

MUA Quadrennial Conference – Qube - Members Meet Senator Lazarus

MUA Quadrennial Conference

THE MUA QUADRENNIAL Conference was held on the Gold Coast from 29 February to 4 March. The Conference had some 240 delegates from all around Australia attending. The Conference debated a large number of issues and debated on policy that will hopefully carry us into the next four years. Of particular interest to members was the proposed merging of the MUA with the CFMEU. Members should be aware that:

- The MUA will keep its identity with the merged Union
- All assets of the MUA will remain with the MUA in the proposed merger
- Before any merger of the Unions the MUA will hold a plebiscite of all members

As the Branch Secretary of the MUA Qld Branch I have a unique view on this proposed merger as I have been an elected Official of the CFMEU through my time as an elected BLF Organiser.



Quadrennial National Conference Delegation

The merged Union will create a powerful bastion of progress against the right wing attacks workers are facing everywhere. It will give the MUA access to legal, media, organisational and campaigning tools far above what we currently have. Overall I see it as a positive outcome for both Unions; HOWEVER it will be up to members to decide in a fair and democratic vote.

QUBE EBA

THE QUBE EBA made its way to Brisbane where the MUA Qube National Bargaining Committee plus Brisbane Qube delegates met with Qube management Monday 7 March 2016. The formal wage offer from the

company was a wage decrease of -2% in the first year and CPI increases for the next three years.

On top of this is also the dismantling of the cherished 7x1 roster plus other claims which we found absolutely unfair and unacceptable.

It is hard to fathom Qube management's logic in all of this. At the same time as mounting an Australia wide assault on wharfies' wages and conditions, Qube have the capacity to put together an almost 10 billion dollar deal to take over Asciano.

Whilst the MUA acknowledges the bulk and general stevedoring sector is going through difficulties we have expressed a desire to develop an Agreement that expresses the hopes of both parties. What it cannot be is an attempt to drive down real wages and conditions of wharfies.

It could well be management should think a bit more about the wharfies that create the wealth of the company by working in all kinds of weather, day and night through irregular shifts to earn a living to keep their families afloat.

All we want is “a square deal for Qube wharfies.”

Townsville MUA Members Meet Senator Glenn Lazarus

Townsville MUA members met with Senator Glenn Lazarus at the Townsville office on Monday, 7th March, 2016. During the meeting, Glenn expressed his support for Australian shipping and the right for Australian seafarers to work in their own country's waters. He also made mention that both he and Tasmanian Senator Jackie Lambie would seek to introduce a bill to the parliament that is akin to the American Jones Act, where Australian jobs are assured within our coastal trade and that ships used in Australian waters would be built here.

Members from Queensland Nickel spoke to Glenn about issues they had faced, and continued to face, while Clive Palmer played games with their livelihoods. Glenn agreed with comments made about making employers quarantine monies for accrued entitlements so that

employees facing similar circumstances still got paid and added that the same should apply to small contractors working for construction giants. Glenn also made comment about the use of 457 visas in this country despite climbing unemployment figures.

Senator Lazarus raised the issue of legislation before parliament seeking to limit the ability of micro parties to get elected and made the comment that the legislation effectively lessened the chance of the ordinary resident to get elected if they weren't in one of the major parties.

The members thanked Glenn for taking the time to visit with them and stopped for a photo and a chat with him over morning tea before he left.



Townsville Members Meet With Senator Glenn Lazarus

Report from Cairns Visit

Flying to Cairns on Wednesday with Qld members we were off to a good start meeting Senator Jacqui Lambie on the plane and inviting her to politics at the pub with Glenn Lazarus which she accepted.

Politics at the pub organised through the Build a Better Future crew was a success with a packed house and both crews from the Coral Knight were there plus the local MUA activists. We soon had the topic on Australian shipping and then on to this countries sell out of Australian jobs through the 457 visas. Penalty rates were the other hot topic.

The Senators were in town for a shipping summit meeting the next day at Sea Swift hosted by Mick Doleman. The series of meetings is aimed at drafting a more serious legislation to put forward to government that will genuinely turn around the situation our shipping industry is in.

The morning started with a 0730 meeting with off going Coral Knight crew followed by a 0830 meeting at the cruise terminal with our Cairns activists, Senators Lazarus, Lambie and Mick Doleman to discuss politics and our issues. Mick gave us a good insight into where our political campaign is at and we committed some assistance to the Glenn Lazarus team at the election.

We then gave our guests a guided tour of the Coral Knight which had them extremely impressed with the professionalism Australian seafarers work to and an understanding of the important tasks the vessel does up in the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait with regards to salvage, maintenance and oil spill response.

While on the Coral Knight I proposed an indigenous trainee IR from Thursday Island and we are confident of getting up. The new replacement vessel Coral Gardian is looking like running late November at the latest. The CIR and I will be inspecting her in China. Gardline are currently shopping the market to find work for the current vessel when it's replaced and hopefully it stays on the coast.



Senators Lambie and Lazarus with Paul Gallagher and Mick Doleman

After success in FWA full bench where we won the right to base an Agreement on the Seagoing Award rather than Inshore Award I visited Sea swift vessel Newcastle Bay at 1100 - 1300. While any contractor or visitor can walk on board their ships anytime, Sea Swift will only allow a Union Official under a Right of Entry to sit in a demountable on the wharf so they can watch who goes ashore to meet with the Union. One member had the courage to meet. The others were young and seemed scared. This situation of anti-union behaviour and intimidation of Union members is not tolerable to this Union and will be disputed in FWA.

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