



We're working for you!

The NEWSLETTER

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34th ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NZ MEATWORKERS AND RELATED TRADES UNION INC. PRESENTED AT THE CHRISTCHURCH CONFERENCE HELD 27th & 28th APRIL 2005

Mr Chairman, Conference Delegates, Visitors and Observers, I present to you my Annual report.

The period under review has been a particularly busy one around the National Office. The new Holidays Act that came into force at the start of the review period has caused us considerable concerns, although members in the main have gained from this legislation, we struggle to find employer's who interpret the Act the same as we do. Several cases have been prepared and presented to the Labour Inspector's for rulings and we are currently awaiting a hearing date from the Employment Court to deal with a matter that affects several thousand of our members.

During the end of the season / off season period several changes were announced for the 'Smithfield Plant' the fellmongery, wool and pelt departments were closed and intention to build a new boning room announced. The boning room however in typical Alliance Group Ltd fashion came with restructuring of payments (downwards), congratulations go to the members who stood firm during this difficult period by refusing to lower their conditions and wages. The new room has not gone ahead and we are still struggling to get a result for the workers displaced by the fellmongery closure.

The Dannevirke Plant document expired and was replaced by a short term fix with an expiry date coinciding with the Alliance Group Ltd Collective Agreement, this Plant continues to take up considerable National Union time.

PPCS / Richmond are now by far the largest Meat Company in the Country. A joint Union / Richmond Plant Officials Meeting was held in December and valuable trade in agreements and ideas were exchanged. We need to keep a record of policies being implemented that were previously the domain of those two Companies and that are now being implemented under the PPCS banner.

One such policy on which we have no agreement is the Drug and Alcohol Policy that was previously discussed with Richmond's, this has been picked up by PPCS operations and as far as I can tell been implemented as a PPCS policy, in the main, with little or no dialogue with the Union.

Settlements of expired agreements have been in most incidents reasonably successful, we are mindful that in the next few months some major documents are up for negotiation. Planning for these starts next month and like the rest of the Union movement we will no doubt be looking for some meaningful wage movements.

Mid year we applied for and were granted funding for a delegates training course, this funding comes via the Employment Relations Education leave section of the Employment Relations Act. During the last two months 302 delegates attended the twelve courses within our Union, Maurice Teen (our Trainer) once again done a wonderful job. This training also gave me the opportunity to mix with delegates and receive their valued comments.

In September I accepted an invitation to attend the Federal Council of the Australian Meat Industry Employee's Union in Brisbane. This was a great opportunity to create bonds with a brother Union, dialogue and information sharing has continued since that meeting and we of course have already welcomed their President, Graeme Bird and Secretary, Ross Richardson to this Conference. A full report on the Brisbane meeting has been circulated and printed in our newsletter.

The decision of Meat Union Aotearoa to apply to become a Branch of our Union is a great step forward, they are to be commended for reaching this decision and we should not overlook the fact that they are prepared to take the ultimate step of disbanding their Union for the sake of unity amongst meat workers. I hope common sense prevails and we become united at last.

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Graham Niles has continued to represent us at the CTU National Executives. I have attended most of the Food Sector Meetings with Roger Middlemass filling in for me if I am unable to attend. We have signed a Union Co-operation Agreement within the food sector and I believe that we are making inroads into non union sites through the Union Co-operation the food sector has brought about. While this has not brought more members into our organisation, Unions involved outside of the meat Industry have benefited.

Membership of our Union remains steady and mainly unchanged from previous years, at least two new plants (Rakaia and Awarua) are getting under way or about to start and we look forward to welcoming in the new members at these plants.

The financial position of the Union continues to consolidate, during the year we upgraded the National Office computers and telecommunication system. We worked within our budget and presented a modest surplus.

Our ACC Consultant Kay Stringleman left us during the year and was replaced by Karina Tifaga who has settled in well and is up to date with matters of members concerns regarding ACC claims.

Amanda Stephens is currently involved in a round of training for health and safety delegates, along with her other duties. Amanda's work and knowledge in matters relating to Health and Safety is appreciated by myself and the wider Union members.

My thanks to Sherryl for her continued support and for the manner in which the day to day matters are handled, nothing seems to be a problem to Sherryl and most of us can take a lesson from her cheerful manner.

Branch, Sub-Branch Officials and Delegates, thanks for the continued support. My thanks to our MISS Trustees Robin McGowan and Mick Pope and I also wish to thank all members for supporting my re-election as your General Secretary – I'll keep trying.

I extend the sympathy and condolences of the Union to those who have suffered losses of family and friends over the past twelve months.

UNITED WE STAND

D W Eastlake
General Secretary

WORK DEATH TOLL FOR 2003/04 = 61

Work death toll so far for
2004/05

25

*The running total has been aligned with OSH's business year – 30 June to 1 July.
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DAD'S ARMY

—Trevor Findlay

This article has been supplied by Trevor, who is the sub-branch secretary at Alliance group Ltd, Sockburn, Christchurch.

Three men joined the chiller gang at the Alliance, Sockburn plant in September 1978.

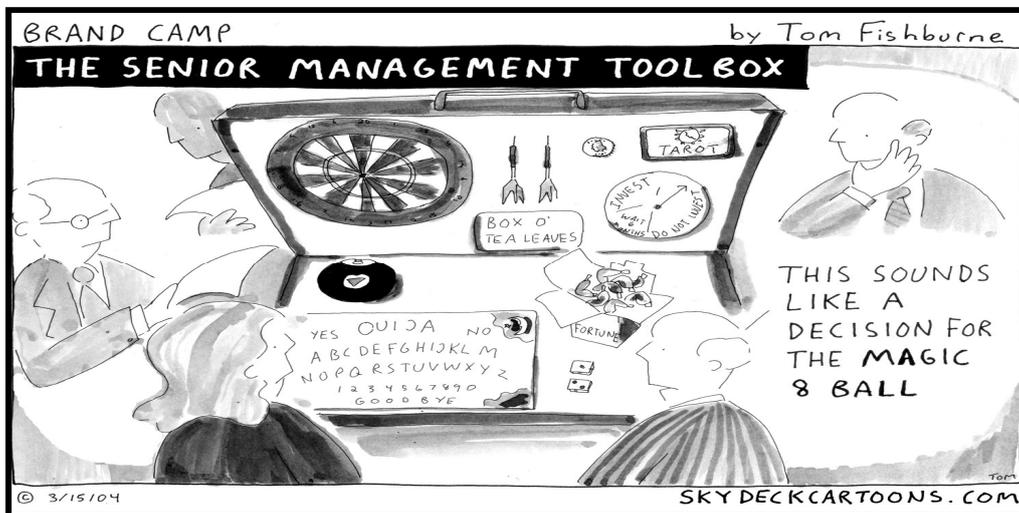
They have not left the department in the 26 years they have been there and are known as Dad's Army by their workmates as well as Company personnel.

To this day, the team have turned up for work at 3 am for local load out and only in the last 5 years have a new start time of 4.30am.

All good things come to an end, and this one has happened in three's!

Tony Whisker has retired, Tom Brennan has moved to Lamb Boning Room with a 7.30am start time—which leaves poor old Willy Register still there. But I have heard he is looking for a job with a later start time.

Well done the boys from "Dad's Army"!



MEETING DATES : 2005

EXECUTIVE MEETING

7 September

6 December

CONFERENCE

2-3 November



“Don't let the best you have done so far be the standard for the rest of your life.”

- Gustavus F. Swift,
- 1839-1903

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We're on the web!
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Comments, articles and/or photographs are welcome from members.

Please contact Amanda at the address on the left if you wish to contribute to this newsletter.

The Newsletter is published on an "as required" basis through out the year.

The Union reserves the right to edit submissions.



NZ Meatworkers Union
- working for you

National Office personnel:-
General Secretary : *Dave Eastlake*
Office Manager: *Sherryl*



Odds 'n Ends

- *1 May 2005 signified the start date for changes to the benefit stand-down rules for seasonal workers, with a choice of either 26 weeks or 52 weeks initial stand down assessment. See your union secretary for more details.*
- *PPCS Ltd was fined \$10,000 under Section 6 of the HSE Act and ordered to pay \$10,000 in reparations after an employee's hand was crushed in an unguarded conveyor belt (Dunedin DC, Nov 11);*
- *PPCS Ltd was also a finalist in the "Best Productivity from a health and safety initiative" category of the NZ Health & Safety Awards, for it's knife sharpening project. Use of correctly sharpened knives has seen a significant drop in injury numbers and associated problems over the last 12 months.*

