in Fremantle. There were several issues raised at a Shipboard meeting, to which they were followed up with Perkins.

So far we haven't received a reply. Perkins is showing all the signs that it may be a little out of its depth with this size/scope of work/vessel - management have struggled to comprehend with some of the normality's of the industry.

Meeting dates for more MUA-Perkins talks over a future agreement are close, but common is the belief if they don't get their act together soon, they'll quite possibly lose the Manning contract.

National Tug Conference

The National Tug Conference is scheduled for February 9, at St Georges Basin and will go for a week.

Delegates have been elected and along with officials will be getting down to work collectively, to construct the log of claims and issues and the best way to go forward for this part of the Industry.

Vessel inspections

Vessel inspections have been thick and fast.

Apart from the down-side of spending valuable working time on airplanes/out of office/worksites, it's positive news for the Seafarers and their industry and the many members who are, and have been, un-employed on the database.

Comrades, our industry is growing through the roof and with it *we must take ownership!* We must protect our livelihood and our future by being vigilant, protecting our hard fought for conditions, leave etc, and by demanding Offshore/Inshore companies adhere to our/their agreements of Employment.

Geraldton

Organisers Noel Neilsen, Matt Elliott and I held numerous meetings in Geraldton with MUA Rank and File members and their employers (Geraldton Port Authority/Patrick BnG/Patrick BWL/Svitzer Towage/Mercantile Marine and Geraldton Port Security).

Over several days, many issue's were highlighted and dealt with accordingly, one of which was the *lead exposure* issue, in which we left the Geraldton Port Authority in no uncertain minds about the concerns of our MUA Members in that port and the guidelines they must follow

and adhere to, during handling/loading of lead, now and in the future.

Monthly stop work meetings

Comrades, it's great to see the regular big turn-outs at our monthly stop work meetings. These are so important to the membership, in terms of future direction, industry improvements and developments, strategies with campaigns, actions and agreements etc.

It is our place where the Rank n File have their say, with healthy constructive and most times 'colourful' input.

Comrades, keep the great attendances up and encourage the attendance and participation of our new and recent membership, for they are our future.

New organisers

I'd like to extend a united welcome to both our new organisers - **Matt Elliott** and **Grant Couch**. I've seen the efforts, determination and drive that they both show, and wish them all the best in the future with joining the team in the MUA WA Branch.

See pages 12 and 13 for columns by Matt Elliott and Grant Couch, respectively.

Saiipem 10,000

Saipem 10,000 is a Drill-Ship with FPSO capability that I inspected off Darwin and is coming to our coast.

Manning Level meetings with MUA and GRN have taken place and there's also been concerns over asbestos assessments and the vessels lifting equipment capabilities with UNIRIG onboard sorting out Equipment/Certificates etc.

MUA WA Branch state conference

We are holding a Youth Delegates Conference on Monday, February 21. How good is this - the future of the MUA, all coming together?!

Don't miss the official opening on Tuesday, February 22, with a traditional Aboriginal ceremonial opening.

There will also be speakers from International Trade Union Leaders Mojo, Liverpool Dockers Delegates, Paddy Crumlin (Head of the ITF and MUA). MUA National and State Officials, ACTU Affiliated Unions, National and State MUA Delegates and Guests will all be present here, at OUR conference.

Hear about what's happening around the world and in your country and it's affects upon our future and the MUA's direction.

The conference runs until Friday, February 25 and concludes with the MUA WA State Conference Ball. Don't miss the opportunity for a great night out.

This will be at the Burswood Casino Ballroom.

Comrades, forget work to bring your wives, husbands, friends and family – a top night out is ensured with the best band in Perth, oysters and champagne on arrival, all you can drink (beer, wine and soft drink) from 7pm to 1am - and a three course meal – all for \$100 per person.

Hurry, whilst tickets are still available.

In unity



Shipping giant Patrick convicted and fined \$180,000

The following story was reported by news agency Australian Associated Press on January 24 and ran throughout online news services all around the country.

Shipping giant Patrick has been convicted and fined \$180,000 after the company was found guilty of discriminating against a worker who raised safety concerns about loading cargo.

It is the first discrimination prosecution since the introduction of new workplace health and safety laws in 2004.

The worker, an experienced stevedore and an elected health and safety representative, raised concerns about the safety of a new basket-lifting technique on three occasions in 2007.

He objected to using the method to load steel in and out of vessels after a request by a Patrick Stevedoring client.

In a meeting between the worker and a company manager, the manager threatened to dismiss the worker and stood him down for a week.

At a later date, the worker received a disciplinary letter with a number of complaints against



They call this safety: Patricks want its people working on cargo like this, when they're fatigued, from constant 12 hour shifts. Workers are on constant 12-hour shifts, when employees are sitting home. Some are working 70-plus hour weeks, 14 days straight.

Working 12-hour shifts around the clock on dangerous cargo like this makes Patrick Stevedore's safety a joke. Employee safety is only recognised when it does not interfere with the discharge of the cargo. At least working 8-hour shifts would give employees a reasonable rest period.

him, including a claim that he had refused to indicate whether he would follow instructions to use the basket lift to load cargo.

In sentencing, Victorian magistrate Rosemary Carlin on Friday pointed to "serious instances of discriminating behaviour" and the need to deter other employers from discriminating against their workers.

Patrick Stevedoring pleaded not

guilty to all charges.

WorkSafe executive director Ian Forsyth said raising health and safety issues to ensure a safe workplace was a necessity.

"Discriminating against someone who's trying to speak up about safety issues isn't something WorkSafe takes lightly - and this prosecution sends a clear message to all employers that it's unacceptable," he said.

A spokeswoman for Patrick said none of the managers implicated in the charges were still at the company.

In a statement Patrick said it had made "numerous improvements" to safety systems since the incidents in 2007 "and will review the court's decision to ensure all improvement opportunities have been undertaken".

Barb Piper – her strength is amazing

By Adrian Evans

WHEN Steve Piper left home for work on the 14th July last year, he thought it was going to be just another day on the wharf at POAGS Appleton dock.

He would not get to go home to his family again.

Tragically, Steve Piper was struck by a falling piece of equipment and killed instantly. He was only 41 and had two young children.

After Brad Gray - POAGS and Nick Fanos - Patrick were tragically killed on the job only months earlier the wharf was rocked again by the terrible news.

How many more must die before we see proper regulation in the industry?

Unbelievably, during these EA rounds, the employers are opposing our push for improved safety measures. POAGS is the worst of them.

At the time of the tragedy, the MUA extended family rallied around in support, both personally and financially. Collections were raised around the country, as we did for Brad and Nick.

Just before Christmas I got a call from Ben March, who is a member at POAGS Fremantle. He said the POAGS members had passed the hat around for Steve's family in the lead up to Christmas. Generosity like this further demonstrates that membership of the MUA is not just about employment conditions. We are a family and it hurts all of us when we lose a family member.

I contacted Kevin Bracken – Secretary of the Victorian Branch - to see if I could arrange to have a coffee with Steve's wife Barb while I was in Melbourne for Patrick negotiations.

As it turned out, Steve's brothers live in WA and Barb was headed over for Christmas with her kids.

I spoke to Barb and arranged for her to catch up and to present her with a cheque from the members and have a chat about things. Steve's young son and brothers came in too.

Barb said she has been overwhelmed with the support from the MUA and its members around the country, particularly Kevin Bracken from the Victorian Branch. Some of the things that were said shocked me.

In the days after Steve's death Barb had to fill out workers' comp forms, which was an extremely difficult emotional task. If that wasn't bad enough, POAGS lost the forms and she was required to do it all again!

It took weeks to get the correct final pay sorted, as they initially underpaid his entitlements and there was no personal contact from the company for many weeks.

You would think that a company that has any compassion at all would offer full assistance financially, personally and administra-

tively. Barb is particularly interested in how the government is going with the Stevedoring regulation. She was shocked to hear that while things were progressing, we are still a long way off.

She pleaded with us to continue our campaign to make the wharves safe before another life is lost and another family is left to pick up the pieces.

Barb asked if we could pass on her appreciation to all MUA members for their ongoing support as it has really helped her family through her darkest times.

Barb is a very strong woman and meeting her has further strengthened my resolve and that of the MUA to ensure stevedoring regulation becomes reality and EA's contain proper safety provisions.

Never forgotten – Never again.



2011 WEST COAST

Monday, February 21 YOUTH CONFERENCE

- 8:30am-8:45am** Official Welcome and Opening
Chris Cain, MUA WA Branch Secretary
Will Tracey, MUA WA Assistant Branch Secretary
- 8:45am-9:15am** WA Branch Report
Chris Cain, MUA WA Branch Secretary
- 9:15am-9:45am** MUA WA Branch DVD
- 9:45am-10:10am** Campaigns
Will Tracey, MUA WA Assistant Branch Secretary
- 10:10am-10:30am** Break
- 10:30am-11:00am** Internationalism / ITF / International Solidarity
Adrian Evans, MUA WA Deputy Branch Secretary
- 11:00am-11:30am** Importance of Politics in Youth
Roger Cook, MLA, Member for Kwinana
- 11:30am-12:00pm** Structure of Your Union
Allen Wattam, MUA WA Organiser
- 12:00pm-12:30pm** Young Maritime Workers Committee
Tim Dukes
- 12:30pm-1.15pm** Lunch Break
- 1:15pm-1:30pm** Facebook / Twitter / On-line Merchandise
Craig Booth - MUA WA member
- 1.30pm-2.15pm** Workshop
Expectations and Hopes for Conference
- 2:15pm-2:30pm** Break
- 2:30pm-3:00pm** Veterans
Jimmy Bray, MUA WA Veteran
- 3:00pm-3:30pm** Women in the Workplace
Maree Woods - MUA WA member
- 3:30pm-4:00pm** Being part of the Union in the Workplace
Ronnie Farrell - MUA WA member
- 4:00pm-4:30pm** Other Unions Youth and Roles within the Workplace
- 4:30pm-5:00pm** Resolutions from Conference and What to Expect
- 5:00pm** Close



Tuesday, February 22

- 9:00am-9:15am** Opening of Stop Work Meeting
Adrian Evans, MUA WA Deputy Branch Secretary (Chair)
- 9:15am-9:30am** Welcome to Country - Traditional Owners
- 9:30am-9:40am** Official Opening of Conference
Jon Ford, Shadow Minister for Mines; Petroleum; Fisheries
- 9:45am-10:15am** Tribute to *Paddy Troy* - Fremantle working class hero
- 9:40am-10:10am** MUA WA Branch DVD
- 10:10am-11:00am** *Paddy Crumlin*, MUA National Secretary & President of the ITF (International Transport Federation)
- 11:00am-11:20am** Break
- 11:20am-11:50am** *Chris Cain*, MUA WA Branch Secretary
- 11:50am-1:00pm** International Speakers
Ray Familathe, Vice president ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union)
Joe Fleetwood, MUNZ General secretary (Maritime Union of New Zealand)
Steve Todd, National secretary, RMT UK (Rail, Maritime and Transport workers)
Willie Adams, ILWU International secretary / treasurer (International Longshore and Warehouse Union)
- 1:00pm-1:30pm** Presentation on Growth of the WA Branch
Will Tracey, MUA WA Assistant Branch Secretary
- 1:30pm** Close
- 2:00pm-6:00pm** BBQ at Union Rooms

Wednesday, February 23

- 9:00am-10:30am** Internationalism – Relevance of Unions in the International Community and Importance of International Perspective
TBC - South Africa;
Steve Cotton – ITF Maritime Co-ordinator UK
Paulino DeCosta - East Timor
Dal-Sik - Head of Cargo Truckers KTSL
Hanafi Rustandi – President of the Indonesian Seafarers' Union KPI
Reg McAlister - PNG
- 10:30am-11:00am** Discussion
- 11:00am-11:30am** Break
- 11:30am-1:00pm** Community / Indigenous Relationships
Dave Kieran - CFMEU Organiser
Ian Bray - MUA Assistant National Secretary
Peter Simpson - ETU Queensland Secretary
Paddy Hill, Birmingham 6 and *Gerry Conlon*, Guildford 4 Miscarriage of Justice Organisation (MOJO)
- 1:00pm-1:30pm** Discussion
- 1:30pm-2:30pm** Lunch
- 2:30pm-4:00pm** Industrial Relations – Current Industrial Relations System, negotiations, bargaining in the current environment. Forward with Fairness, Future of IR, Impact of Laws.
Joan Doyle – Branch Secretary CEPU
Dean Mighell – Secretary ETU
Dave Noonan – National Secretary CFMEU
Craig Johnson – Ex Secretary AMWU Vic
- 4:00pm-4:30pm** Discussion
- 4:30pm** Close
- 6.45pm** Boat Cruise for international guest and Union officials



STATE CONFERENCE AGENDA

Thursday, February 24

- 9:00am-9:20am** Open State Committee
Chris Cain, WA Branch Secretary
- 9.20am-9:30am** Members Equity
- 9:30am-10:00am** Workers Compensation / Seacare
Kate Dempster, WG McNally Jones
- 10:00am-10:10am** Maritime Super
- 10:10am-10:40am** Industrial Agenda
Will Tracey – MUA WA Assistant Branch Secretary
Adrian Evans – MUA WA Deputy Branch Secretary
- 10:40am-11:00am** Break
- 11:00am-11:10am** MMPCU
- 11:10am-12:40pm** Regional Port Reports
Esperance
Albany
Bunbury
Geraldton
Dampier
Port Hedland
Broome
Fremantle – FPA / Stevedoring
- 12:40pm-1.10pm** Lunch break
- 1:10pm-3:00pm** Delegates' Reports
Bluewater
Towage
Offshore
Inshore
FPSO's
Dredging
Diving
ROV
Women
Youth
- 3:00pm-3:15pm** Break
- 3:15pm-5:00pm** General business and resolutions
- 5:00pm** Close



Friday, February 25

- 9:00am-10:30am** Unions working together
Kevin Reynolds - CFMEU Secretary
Steve McCartney - AMWU Secretary
Jim McGiveron - TWU Secretary
Steve Price - AWU Secretary
- 10:30am-11:00am** Discussion
- 11:00am-11:15am** Break
- 11:15am-12:45pm** Growth / Retention
Building capacity, Growth Campaigns, Organising
Simone McGurk - Unions WA Secretary
Willie Adams - ILWU International Secretary/Treasurer
Will Tracey - WA Assistant Branch Secretary
- 12:45pm-1:15pm** Discussion
- 1:15pm-1:45pm** Lunch Break
- 1:45pm-2:30pm** Closing of MUA WA State Conference
Chris Cain – MUA WA Branch Secretary
Paddy Crumlin - MUA National Secretary
& President of the ITF (International Transport Federation)
- 2:30pm-3:00pm** Discussion
- 3:00pm** Finish
- 7:00pm-1:00am** MUA West Coast Gala Ball
Burswood Grand Ballroom



Registry will make workplaces safer

Incident registry

With the support of the Union's executive, I have the great pleasure in announcing MUA WA's register for members to report all injury, incidents and near misses in your workplaces.

By collating members' reporting in workplaces over, we can inform members of incident and injury patterns of either individual employers, or industry-wide patterns and trends.

For example, an employer may only experience one near miss with some form of new industry-wide technique or system. Your Union, via the incident registry, can see the same or similar incident occurring numerous times across a whole industry.

These patterns and trends will be published quarterly in this publication.

Additionally, your Union's registry will provide a secure and confidential storage system for all documentation relating to an injury, all medical certificates and insurance details. So even if you misplace or lose some documents, we will have it on file for you.

What do you need to do?

Please forward any near misses, incidents, injuries, lost time injury medical certificates and/or insurance details to me. We have our own report form that is available from me.

You can submit either by snail mail, email, fax or you can drop it in to the Branch.

Please include full names, Union membership number and employers' name and vessel name, if applicable.

All documents will be scanned to an electronic format and any hard copies will be destroyed. So emailing documents through would be the preferred method, but we understand that this is not always practical.

If you would like to obtain a copy of any documentation from this system, we will require photo id - to protect you and follow confidentiality laws.

My goal is to help eliminate serious injury and death from our workplaces and this system combined with our other measures will help members to go home safely.

I want this plan to be available nationally, for all MUA members to use, but one step at a time.

Let us WA members lead the way - again!

Industrial issues

I have had meetings and telephone discussions with our members and workers from around the country regarding their collective agreement negotiations with Defense Maritime Services (DMS).

Our members and the workforce as a whole, are still stuck on grubby little documents called AWAs and interim AWAs.

These AWAs have ripped the guts away from what we take for granted - paid entitlements of overtime, weekend shift entitlements and rewards for work-



The proud crew of the Ramford Sterling just wanted to say hi and wish all who stay united a terrific year.

ing outside of the spread of hours.

Over two years, these workers have been well and truly frustrated around by delays, internal blues and, now, the employer has suspended a vote.

I am going to travel around the country soon to meet with members and workers, talking about our strengths and weaknesses and how we are going to improve their working lives.

It really is easy - **JOIN THE MUA!**

I had the privilege to meet some solid members on a seismic vessel in Sydney for a ship inspection before a tour into the Bass Strait. The Ramford Sterling is an 18-month-old vessel built in Europe.

After the inspection, it was decided that pedestal fans would be provided to our members for each cabin and a dispute began about the swing times in southern waters.

Our view, and the members' views, are that it is four week swings, due to the fatigue and OHS issues for the conditions in the southern waters. The employers view was five-week swing.

The agreement states that seismic vessels do a five-week swing without mention of southern waters. Traditionally, the five-week swing was to help the employer pull up their equipment and steam to port for swing changes so the extra week remained.

Now, with technology improvements and helipads, the employer wishes to

exploit workers good faith and keep it at five weeks. Unfortunately, the agreed fans had not arrived when the order was given to sail and, in all good conscience, our members wanted to help the employer to keep their promise to supply the fans, so they decided to wait for the fans arrival.

At 6am on a Monday morning 16 new pedestal fans arrived.

On my return to Sydney that morning from the Gold Coast and numerous calls from Singapore, WA and Sydney, I met with our members on the dock.

We discussed the swing times and the arrival of 16 fans. After discussions with MUA national office and Western Australian Branch executives, it was decided we will pursue this matter further in FWA.

Members, a small crew of 16 MUA members stood up solid and strong for all Australian seafarers sailing in southern waters.

The battle has not been lost, nor won - but the struggle continues.

Thanks

I have been given the responsibility to help organise the State Conference in 2011. It is a big task, but dedicated Union members have made my life a lot easier.

I would like to thank everyone who helped clean, organise and work for

this conference. You may remember an SMS that went out for volunteers. I believe I called everyone back, but if I missed someone I apologise.

But in all fairness, my phone was constant for hours - which is a great thing.

To the musician who receives our SMS by mistake and left me an abusive message because he did not want anything to do with our "stupid bloody Union" and "legal action will be taken if he receives another message", I am more than happy to take you off the data base, but it would help if you could leave me a name and phone number, and not call from a private phone number, you bloody big goose.

Also, thank you to all the members who have welcomed me. It has made my journey and transition so much easier.

Additionally, thank you to the team at the MUA offices for their support and patience during my introduction to your working family.

Facebook

I would encourage all members to join our WA Branch on Facebook for updates on all actions and events that involve our members - state and nation wide.

Cheers



Phone: 0458 004 801 Email: grant.couch@mua.org.au



Grant Couch Organiser

We're in the fight for the long haul

Comrades

My name is Grant Couch and I have been a watersider since 1991.

I began my wharf life as a casual stevedore in Lyttelton, New Zealand. I worked for BHP, Canterbury Stevedores, Toll and Lyttelton Port Company and more recently with Toll-Patricks in Fremantle.

I was a member of MUNZ from the first day of my life as a watersider, until I joined the MUA when I began work in Fremantle. Like all casual watersiders, I had to seek employment with multiple sites so as to sustain enough employment to support my family. This often required working bulk and general one day, and terminal the next.

I started with Toll in Fremantle, that eventually merged with Patrick to form Patrick Bulk and General

I'm a proud fourth generation wharfie and recall proud memories of my grandfather being involved in the biggest blue that the New Zealand waterfront had ever seen.

For the best part of three years, my grandfather stood, day in and day out, on the picket line. The New Zealand Government of the time mobilised the Army onto the wharfs and each day he stood face to face with soldiers and tanks.

While others lost faith, he stayed until the end and yes it hurt - it hurt our family a lot. For him, *unity, solidarity* and *standing up* are not just words, they are a way of life.

Enough about me.....

In the short time that I have been an organiser with the MUA, a lot has already happened. Here are a couple that members need to be aware of:

Patrick Bulk & General - Fremantle

I was lucky enough to be invited to Melbourne to be a part of the Part A Negotiations.

This process is going to be ongoing and it is clear we need to stand our ground. Patrick is not just going to roll over on the EBA, it is going to make you fight every step of the way.

Have faith in your negotiation team. They are committed to the fight and will not make decisive decisions unless the membership is happy.

One thing we need to remember is that a log of claims is not the holy bible.

It is a work in progress and a starting point for the negotiations.

We will need to trade off some parts to achieve others, but we haven't forgotten that this is *your* document, not the MUA's, so consultation with members about what will stay and what will go will take place.

At the moment, we are taking Protected Industrial Action, not to finalise the log of claims into the EBA, but to get Patricks' senior management to come back to the table and start moving the process of negotiation.

The Protected Actions are having an effect. The pressure is going on and they will eventually come back to the table. Patrick is trying to put on a brave face and are telling everyone that it has little effect on its business.

They are drawing this out, hoping the membership will crumble.

This is when we all need to keep the faith and solidarity - not just at Patrick Bulk and General, but across the waterfront.

Any signal of weakness, and you can bet your bottom dollar that the next company to go through the EBA will try it on too.

Remember, to the employer, weakness is an opportunity to exploit, divide and conquer the workforce.

The AMC stoppage meeting was a great sign of unity on the waterfront and was attended by Patrick B&G, Patrick Terminals, DP World and Seafarers.

It was good to see as we all move into EBA and negotiation periods.

A big thanks goes to all those who attended. It was great to see Sean Patience there, standing with his comrades.

POAGS

Thanks to the diligence of our comrades and site delegates, we have identified a gaping hole that needs to be filled immediately within POAGS.

POAGS employees that have progressed from casual to PGE, VSE or full-time in the past two years, have a high risk of not having had their super coverage increased to include Total and Permanent Disability (TBD).

This is a serious issue considering that in the event of a serious, but non-fatal accident, members are not covered, other than Workers Compensation, which reduces over time.

So, if you work for POAGS you need to make sure you are killed, not seri-



Leading from the front: Your Branch is out there fighting your fights with you.

ously hurt. If you're not killed, your families get nothing - that's the crux of it.

I raised the issue with POAGS locally and nationally and they were aware of the issue - they don't care, but they are aware of it!

I followed this up with an email to POAGS, advising them that this is completely unacceptable and that it needed to be rectified immediately at a national level to ensure no POAGS worker were missed.

Warren Smith, at MUA National Office, has also picked up the ball on this and together we have been talking to Maritime Super with regards to seeking clarification on the correct process and they agree that the position of the MUA is correct.

"TPD Coverage is only given when advised by the employer that their employment status has been upgraded".

POAGS senior management are still arguing that it is the responsibility of the worker to change the status of their Super. This goes to show they have no bloody idea, even when it is pointed out in black and white.

It also shows they don't give a shit about the wellbeing of their workforce.

Sousa has advised Smith that he agreed in principle, but would need to seek consultation with Pearse. Strangely enough, Pearse is unhappy with me, probably because I caught him out telling lies! I will stay on top of this and keep you all informed.

I have advised POAGS senior

management that the MUA hold them responsible for any costs to any member that has been, or will be, disadvantaged by their inaction. If you know of anybody who has been affected by this, please get them to contact me.

Final note

I cannot stress enough to the members - if you get hurt at work, go to hospital and get assessed.

If the grubs come looking for you, advise the doctor of his duty of client-patient confidentiality and that you do not authorise them to discuss or provide any information to anyone other than yourself.

Don't sign anything, even if the boss says you have to. You don't have to.

Call the MUA and we will come and swat away the flies that want to buzz over you waiting for your signature.

These papers are mainly disclosure papers. It gives them the right to look over all your medical records and see if they can blame it on existing injuries.

Most importantly - go to your doctor, not the doctor that they want you to see.

The words 'company doctor' should be enough to ring some bells. They work for the company. They care only about limiting their exposure to Lost Time Injuries (LTI's).

Our goal is to get you home to your families after being looked after properly, financial and mentally, so that all you need to worry about is getting better.

In Unity



In support of ships'

ROLLING funds, over four decades, have provided the most successful industrial, political and economical involvement of the rank-and-file in the many campaigns and issues confronting the union.

Every person in the industry today, no matter what area, owes their very job to the struggle of the union and the financial and active role played through the rolling funds with the involvement of rank-and-file members of the union.

Today, that struggle continues with the Industrial Assistance Commission reports, pickets, legal proceedings and writs.

Recently, we have had some comrades who have questioned paying into ships' rolling funds. Ever since the inception of rolling funds we have had members, from time to time, reluctant to pay and, I suppose, in recent times it is easier to understand because of the amalga-

mation of the maritime unions.

Some of the members who have amalgamated with us may not be familiar with rolling funds and for what purpose they are used. In the past, once the purpose of the funds were explained to the members concerned they have been quick to support them.

History

To explain rolling funds fully, it is necessary to go back to when they were formed. During 1948 the union and its members formulated a "policy of peace" which was passed unanimously at the annual general meeting in Sydney March 1949 (page 4 Seamen's Journal February 1950) and approved by seamen in the April Stop Work Meetings at Brisbane, Newcastle, Sydney, Melbourne, Port Adelaide and Fremantle.

Later, we formed a policy not

to carry arms and ammunition to future wars and decided that we would support the peace movements that were beginning to emerge and organise in Australia.

There was also, at that time, a campaign to improve our living and working conditions in the industry. Towards this end a Peace and Progress fund was set up in the union and members were asked to contribute.

To finance these movements and defeat the then Menzies Liberal and Country Party Government at the coming election, a 10/- was struck. While 10/- (\$1 in today's money) doesn't sound much now, the wages at that time were only about 7 pounds (\$14) a week.

The majority of members supported the policies and direction the union was taking and immediately set up rolling funds on all ships which were voluntarily donated to

each pay day by the crew.

Industrial Struggle

At that time the Australian working class, including ourselves, were under heavy attack by the then Menzies Government and there was quite a lot of industrial unrest. Consequently, many trade union strikers sought finance to help continue their struggle.

Whereas there used to be tarpaulin musters onboard ships with no check on how much money was given in support of causes, we now had our rolling funds with all donations going to different campaigns and struggles ashore – being paid through the branches of the union and we had a proper check on all amounts that were paid out.

Our members are always generous and quick to help our brothers in struggles ashore, and if we were to add up how much was given I am sure it would be quite substantial. Let us hope that all the people we have given to do not forget, if and when we call for assistance.

I do not remember why they were called rolling funds but I think it was because, at that time, we had a number of rolling campaigns going.

The campaigns that were mostly funded were highly successful and the results show in the standards of accommodation, working conditions and the maintaining of jobs today.

I must digress here to explain union dues, before I proceed to develop the question of rolling funds. Union dues are paid at regular intervals, to support the union structure. Our dues are linked to wage rises and are set at 1.2% of our wages with an average being struck.

Union Funds – Administration

As I said before, the dues support the union structure, employ officials and staff, buy or rent buildings to operate from and set up the necessary infrastructure.

The officials are elected every 3 years by the members and are paid to advance the interests of our union members and to give them any protection or support that they may require during their term in office.

The costs then and now of running the union uses almost all the dues paid. In larger unions with scores of thousands of members there is generally enough money to promote campaigns. In our union of over 5,000 members there is very little money for campaigns or political donations from the general funds.

Rolling Fund

The members of our union, to their credit, recognised and understood that if the union and its members were to progress we would have to find extra finance. Campaigns do not run on thin air and must be funded to reach fruition.

Let's go back through some of our campaigns financed partly by rolling funds. Firstly, let me say that

following up our policies of peace, first raised in 1948, Seamen's Union of Australia members have been vigorous supporters of peace and the peace committees in Australia both physically and financially and have seen tremendous achievements in this area.

Campaigns

It think it would be fair to say that the Australian Peace Committee could not have achieved what they have had it not been for donations from SUA rolling funds. It would also be fair to say that if there is no peace in the world we can forget about any campaign we may wish to promote.

The coastal tanker campaign, while highly successful, took ten years. All leaflets, advertising etc., came from ships rolling funds. The benefits arising out of the SUA members manning coastal tankers were enormous.

Other financed campaigns include the Ampol and the overseas tanker campaign, support for the Australian National Line, the aggregate wage and both the overseas and expand Australian shipping campaign, still going after six years.

The original COM/Representatives and Conventions held about every three years have in the past – excluding the last two – had delegates financed by rolling funds. The enlarged COM is where the way forward in our union is discussed.

Rolling funds have been set up in all ships and also in the Maritime Services Board departments, where our members operate, at Goat Island, Botany Bay, Watsons Bay, Newcastle and Port Kembla and the finances from these areas have assisted our members campaigns in the MSB.

The rolling funds have not only been used for campaigns but have financed many causes and emergencies. They have been used in numerous family crisis for transport, sickness, injury etc. and assistance to members unable to rejoin his ship through injury and sickness.

Deputations

Deputations to Canberra and other places, involving rank and file members in support of union programs, have been financed by rolling funds.

Right now, rolling funds are financing teams of seamen to go out into the country areas around Australia to explain to people, and the country media, why Australia must have a greater shipping fleet and a larger share than the current 4 per cent of our international trade carried by Australian ships.

Members' Awareness

The comrades involved in visiting the country areas do so in their own time. They receive expenses that pay for a bed, fuel and sometimes, maybe a meal a day.

Members conscious of the need to lift or expand Australian shipping campaign have come from the Blue

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Rolling Funds

*In Support of Ships Rolling Funds
And What They Stand For
A. Allport, Retired Member
(extract Seamen's Journal
February 1990, Vol 45, No. 2)*

... and what they stand for

Mountains, Port Kembla and the south coast, the central coast, the Sydney metropolitan area and on odd occasions from Newcastle – at their own expense – to stand with their comrades on the picket line outside Columbus line offices in George St, Sydney.

Members have used the rolling funds to help support, elect or re-elect the Labor Party in elections running back to the fifties. While there is some criticism of the Labor Party, they have at least supported the SUA in expanding Australian shipping, retention of ANL and cabotage on the coast. That in itself is value for the money we have put in to re-elect them. Had there been a Liberal / National Party in power, we would, in my opinion, be fighting flag of convenience vessels in the coastal trade.

Any member who refuses to donate to the rolling fund which is democratically set up and properly run by the members is obviously only thinking of himself and not of the union or its members as a whole.

Donations

Most donations to rolling funds are relatively small. Some funds of latter years are funded by ships' bars and members only put in a token amount. The last rolling fund I paid into was \$3 per week. This is no great burden to members in our industry. What will \$3 buy – a middie and schooner of beer, 3 units on a "nag" on Saturday or a cheap carafe of wine at a dinner. Many of our members would blow 6 months of \$3 per week in an evening.

So, is it not a small price to pay, if the money is being used to promote the betterment of the membership or to help one of our members who is sick or in trouble?

In conclusion, if it was not for those conscientious members, who have paid into rolling funds since their foundation to assist or help promote campaigns, the present SUA members would probably not have the conditions and living standard that they enjoy today.

Rolling funds gave our officials and members the necessary finance to carry our campaigns to successful conclusions and in doing so lifted the SUA to the position of No.1 seagoing union in the world today; and recognised as such. I shall leave the reluctant donors to think it over.

Almost lost Patience with Patricks B&G

SEAN Patience, a Stevedore with Patrick Bulk and General Operations in Fremantle, very nearly became the latest fatality on the waterfront. While loading sheep, Sean was hit by a large one, that jumped from the top of a livestock truck. It struck him in the back of the head and propelled his head forward, hitting it on the race.

Sean was unconscious and bleeding heavily from the head, leaving a large pool of blood. While Sean's point of worked stopped, all other work continued.

As soon as Sean was taken to hospital by ambulance, points 1 and 2 resumed work again immediately, while his mates stepped around Sean's pool of dried blood.

All points should have stopped immediately. Management should have addressed all workers about the incident, consulted everybody about a JSA and the blood should have been cleaned up, before returning to work.

Not only was it a bio-hazard, but surley morally wrong.

Our blokes do not want to be walking and standing in the pool of dried bloody remains of our comrades. This to me shows the absolute disrespect that these companies have for our comrades.

Patrick has just rolled out its Blame the Worker "DU-PONT" training. Where's managements' duty of care? There is none. They simply don't give a shit.

They go running up to the hospital, not because they give a shit about their employees, but to see if they can avoid an LTI by talking to doctors. Fine, go and see Sean, ask if he's ok, but don't ask questions about the incident while he is heavily medicated, or contact emergency doctors about rehabilitation and light duties.

Wait for the medical report and support his rehabilitation, even if it means a dreaded LTI. Even better, how about making sure it doesn't happen again.

The hat was passed around at the MUA AGM and Patrick members delivered \$3500 to Sean and his wife in Hospital. The relief was apparent as we handed over the money, as they had no idea what the future would bring. There was comfort in the knowledge that regardless of what that future was, his mates were going to be there to do whatever they could to help him out.

Thankfully, Sean is making good progress, no thanks to Patrick or Allianz (Patricks Insurance Company) who keep trying to find new obstacles along the way to make life difficult.

An unsung hero in all this is Kate Dempster of McNally's - our lawyers. Kate had to fight for Sean's correct weekly compensation pay, which ranged from around \$300-\$600 per week more than what Allianz were going to pay.

Allianz then decided not to pay for the ambulance and to add further insult to injury, decided to challenge paying Sean's hospital bill in which he had a bone taken from his hip and put into his neck to fuse the vertebrae together.

This is an ongoing battle, but we have Kate on our side and she is doing a terrific job of taking it to these asseholes for whom workers rights and welfare are always second to profitability.

This just pushes home to all the importance of correct accident management to ensure you are protected.

Do not sign disclosure papers from the company at the time of the injury. You can assess with proper advice the need to complete the paperwork at a later time, not while under duress or medication. Call the Branch and advise of your accident and we will refer you to McNallys for advice and we will get rid of the vultures hanging by your hospital bed.

If you need to attend a doctor make sure its your own doctor not a company appointed one.

There is a commercial relationship between those organisations. All you should need to worry about is recovery. Touch One Touch All... why we are Union.

Grant Couch

See page 17 for letters from Sean's wife, Kylie

How healthy is your super?



If your superannuation balance is looking a little sluggish, it's worthwhile enlisting the services of a financial planner to get it back into shape

Maritime Super's Perth-based affiliated financial planner, Paul Hearn, can review your current situation and work with you to formulate a plan to give your super a good workout.

The first visit to Paul is free, and because Maritime Super doesn't pay commission to its affiliated financial planners, you can rest assured in the knowledge that they have one outcome in mind: to provide the best possible advice tailored your own needs and goals.

To make an appointment with a financial planner, contact Member Services on **1800 757 607**.



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FROM THE MEMBERS



Members can email correspondence to muawpaper@hotmail.com. Please include phone number and member number



ISSUES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

We fight the fight together

I am forwarding this to your attention as this is a serious safety issue. I received the above picture from our affiliated Union, The Montreal Stevedore. In French text, the Stevedores expressed their concerns about the state of the 'flatrack'.

As you can see from the pictures, it is self explanatory.

Can you please ensure that proper repairs will be done prior of ship's arrival to Valencia. Ignoring this email could result in serious or deadly accident. In the event the vessell comes back to Canada in the same state, Port State Control will be called on board.

We copied Valencia ITF Inspector, German Arias.

Best Regards

Patrice Caron - ITF Inspector - Ports of Quebec, Canada

MUA members, demobilised from the cutter suction dredge, Leonardo Da Vinci in Singapore, Saturday, November 27.

MUA members wish to convey our appreciation to Chris Cain, officials and organizers, for their dedication, advice and commitment during MUA employment on the LDV.

Ian Pendleton 2636 for MUA members LDV.

Lads

A little bit of good news for you.

As you may or may not be aware, I had taken issue with the rate of pay (of weekly payments of workers' compensation) for Sean Patience.

Allianz were going to pay him \$1,609.80 for the first 13 weeks and \$1,382.60 from the 14th week onwards.

I filed an application with WorkCover seeking weekly payments of \$1,977.02 per week and it was listed for hearing next week.

I'm pleased to say that I got a call from Allianz today who are now prepared to pay him an appropriate rate of payment.

So in summary, after being told that Sean didn't require legal representation (as Patricks and Allianz would do the right thing by him) they were prepared to underpay him \$367.22 per week for the first 13 weeks and \$594.42 per week from the 14th week onwards.

I spoke to his wife who said Sean was actually thinking about going back to work because he couldn't afford to be on work-

ers' comp for much longer!

**Kate Dempster - Solicitor
W.G. McNally Jones Staff Lawyers**

Dear Chris

It is with regret that I must tender my immediate resignation from the Union that has served me so well for 46 years.

As I am now approaching my 69th birthday, I feel it is time to swallow the anchor and spend more time with my family.

The MUA is now in better shape than it has been for some time despite all the new regulations etc etc. The MUA is here to Stay. Keep on course.

Yours fraternally,

**Paul (Willem) Huyser C.I.R. MUA #
1693**

Hi Chris and Doug

I would like to say thanks to you both for all you have done for myself, Sean and Don on the Mimar, and appreciate all the hard work you have done for us while under the pump with other issues.

We are proud to be MUA members.

Thanks Comrades

Paul Wightman

Hi Guys

Doug has just informed me that OMS have agreed to square up the leave owed to me. I haven't heard from them yet, but I'm sure it will happen.

I just wanted to drop you a line to let you guys know that I appreciate it every time, past, present and future, that you represent me.

As I try to tell others, we don't need to be in contact every five minute. If we don't hear from you, that doesn't mean you have forgotten.

Sometimes issues take a long while to resolve and we need to fight as much as we can ourselves before asking you guys.

Once again Cheers.

In Unity

Mickey Heald

Brother Christy

On behalf of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, could you pass on this message of support and solidarity for your members taking strike action at Patrick's Bulk and General terminals in WA.

Our Union extends its full support to you and the officials and rank and file, and if we can do anything to assist, please let us know.

Congratulations to the MUA for their strong and principled stance.

Keep us updated on progress.

Yours fraternally

Joe Fleetwood - General Secretary

G'day Comrades

After hearing a motion put forward at the Fremantle January stop-work meeting, I would like to put in writing my whole hearted support.

The subject being the non-attendance to our monthly meetings from some members onboard FPSOs in light of the fact of the Norwegian roster structure being 3-on-3-off-3-on-6-off, making it possible for them to attend meetings more often than some.

I am an Integrated Rating on the Stybarrow Venture MV16 and the only one from the West.

I have been at sea since 1974 and have not missed a meeting in that time, whenever I am on leave.

At our MUA shipboard meetings I am continually telling our members to get to their respective branch monthly stop work meetings and get involved and educated, but all to no avail.

At the last meeting I know for a fact there should have been at least three or four caterers attending.

It does my head in knowing for some of them this is their first job in the industry and not even through the data base, but some scabby recruitment agency on the internet.

With such great conditions that the MUA have fought for in this area of our industry, this is their gratitude.

In Unity

**Ronnie Kunnen 6003930
Stybarrow Venture MV16**

Comrades

The MUA crew on the MV Pacific Explorer would like to say a big thank you to Chris and Will for their hard work and ongoing efforts in dealing with OMS management regarding over-swing and crew change issues, which were proving challenging to say the least.

We all know what it's like dealing with management who have proven on numerous occasions to be experts at ducking and weaving whenever cornered.

The membership on board appreciate the time and effort put in by you both, firstly, for coming up with a great strategy to deal with our issues. Secondly, for finding the time and making the ongoing efforts to ensure our members are treated fairly.

And thirdly, for getting a great result over the line.

All this while dealing with any number of other big ticket items, weather it be EBA's, safety of members or the ongoing struggle for the working class.

Comrades, your tireless efforts and many sacrifices certainly don't go un-noticed and remind us all why we are so proud to be members of our great union.

In Unity

MUA Crew, Pacific Explorer

The MUA crew aboard 'William E. Bright' congratulate the MUA people charged with protecting our delegates and OH&S reps, in both the seagoing and Stevedoring sides of our membership.

The win against Patricks (Geelong) through the courts and the vindication of our Comrades on the Geelong wharfs for standing up for their Safety Rep Frank Carroll is a victory we can all take heart from. We support not only your actions, but those actions taken by Comrades all around Australia against any employer (both Stevedoring and Sea Going) who are hypocritical towards safety standards in our Industry.

Once again Comrades, well done!

**On behalf of MUA Crew
John Lawrence 1427#
MUA Delegate
William E. Bright**

My name is Zach. I was a stevedore for P&O Ports.

I appreciated what your staff did for us in Hedland. And although I am no longer with the MUA I take pride in telling people that I once was a comrade of the Maritime Union of Australia.

Rank and File

Zach Charles Thomas.

On behalf of the MUA Veterans Association Port Kembla Branch, we endorse and fully support the action taken by the WA Branch against an employer who historically has proven to be the most intransigent of all Stevedoring employers.

Their failure to adhere to the most basic of safety measures and also their unceasing ability to employ management who would undoubtedly fit the criteria required for employment in the slave trade.

We are well versed in the tactics that these bastards use and we took great delight in taking them on and beating them, Rank and File action will always play a big role in combatting their anti worker attitudes.

Stay Strong!, Stay United!. We're proud of your stand!

Kenny Mc Bride.

For and behalf of Port Kembla Vets.

Dear Comrade Chris. Team MUA.

We ,the crew of PB. Konui, take the opportunity of wishing all hands at MUA Fremantle a very Merry Xmas and a most prosperous New Year for 2011 and all the years to Come.

We also reflect on a job well done re negotiations for the EBAs and tug and barge award. Yours in unity.

**MUA Members Aboard.
Ken Govier IR.
John Lawrence IR.
Bob Johnson IR.
Shane Dixon Chief Cook. And a good
one at that.
Steve Wear TIR.**



Ode to the Bear

Greg Brownlee passed away in Cape Town, South Africa on Saturday, January 28



A knock about bloke from Annandale, who'd treat his brother on the square;
 the seafaring son of an S.P bookie, was the blue eyed, red haired Bear;
 and as we come alongside in Freo town, on a morning still and fair;
 when from the cab of the crane, I saw the "old man" cringe,
 as up the gangway strode the Bear;
 for this was to be his final voyage, 'though with no celebration or fanfare;
 as we set sail across the Indian Ocean, to a land of want and care;
 and upon landing on Sth African soil, with a minute not to spare;
 with stubbie and form guide in tow, to the races went the Bear;
 Mother Russia won the Queen's Plate that day, a bonny Cape Town mare;
 with arms waving amongst the cheering throng, was a 6 foot, roaring Bear;
 men like he are rare these days, the bold men who dare;
 and there are laws in place throughout this land, for the protection of such Bears;
 when seafarers strike and organise and rightfully demand their share;
 among the leaders of the union push, was the 6 foot, militant Bear;
 so, as we bid and say our final adieu, please don't pity or despair;
 for beneath this flag draped casket lies, the spirit of Comrade Bear.

By Gary McCarthy



Hi Will

This is Leah, Greg's wife. I recieved an email from Michelle Tomo with the link to the MUA website where the 'Ode to Bear' was listed. I know you are having a meeting tomorrow and I would like if you could to pass on my deepest thanks to Gary McCarthy for such a tribute to my husband.

He loved the friends he made and loved the union and its principals with all his heart.



He loved being the delegate. As he said on many occasions, "I was a dubbo when I was younger and the Union looked after me" and he had made it

his responsibility to pay back.

This, I believe, he did with all the strength he had in him. I would also like to personally thank

you and Chris for being at his side when he needed you.

Unfortunately, I can only feel bad thing toward those two captains as they were in the wrong.

But you couldn't change Greg or his principals.

Again, thankyou

Leah Ryan-Brownlee

Good morning Chris & Will

We met with Leah and Nat and took Bear's belongings with a bunch of

flowers and a sympathy card.

Leah is holding up well considering what she has gone through.

We had a few drinks and a lovely meal and swapped stories about the Bear, so there were a few laughs and a few tears.

Leah cannot speak highly enough of you both for all you have done for Bear and your support.

Regards

Michelle & George

See Grant Couch's report on the incident that injured Sean Patience on page 15



Sean Patience

On behalf of my husband Sean, myself and our 3 Children Reece, Zane & Chelsea I would like to thank everyone in the MUA Union for the wonderful support and financial donation we have recieved.

This has been a very hard time on our family but it is made easier we have the support of this fantastic union.

The financial donation is greatly appreciated and means we can put all of our efforts into trying to get Sean to make a full recovery.

Special thanks to Alan, Chris Cain and extended MUA Family.

Sean says he will see you all fit and strong in 2011

MUA ALL THE WAY

Thankyou You All So Much Kylie Patience.

TO MUA.

For everything you've done...
 for being the special people
 that you are...
 thank you so very much.

KYLIE, SEAN, REECE, ZANE
 & CHELSEA PATIENCE

Hi Allen
 Just thought I would touch base in regards to Sean.

He is going well at the moment. He is improving every day and understandably he is getting very frustrated and bored with being home so much these days.

He is able to shower without the help of Silver Chain now and we have another specialist visit in a couple of weeks to see if his brace can be changed to a

smaller one (he is hoping they will take it off).

I'm not so sure about that yet!

He still has numbness in his left arm and fingers and his left arm is still weak.

Only time will tell if his arm will ever be back to normal.

I think his positive attitude will help him to recover as quickly as his body will allow it.

Accidents like these not only affect the injured party, but also

the whole family. I can honestly say my life has definitely being turned on its head.

It's been difficult caring for him and having three kids on school holidays, but I just take it one day at a time.

With the support from the Union and his fellow workmates, it makes it easier.

Will update you again soon

Kylie Patience

Youth Conference

YOUTH REPORT

THE youth of the WA Branch have been getting together in special forums, to discuss what we want to hear about in the up-coming West Coast Youth Conference (Feb 21).

Items such as politician's educating us on what they are here for, why is it so important to have different structures within the MUA, the importance of how drug and alcohol abuse can affect your life, what we want to achieve out of this conference with our own resolutions, women in the workplace, and finally, we really want to hear from our older, more experienced comrades, whom have been a part of the WWF and the SUA.

By having these conferences, we the youth of our industry, are having our confidence within the workplace and everyday life grow stronger.

Some of us will be able to establish public speaking or help delegates with computer skills etc. So these attributes are not only for the workplace, but our stop-work meetings and our day-to-day lives.

The youth attending this conference are excited to take part in this up-coming great event held by the WA Branch. On Behalf of the youth, thanks to our officials for allowing us to have this knowledge passed onto us through an event such as this.

In Unity

George Gakis 9022614



Is this the floods in Qld? No! It's a Gorgon Project safety under fire after near sinking

UNIONS are up in arms after yet another safety incident on the \$43 billion dollar Gorgon Project, which could well have ended in tragedy.

On Sunday, February 6, the multi-cat vessel, Boskalis BKM 102, was working on the Gorgon Project off Barrow Island at 9.30pm when it

ran over the dredge anchor, ripping open its hold and oil tank.

"We had four crew on the vessel with the Dutch captain and it was sinking fast," said Chris Cain, MUA WA branch secretary. "The ship had a gaping big hole, with water and oil flooding in, when it made a run for the beach."

Mr Cain said the crew made it to shore, but the safety dispute arose when the captain wanted them to stay on board for the tow to Dampier.

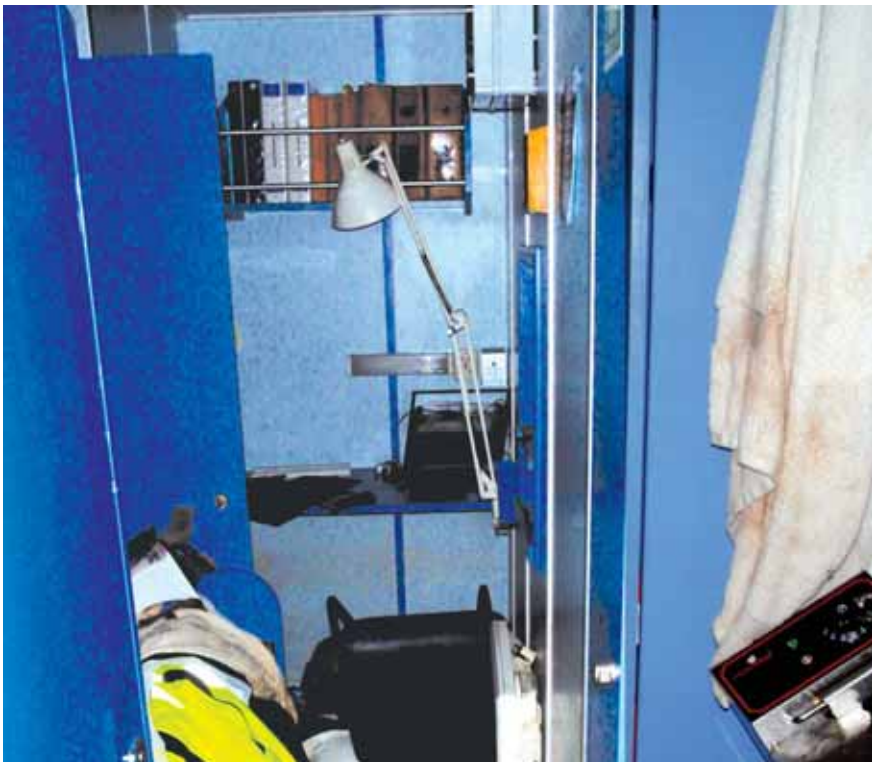
"It was not safe, the vessel was in no condition to sail," he said. "The crew worked 22 hours straight trying to pump the water and oil out of

vessel, but no divers were employed to assess the damage before it left."

"This is yet another example of a multi-billion dollar project employing cowboys on the cheap and putting lives and the environment at risk," said International Transport Workers' Federation President and MUA National Secretary Paddy

Crumlin. "It's a joke and it's the second time in the past few months Boskalis has been the culprit of a shoddy operation."

Boskalis was also subject to safety concerns when an inspection of its cranes and rigging equipment by the Gorgon Project manager Kellogg Joint Venture identified significant



On the scene: These pictures were taken as BKM102 got into trouble.



Boskalis vessel on the Gorgon Project off Barrow Island

safety concerns in December.

“The BKM 102 is the same vessel Boskalis has been trying to get us to live on board in putrid conditions during the cyclone season,” Chris Cain said. “We couldn’t have people living on a flooded vessel in that condition, but they put two skippers on board and let her go. “That’s a

150km trip to Dampier with cyclones around.

“One Dutch skipper and one Aussie skipper stayed on board for the tow, with it leaking oil and rubbish everywhere on a pristine nature reserve. So much for safety.”

The BKM 102 is now on a slipway in Karratha undergoing repairs.



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State Conference is your chance to meet your peers

WITH the State Conference upon us, I have been trying to contact and encourage as many female members as possible to come along (if they are free), even if only for a few hours.

Conference is a great forum for us to meet, get to know each other and discuss any issues that anyone wants to discuss. We don't mind the social aspect either.

We are mostly pretty isolated in our workplaces and rarely have opportunity to get together. We will be looking for more women to get active on the Women's Committee and be active in OUR Union.

The camaraderie of our Union and Conference is inspiring and contagious. The more we meet and get to know each other, the stronger and more confident we become.

The Women's Committee has recently put out a newsletter that is available on the MUA website, facebook and has been emailed to all women on the Union's email system.

There is now a section on the MUA website for female members to add themselves to the network list so they can be informed and included on all issues through periodic emails. Anyone who wants to contribute can do so through either myself or Mich-elle Myers.

WOMEN'S REPORT

March 8 is the Centenary of International Women's Day. The first IWD demonstration was in 1911 in Europe. Some 30,000 women demonstrated for the right to vote. These days IWD celebrates economic, political and social achievements and struggles of women past, present and future. For more information on history and events go to www.unifem.org.au or look at our MUA or facebook sites.

Lastly, I'd like to recommend a movie to get out. It's called *Made in Dagenham*. It is based on a true story of a group of women factory workers (at the Ford manufacturing plant) that went out on strike for equal pay in 1968. It's fun with a great message about our early struggles for equal pay.

OK see you all at Conference.

In unity

Reeo - reeo66@live.com.au



YOUR BRANCH



Win on the record: An extract from a recent edition of the Financial Review.

Waterfront row gathers steam

Mark Skulley

ments this year.
The industry is worried that the MUA is trying to capitalise on big pay rises won last year by the union's militant West Australian branch for crews working in offshore construction for the booming liquefied natural gas sector.
The lobby representing foreign ship

stand-off has developed on the waterfront over stalled negotiations with Patrick Stevedores that has led to rolling strikes by members of the Maritime Union of Australia.

The union has blasted an ambit claim by Patrick Stevedores which it says would increase costs in part of the business by 10 per cent in the first year of a three-year deal, rising to almost 200 per cent over the life of the deal.
Its general manager for bulk and general operations, Warwick Sommer, said Patrick would "not be held to ransom by a union that appears to be returning to its

uncompetitive internationally and would strain the viability of Patrick.

"We have to ask ourselves, is this return to the bad old days?" SAL chief executive Llew Russell said.

The union's latest claims include a push for pay rises of 10 per cent a year plus changes to job classification structures. But Patrick is refusing to put a formal response to such unrealistic claims.

Patrick has had 17 notifications of strikes since Christmas at the West Australian ports of Fremantle and Albany along with Melbourne and Geelong in Victoria. A ballot on possible strikes is also being conducted in Darwin. It lost 26 days of working time in January with more strikes due this month.



“WORST: The exorbitant and unjustified wage outcomes that were achieved following the dispute between the MUA and vessel operators in the offshore oil and gas industry.”

- (Steve Knott (AMMA chief executive AMMA commenting in Workforce publication, under the heading `Highs and lows of 2010.



I found this quote quite good and relevant in regards to the months we have to come with our EBA and supporting Patricks in theirs. Happy New Year boys - all the best to you and your families. 2011- the year of retaliation.

Will Tracey

“There will always be a place for us somewhere, somehow, as long as we see to it that working people struggle on, fight for everything they have, everything they hope to get, for dignity, equality, democracy, to oppose war and to bring to the world a better life.”

- (Harry Bridges 1901 - 1990)