



QUEENSLAND BRANCH NEWS

NEWSLETTER of the QLD Branch of the MARITIME UNION of AUSTRALIA

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No. 22 – Thursday November 12, 2015

Brisbane Ferries Action – DPW votes YES – QLD Nickel – MV Portland

MUA members take their first ever protected action at Brisbane Ferries

TUESDAY November 10 saw MUA members at Brisbane Ferries hit Transdev with its first ever round of protected action. MUA activists and officials were out in force at numerous ferry terminals just after 5am. Other members and supporters took to the river, with Larry and George Foley in their tinnie and Mike Barber on his jet ski proudly flying the MUA flag in support of those at Brisbane Ferries.

Our protected action consisted of not charging passengers for their fares from the early morning to 9.30am. The Go Card machines were switched off as per the Fair Work Protected Action Ballot.

But it was not only the MUA that was out in force. So too were Transdev management, their hired goons and Translink officers. Some of them were dressed in all-black uniforms and looked like something straight out of the dog squad. These goons would jump on the ferries, check to see if the Go Card machines were turned on, and then threaten MUA members with disciplinary action if the machines were off. This is despite the fact that this action by

MUA members is legally protected under current Fair Work legislation.

Transdev have clearly spent significant time and money to try and stop MUA members at Brisbane Ferries from winning a fair and equitable EBA.

However, despite their best efforts, Transdev's intimidation tactics had little effect on our members.

The commuting public have been extremely sympathetic. Many have thanked us and wished us the best of luck in our campaign for a Fair EBA for Ferry Workers, as they know how often members at Brisbane Ferries go above and beyond the call of duty to ensure the safety of all commuters on the Brisbane River. Others commuters expressed their disgust at the mistreatment of our members at the hands of Transdev.

After this successful first round of protected action, activists went for

a break at the Spoon Deli Café (108 Albert Street). Spoon is run by Jamie, a proud supporter of workers' rights and firm believer in the need to pay staff all their penalty rates.

The next stop was King George Square for a demonstration that kicked off at 1pm.



Up to 100 people from a range of unions took part. The rally heard speeches from MUA QLD officials, Labor candidate for Brisbane City lord mayor Rob Harding, ACTU organiser Trent Abberfield and Morningside councillor Shayne Sutton.

Then the rally made its way to the Brisbane City Hall for Council question time. By 2pm our members had filled the public gallery, where we were treated to an impressive performance by Councillor Sutton who fired numerous questions at Liberal National Lord Mayor Graham Quirk. He had no answer to Sutton's pointed questions about workers' safety, poor rostering and Transdev's oppressive business model.

Our campaign and the public scrutiny that comes with it are putting Transdev under serious pressure. We cannot let up now. We want to thank everyone who took part in the day's action, and especially the diligent delegates at Brisbane Ferries who have displayed their dedication to the welfare of their members and have done hours of voluntary work behind the scenes.

This successful action is the start of our campaign for a Fair EBA for Ferry Workers. We encourage all members to take part in any way they can.

DPW members Vote YES to new EBA

MUA members at DP World Brisbane voted overwhelmingly to accept a new EBA which will cover their conditions of employment until 2019.

This brings to an end the 21 month battle to get this Agreement over the line. Despite all the road blocks placed in our way by DPW management, we were able to deliver an agreement which sees above inflation pay rises and the introduction of income protection covering all DP World workers. This is a major victory for our union.

The success of the campaign was a testament to our union's tradition of a strong rank and file that withstood the employers' attacks and showed great maturity and patience in grinding out an outcome. Special mention must be made of the site committee who put members concerns fearlessly to management and dug in on important positions.

Lead delegate Mick McLennan (Macca) was indispensable in his knowledge of the construction of the agreement and his ability to articulate the most important of issues. The solidarity and patience that the entire site committee has demonstrated during this saga is very much in the best traditions of the working class movement.

With the signing of this agreement, members at DP World Brisbane can now make sure that all members who have been active in getting this EBA up have the full and total protection of each other.

Queensland Nickel negotiations continue

EBA negotiations with Clive Palmer's Queensland Nickel (QNI) in Townsville continue to drag on. The multimillionaire MP cries poor while his management tell us they cannot agree to anything which adds to the company's costs. But we know

better than that. Clive's various companies chipped in almost \$26 million to fund the Palmer United Party (PUP) election campaign in 2013-14. This included over \$15 million from Queensland Nickel alone.

MUA members have sought to negotiate concessions such as a shortening of the 12 hour shift length when no ships are in and observance of the closed port day on Christmas Day. Clive has refused. Given the fact that wharfies at QNI have already copped a two-year pay freeze, his response simply beggars belief.

The MUA continues its work organising on the ground in order to achieve a positive outcome for wharfies at QNI. Our members need to force Clive to acknowledge that his good fortunes rest squarely on the shoulders of his workforce. Our good will is not something to be taken for granted.

Alcoa plans to dump the MV Portland

ALCOA, the U.S. multinational has announced plans to replace the Australian crewed vessel the MV Portland, which has carried alumina from West Australia to Portland, Victoria for 28 years.

With a revenue base of over \$30 billion, Alcoa want to use a foreign crewed ship on a temporary licence and pay the crew as little as US\$2 an hour. This will see another 40 Australian seafarers on the



CSL Melbourne crew supporting local shipping

scrapheap and lower the already dangerously low number of jobs in Australia's blue water shipping.

Alcoa's Australian operation not only made \$268 million profit last year, but it also received \$90 million in government subsidies from the Victorian government. Alcoa's plan to get rid of an Australian registered ship with 28 years' service and replace it with a foreign crewed ship is a disgrace. Their plan has the full support of the Liberal government of PM Malcolm Turnbull and Warren Truss, the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development.

The MUA QLD Branch urges all members to join the campaign to save our seafaring jobs by joining and getting involved in the UMLA activist committee. Please call the branch to register.

100 days of the Hutchison dispute

THIS Saturday November 14 marks the 100th day of the Hutchison Ports dispute. Just before midnight on August 6, Hutchison sacked 97 workers by text & email.

The community assembly is still in place. MUA members are encouraged to make the trip to Curlew Street, Berth 11 Fisherman Island to show your support for our sacked MUA members.

North Queensland Campaign Intensive

THE MUA QLD Branch is hosting "North Queensland Campaign Intensive" in Mackay on November 18 and 19. This campaign training for NQLD activists will assist and empower our members to engage in campaigns leading up to the next federal election and beyond.

One of the aims is to establish activist committees in all the Queensland ports and a solid communication network where we engage in the campaigns of the MUA, ACTU and the QCU as well as see our members engage with their local communities and so build an atmosphere of mutual support. Any interested NQLD members are asked to contact your port delegates or the MUA Branch.

Branch Conference – December 3 & 4

THE MUA QLD Branch Conference is fast approaching. The two day conference will be held on Thursday December 3 and Friday December 4 at the Queensland Council of Unions (QCU) Building, Level 2, 16 Peel Street, South Brisbane.

All members should have received registration forms via. email. It is important that all members who wish to attend fill in the form and return it to the MUA Brisbane office ASAP – preferably no later than November 19.

Annual General Meeting – November 24

THIS year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on November 24, 7am to 10am at the Wynnum Manly Workers Club, 35 Bognor Street, Tingalpa. All members are encouraged to attend.

Activist Committee meetings

ACTIVIST Committee meetings are held on the second and last Tuesday of every month. The meeting on the second Tuesday starts at 10am in the union rooms. The meeting on the last Tuesday of the month begins after the Monthly Meeting.

Branch Official's details

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**EDUCATE
AGITATE
ORGANISE**

MUA Queensland Branch Conference
Thursday December 3rd - Friday December 4th
QCU Building - 16 Peel Street, South Brisbane

- Updating members on the Hutchisons dispute
- Organising for safety
- Running effective campaigns on the job
- Debating the way forward for our MUA Branch
- Discussing which policies to take to National Conference

Conference open to all financial MUA members
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