



QUEENSLAND BRANCH NEWS

NEWSLETTER of the QLD Branch of the MARITIME UNION of AUSTRALIA

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No. 23 – Thursday November 19, 2015

Hutchison dispute ends – Port of Bris. Ambulance – Joe Hill & more

Hutchison Ports dispute comes to an end

AFTER 102 days of at times bitter struggle, MUA members in Brisbane and Sydney voted overwhelmingly on Monday to rescind their previous EBA and to vote in another EBA to cover their working conditions over the next three years.

We have travelled a long way from our hapless position on August 6, when 97 workers were sacked by text & email, to the outcome that we have achieved this week. This is a credit to the rank and file, the leadership involved and the thousands of supporters who stood by us during this most difficult of times.

In a perfect world I would have preferred an outcome with no redundancies. But what we have achieved is an outcome

which I believe we can look anyone in the eye and say “We did our best”.

Times have been very grim at the Hutchison terminal in Brisbane. Through put is currently running at a tiny 20,000 TEU.

MUA members who accept the Voluntary Separation Package will receive no less than the equivalent of 26 weeks pay. Keep in mind that everyone at Hutchison has been there for less than three years. The MUA has put up very strong fences around the use of casuals and how they must be sourced, and we have made sure the new EBA cannot be used by HPA to undercut its competitors.

As the QLD Branch Secretary my heart feels heavy with the loss of jobs but my conscience is clear knowing that all rank and file delegates involved and all officials, including National Secretary Paddy Crumlin left no stone unturned in our battle to get the best possible outcome in a very difficult situation.

Ambulance service win at Fisherman Is.

SUCCESSFUL lobbying by the Port of Brisbane Labor Party (ALP) Branch has secured the stationing

of a new ambulance service based at Fisherman Island. This will shorten Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) response times to accidents in the port area.

The new service will be

based at the QAS training facility on Howard Smith Drive, and will now respond to incidents within the port area between 8am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

The MUA rank and file based Port of Brisbane ALP Branch approached MP Joan Pease, the state Labor MP for Lytton (which covers the port area). Joan pushed the case for the new service in the halls of the Queensland Parliament.

Special mention must be made of Peter Bruekers, who was the driving force behind this success.

The Port of Brisbane ALP Branch has chalked up a win for all workers in the port area. Their next target is 24/7 ambulance coverage at Fisherman Island.



Gladstone Ferries

MUA QLD Deputy Branch Secretary Jason Miners and Central QLD Organiser Paul Petersen met with members on the Gladstone Ferries (operated by Transit Systems) first thing on Monday November 16. It became quickly apparent that our members have many concerns regarding the company's attitude towards its workers. Members feel that the company has ignored their genuine safety concerns and left our members out of the consultation process. The MUA will be addressing these issues with Transit Systems ASAP.

NSS Gladstone

PAUL Petersen went to NSS Stevedoring in Gladstone on November 16 to hear from our members and to talk to them about the upcoming EBA. Five new members signed up to the MUA during this visit.

Both Paul and MUA Northern QLD Organiser Glenn Desmond will be working together to achieve a good EBA outcome for all members at NSS. Paul will be back in Gladstone on November 25 and 26 to meet with members.

Smit Gladstone

THE current EA is in the process of being rolled over for an 18 month period.

As the company is combining its LNG operations with its harbour towage, this will allow us to see what crewing and rostering arrangements are required on their eleven tugs. The EA does contain LNG manning levels, nevertheless a review process will be undertaken by an independent maritime assessor on mutually agreed terms.

RTM Weipa / RTM Piramu

BOTH of these Rio Tinto operated vessels were recently visited by Jason Miners and Paul Petersen. Discussions onboard centred around Alcoa and the fate of the *MV Portland* and a proposed plan to tackle Rio Tinto and its renegeing on written commitments for Australian crewed vessels. MUA members on both the *Weipa* and *Piramu* have made

a commitment to fully support the MUA QLD Branch and its campaign to take on Rio Tinto.

The upcoming EBA was also discussed, with the first item on the log of claims being to get our IR back, along with the need to improve communications both between Rio Tinto vessels and with the MUA branch.

Smit Weipa

MUA officials also met with Smit members in Weipa. This was a good opportunity to outline what is happening in the towage area and address some poor port practices which are serious concerns.

Joe Hill (1879 – 1915)



**“Don’t mourn for me . . . organise”
Joe Hill (1879 – 1915)**

TODAY (November 19) marks the centenary of the execution of trade union activist Joe Hill. He was shot by a firing squad in the US state of Utah on November 19, 1915.

Joe Hill was born Joel Emmanuel Hagglund in Sweden in 1879. Joe left for the United States in 1902 and travelled the country in search of work and the “American Dream”. He soon found that dream to be a nightmare for many working men and women.

Joe soon joined the International Workers of the World (IWW, known as the “Wobblies”) and helped organise strikes. He thought himself piano, violin and guitar and roused workers with the songs that he wrote, including *Casey Jones*, *The Preacher and the Slave* and *There is Power in a Union*.

Hill was incredibly active, whether it was organising strikes with dockworkers in San Pedro, California or aiding workers involved in the Fraser River strike in British Columbia. He was quickly blacklisted wherever he went, which forced him to constantly keep on the move.

Hill made his way to Utah in 1914 and settled in Park City and started work in a silver mine. He was later arrested and framed for the murder of a local grocery store owner and his son. Masked robbers broke into the store and left the store owner and his

son dead after a gun battle. That same night Joe turned up to a doctor's clinic with a bullet wound he had received in a fight for the affections of a young woman. The doctor informed the police and Hill was promptly arrested.

The real culprit of the grocery store murders was an out of state career criminal. The police had strong evidence to pin the crime on this character, but instead chose to frame Joe.

On November 19, 1915 Joe Hill faced a firing squad. His body was sent to Chicago where up to 30,000 people attended the funeral. Joe was cremated and his ashes divided into 600 envelopes that were sent to IWW branches across the globe.

The life of the rebel worker, union organiser and songwriter was later immortalised in the famous song "I dreamed I saw Joe Hill last night".

His only crime was to be a voice for union men and women, a crime that he paid for with his life.

*From San Diego up to
Maine*

*In every mine and mill
Where working men defend
their rights*

*It's there you'll find Joe
Hill, it's there you'll find
Joe Hill.*

Annual General Meeting – Nov. 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.

Branch Conference – December 3 & 4

THE MUA QLD Branch Conference is nearly upon us. 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.

It is vital that all members who wish to attend fill in the form and return it to the MUA Brisbane office ASAP. If you have not received a form yet, please contact the Office or speak to a workplace delegate.

MUA Brisbane Office closure – Dec. 2 - 4

THE MUA office at Cannon Hill will be closed from Wednesday December 2 from 12 noon (to help set up the Branch Conference) and all of Thursday December 3 and Friday December 4. Normal hours re-commence on Monday December 7.

Activist Committee meetings

ACTIVIST Committee meetings are held on the second and last Tuesday of the 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.

Office Hours – Xmas and New Year

BRISBANE MUA office opening hours will be:
Thursday December 24
8am - 12.30pm
Friday December 25
Closed
Monday December 28
Closed
Tuesday December 29
8am - 12.30pm
Wednesday December 30
8am - 12.30pm
Thursday December 31
8am - 12.30pm
Friday January 1
Closed
Monday January 4
8am - 4pm (as normal)

**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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