

NEWS LETTER

Drugs and Alcohol in the workplace

WORK INJURY?

The Union is aware of several instances where the employer is challenging whether or not an injury occurred in the workplace.

Workers need to ensure that they report ANY INCIDENT, no matter how trivial it may seem as this greatly enhances your chances of having fewer problems gaining cover and entitlements.

**REPORT! REPORT!
REPORT!**

**WORK DEATH
TOLL for the
calendar year
2013**

**(SOURCE—Safeguard
Magazine)**

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This issue continues to be a problem for the Union and Union members alike.

Members should note that the Union does not condone any worker reporting for work with his/her abilities and/or judgment impaired by alcohol or drugs to the degree that their own safety could be at risk, or the safety of any other person they might come into contact with in the course of their work.

We ask members to seriously think about this matter, can you afford to lose your job? Think about what might happen to you and your family if you lose your job because you had drug or alcohol problems at work.

Most employers have access to assistance for workers wanting to get help for problems with drugs and/or alcohol, you just have to ask. If you don't feel comfortable talking to your employer, talk to your Union delegate or Shed Secretary—they can also help you.

The [Drug and Alcohol Helpline on 0800 787 797](tel:0800787797) is a good place to get help.

GOVERNMENT TASKFORCE ON HEALTH & SAFETY SYSTEMS REVIEW

Over the past 10 months a rigorous process of consultation, discussion and analysis has taken place. The Taskforce's report contains an integrated package of measures which represent the first steps necessary to bring about the substantial changes that they believe are necessary for healthy and safe workplaces in New Zealand. The report contains their collective views and we all fully endorse the findings and recommendations. It is the Taskforce's sincerest wish that their report contributes to fewer deaths and injuries in New Zealand workplaces.

A copy of the full report can be downloaded from the following website link:-

<http://hstaskforce.govt.nz/documents/report-of-the-independent-taskforce-on-workplace-health-safety.pdf>



**Got problems
at work with
ACC, and you're
a Union mem-
ber—see your
plant/on site
secretary first
and as soon as
possible.**

**If they can't
help you, they
can access the**

**CTU Injury
Advocacy**

Service on

0800 486

466

**for expert
advice and
assistance.**



General Secretary—*Graham Cooke*

42nd ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NZ MEATWORKERS AND RE- LATED TRADES UNION INCORPORATED PRESENTED AT THE PALMERSTON NORTH CONFERENCE HELD 12TH – 14TH MARCH 2013

Mr Chairman, Conference delegates, and observer's, I present to you my first annual report. 2012 is a year we should not forget. Dave Eastlake retired 25th May and on the same day at 2pm I was reminded by a magnitude 5.2 quake that the temporary office at Belfast which had been condemned needed to be vacated that same day. The staff returned to working from home, finally finding new offices at Woolston on 13th June.

This is the year the Talley Family decided to selectively lock out large numbers of employees at the peak of the season across its 8 Affco plants, Moerewa, Wiri, Horotiu, Rangiuru, Wairoa, Napier, Im-lay and Feilding. This lock out had its beginnings in October 2010 when Talley's took full ownership of Affco, at the same time ag-gressively pressing employees to sign Individual Employment Agreements (IEA), these paid more per week, attendance bonus and the promise of longer employment. IEA's became a new work-force that worked during the lockout.

After three months of lock out 1,200 Affco employees continued to vote by secret ballot [98%] to remain on strike resisting the Talley's attempt to destroy their Collective Employment Agreement (CEA). The lock out ended with a CEA settlement in the early hours of the 22nd May 2012.

Just hours after settling the Affco Core, Andrew Talley stated ".....the need to rebuild the relationship and trust with the Union..." and expressed his regret at the "....distress and hurt this lockout had caused families and communities.....". Sadly, this 'rebuild' has not happened with many of the senior executives continuing to un-dermine the union and its members at every opportunity.

Concurrently with the lockout Affco/Talley's tried to destroy and discredit the union and part of their action included lodging two complaints – one against the professional body of auditor's, and further complaints by Talley's were laid with both the Serious Fraud Office and Incorporated Societies. The Professional body were ul-timately happy with our audit approach and reasoning. The Serious Fraud Office after receiving Affco's complaint looked at matters very briefly and then dismissed Affco's complaint as being totally groundless. The Incorporated Societies Office engaged their legal team and the services of a big 4 accounting firm who ultimately de-termined that the union required consolidated audited financial statements. Talley's had also involved their own lawyers and we required our own independent legal opinion from Wynn Williams.

The impact of consolidated accounts on this Union has also impact-



EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS Amendment Bill

- Does not promote collective bargaining
- Does not promote low-level dispute resolution
- Does not reduce the need for judicial (legal) intervention
- Does not recognise there is an inherent imbalance of power in employment relationships
- *In general, things will get harder for workers!*

-ed a significant number of other similar organisations around NZ, who have now also had to comply with the burden of preparing and filing consolidated audited financial statements. I am informed this result has had quite far reaching impact outside of our Union.

We thank all those meat workers, sub-branches, branches that donated food and funds. The support from the International Food Workers Union (IUF), NZ Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) and IWI leaders was pivotal in settling this lock out.

Never before has the Talley family yielded to a Union. This MWU Union resisted - Talley's boasted on a number of occasions that they don't have any unions in their other business interests.

Alliance & SFF announced losses of \$50m and \$42m. It is reported other meat companies made losses with Affco likely to be the hardest hit due to the 3 month lockout. Farmers profit before tax was \$114,200 in the 2011 year, rising to \$146,000 in the 2012 year, driven principally by excessive lamb procurement prices at the farm gate. Beef returns are currently at record levels.

Renegotiation of other agreements during the period has not been easy and gains in wages and conditions have been minimal. With lamb numbers at their lowest, this trend will not be easily overcome. Meat companies continue to downsize their operations with the recent closure of Sockburn in Christchurch and Matura lamb slaughtering. SFF has opened a new state of the art meat plant in Te Aroha, finally replacing the plant that was destroyed by fire in early December 2010. Recently, SPM/Talley's officially opened a new export plant in Malvern, replacing the abattoir.

Carol Beaumont (Ex Secretary NZCTU and Member of Parliament) was asked to do a review of the MWU after these two major disputes: Affco/CMP Rangitikei. The purpose of this process is for the CTU and MWU to work together on a set of recommendations for the MWU to consider, in order to improve its capability and strategic ability. The Review has been completed and distributed to Conference by mail 20th February.

Resulting from the 1951 waterfront lockout, 16 separate Freezing Workers Unions were registered in place of the National Union. 54 years later (October 2005) we achieved one National Union. This week can we take another decisive step and upgrade our Union?

As Sonny Tau an Ngā Puhī IWI leader said during the Affco lockout,

- there are those who make things happen
- there are those who want things to happen
- there are those who wonder what happened

Regards in solidarity,

Graham Cooke
General Secretary



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Bits 'n' Pieces/Odds 'n' Sods

LEAN MEATS, Oamaru was fined \$47,250 for breaching s6 and ordered to pay \$10,500 after an employee tried to wipe a wet conveyor belt with a towel. The towel became entangled in a nip point and drew in her hand, causing lacerations and crushing to two fingers, and a strained shoulder. The conveyor was only three weeks old. One nip point had been identified and dealt with, but another nearby had not.
(Oamaru DC, 8 Nov 2012)

CANCER IN MEATWORKERS—STUDY

You may recall an initial study into cancer in Meatworkers took place a few years ago. The result of that study showed that there was reason for further study. Funding has been secured by Massey University to continue the work they had started, and they obtained access to various workplaces to gather volunteers for the on-

going study.

Interim results so far are starting to identify some viruses in the samples but they need to be confirmed by further tests.

The Union will keep you up to date with any further developments.

ANZCO/CMP delegates and Union Officials met in New Plymouth 10-11 April 2013 to discuss wages and conditions. The meeting included a site visit to Riverlands Waitara and a meeting with ANZCO senior management.

