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Dear Member,

NEW ZEALAND LABOUR NEWS

Allied Health Workers Vote To Hold Vote On DHBs Offer

The District Health Boards (DHBs) have made a new offer to allied health workers, now under consideration by its 10,000 members, represented by the **Public Service Association (PSA)**.



(TOP News)

The offer averts strike action overwhelmingly approved in a May vote by PSA members across over 70 professions, whose collective pay agreement expired in October 2020.

A vote on the offer, recommended by the PSA bargaining team, will take place in the coming weeks, with results expected by 28 June 2022.

PSA organiser, Will Matthews says, "It is a testament to the perseverance of severely overstretched health workers that this offer has been reached. The collective power of union action certainly sharpens the minds of employers.

"This offer represents a pay increase of 17 per cent for our lowest-paid members, with the ability to regularly progress up pay steps, and 5 per cent for our highest-paid. In dollar terms, this offer is an increase of almost five times the DHBs' original offer.

"The offer would mean that all allied health professionals will be paid above the Living Wage, and can earn more in the health sector than at KFC.

"The offer also delivers on a number of other priority areas for our members, including safer workplaces and manageable workloads. This will contribute to the attractiveness of the allied health professions and the overall satisfaction and well-being of our members.

We are continuing to focus on the allied health pay equity claim and will make sure that adequate resources are available to complete the claim next year."

Firefighters Union Votes To Strike Nationwide

The **NZ Professional Firefighters Union (NZPFU)** has confirmed that

firefighters across the country have voted to strike after rejecting an offer by Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ) to set to settle a collective agreement.

NZPFU asserts that staffing levels for career firefighters are at a "crisis level" throughout Auckland, resulting in trucks being out of commission.

Martin Campbell, the union's Auckland local secretary, said Fire and Emergency had no plan to review staffing, "nor have they reviewed current numbers since the 80s and early 90s," adding that the city needed 90 career firefighters over and above current numbers to meet demand.



(NZPFU)

When a fire truck is unavailable, the fire stations either close for the day or Fire and Emergency sends a fire truck from another suburb to respond to emergencies, which Campbell said comes with "significant" risks.

Fire and Emergency Chief Executive Kerry Gregory said he was surprised that firefighters who are so committed to serving their communities are considering taking strike action, where they could put people and property at risk. "I'm extremely disappointed that the union has rejected our offer which was a fair offer, in line with public service guidance."

Gregory said the union had not formally notified Fire and Emergency that the offer has been rejected yet, nor have they received any formal notice of any form of industrial action. "We will be carefully considering the approach we take to keep the public safe during this time by initiating our contingency plans."



New Zealand Coastal Shipping Boost "Biggest Turnaround This Century"

Minister of Transport Michael Wood announced on 24 May 2022 that the Government has committed \$30 million of funding for coastal shipping, a development the **Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ)** says is the "biggest turnaround for the industry this century".

The Maritime Union said the funding is a game-changer for New Zealand, one that will see four or more New Zealand operated ships come into service on the New Zealand coast.

MUNZ National Secretary Craig Harrison said the new ships will have a substantial positive impact on New Zealand's supply chain crisis while also providing environmental benefits. He said it is essential the new ships are New Zealand flagged and New Zealand crewed to build resilience and capability in the shipping sector.

The coastal shipping funding is through the National Land Transport Programme (NLTP) to improve domestic shipping services, reduce emissions, improve efficiency and upgrade maritime infrastructure.

Waka Kotahi worked with the wider freight industry to select four applicants for co-investment in new and enhanced coastal shipping services through the NLTP. Those were Coastal Bulk Shipping Ltd, Move International Ltd, Swire Shipping NZ Ltd and Aotearoa Shipping Alliance.

Harrison said after decades of neglect, New Zealand coastal shipping has turned a corner and could now begin to fulfil its potential. The Maritime Union had relationships with several of the operators and would work to ensure crews were available.



(MUNZ)

Harrison said further investment in training and skills for a new generation of New Zealand seafarers is an important aspect of rebuilding the industry. It is essential that a maritime trading nation like New Zealand has shipping capability and skilled seafarers in an increasingly volatile global situation.

Coastal shipping is a low carbon emission transport mode, so it provides environmental as well as economic benefits. When the new shipping services are fully operational, the Government estimates they will remove around 35 million kilometres of truck travel from New Zealand's roading network every year.

NZ Meat Workers Union – One Union Entity

New Zealand Meat Workers Union Conference 2021 made the decision to explore options regarding a one union entity. Essentially this just means removing the restrictions of the current Branch structure. Both the One Entity Committee and the National Executive made unanimous recommendations to the 2021 Conference to go ahead with the proposal which would see one 'flat' structure, with sub-branches retaining their current rights and responsibilities.



The One Entity Committee (LtR): Murray Aldridge, Mike Paltridge, Mike Stanley, Jason Simpson, Daryl Carran, Mike Nahu, Bill Watt, Thomas Latimer, Bob Blackie, and John Woodhead

Conference delegates voted on the proposal as presented, with 43 delegates for and three against. This is a resounding success for the members who will be better serviced by this arrangement. Working across 'Branch Boundaries' is nothing new. The donning, doffing and rest breaks settlements and the Silver Fern Farms Core Collective are just two examples of how working together has been of great benefit to all members.

National Secretary Daryl Carran said, "We need to do this because we have enormous challenges both now and in the future such as climate change, a continual reduction in stock numbers, plant-based foods, water quality, nitrates and so on. The biggest challenge is sheep/lamb farms being sold off in favour of Carbon incomes – trees. We also need to do this in order to ensure we continue to get better outcomes for the members. At the moment we have many meat workers who are lagging well behind others in the industry and this needs to be tackled head-on without any Branch structure impediment."

Daryl continued, "Complimentary to this change is the acceptance of our succession planning which is allowing new, younger people to come through to be trained as Union organisers."

This transition will take effect from the beginning of the new financial year, 1 October 2022. Bill Watt, National Vice President and current Branch Secretary for Canterbury stated, "The only changes will be positive ones."

Care And Support Workers Deliver Thousands Of Messages To Government

After rallying around Aotearoa for a better pay offer, care and support workers and their unions delivered their messages to Parliament in a petition signed by more than 10,000 people.

The signatures, collected in just 10 days, were presented to Labour MP Ibrahim Omer outside Parliament on Tuesday 24 May, the same week negotiations were set to conclude.



(E tū)

The workers, represented by **E tū, Public Service Association (PSA)**, and **New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO)**, are pushing back on the Government's current pay offer of around 70 cents more per hour for an 18-month period, which would start after legislation setting their pay and conditions expires on 30 June.

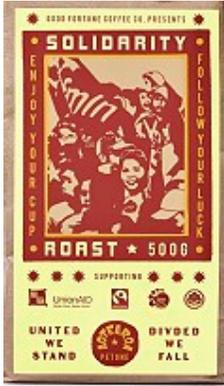
Union delegate and care worker Kiranjeet says working conditions are already poor: "I see people coming into our sector and leaving in days because the work is exhausting, high pressured. We are understaffed, and the pay is too low. Who would sign up to do this work for \$21.84 an hour?"

Sector providers are fully behind their staff and launched the petition jointly with care unions to draw attention to what was going on. The issue has also struck a chord with the community too, with many

petition signers leaving personal messages of support for care workers.

"I want to support the workers who make it possible for my elderly father, who has Alzheimer's, to live independently," Marion writes. "I am so grateful for the care my father receives, and I am appalled at the low rates of pay these 'angels on the ground' receive."

With the time running out to secure an agreement, workers want to see the Government present a fair pay offer.



UnionAID Joins Forces With Good Fortune Coffee Co.

For May Day 2022, **UnionAID** joined forces with Good Fortune Coffee Co. to produce the "Solidarity" blend.

Solidarity is an organic, fair trade, Living Wage blend from the Cooperativa Café Timor. Profits from the sale of the "Solidarity" blend will be donated to UnionAID projects.

The organic Fairtrade certified beans from Timor Leste are marketed by Cooperativa Café Timor (CCT), and sourced from the family-owned farms of the more than 20,000 members of the cooperative. In addition to family incomes, CCT has funded rural and mobile health services which have treated more than 2 million patients since 2001.

Coffee has been grown in Timor Leste for more than 150 years and the Bourbon & Timor Hybrid is well known for its toffee aroma and malty, nutty and raisin aftertaste.

Unions Aotearoa International Development Trust is a registered charity and international development agency which has a unique focus on funding and supporting workers in neighbouring countries in the Asia Pacific to develop unions and cooperatives to improve the income and wellbeing of their families.

As a Living Wage Employer and registered Fairtrader, Good Fortune Coffee shares the values of UnionAID and supports its work to build a "better world" through "better work" in all countries.

Order Solidarity Coffee [Here!](#)

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR NEWS

Biden and Ardern Hit It Off At First Face-To-Face

United States, Washington, DC. As reported by Newsroom New Zealand.

After a long couple of weeks of will she/won't she go to the White House, the Prime Minister has wrapped up a meeting that lasted 30 minutes longer than the one hour scheduled.

It's the first time **Jacinda Ardern** has met face-to-face with President Biden where several issues, including gun reform, the war in Ukraine, and the Christchurch Call were discussed.

But it was the US's new commitment to return to the Indo-Pacific region, and any potential trade or economic opportunities, that dominated the conversation.

Biden told media ahead of the meeting starting in the Oval Office that Ardern's comment about "working together" was significant. "We are not coming to dictate, or to lay down the law," Biden said.

The rapport between the two was evident from the beginning when Ardern began her opening remarks with, "can I say Mr President" and he cut in to comment, "you can do anything you want."

Biden described New Zealand's relationship with the US as being "one of our closest partners - we have a long history of friendship." He and Ardern both reflected on family who had fought on the same side in the Pacific

during World War II.

Biden noted Ardern's leadership on climate change, gun violence, extremism online and the resulting Christchurch Call.

He also took time to acknowledge the Texas elementary school shooting last week and spoke of his visit there just days ago and the "preventable devastation" he saw. In her reply to the President, Ardern expressed her sincere condolences on behalf of New Zealand and extended an offer to share the country's own experiences with Biden if it would add any value.



(Newsroom NZ/Joy Asico)

Both thanked each other both before the meeting and during for their respective support of Ukraine.

Ardern acknowledged the leadership Biden had shown at a time when values and territorial sovereignty are being challenged. Biden also referred to New Zealand's "significant support to the Ukraine."

While the US has committed to a greater presence in the Indo-Pacific region with an economic framework announced by Biden in Japan last week, Ardern pointed out the CPTPP was the trade instrument she would continue to "advocate" the US to join.

Speaking after the meeting to both the travelling New Zealand media and journalists from the White House, Ardern described the relationship as "warm, friendly, (and with) shared values and challenges." "The meeting length is probably a reflection of the many issues we wanted to traverse together, but I'm greatly heartened by the nature of the conversation we had today," she said.

On any commitment from Biden to be more present in the Pacific, Ardern said the US has been proactive about their intention to be in the region on the Pacific's terms, and it wasn't necessary for New Zealand to move closer to the US in light of China's increasing presence.

"Obviously there's no need. I think what's already established is the close working relationship that New Zealand and the United States have, that we have shared values, and really importantly that the focus in our region is...furthering the Pacific values and the focus that Pacific Island leaders have determined for themselves."



(ABCNews)

Ardern described the Pacific region as being "increasingly contested and challenged" and said it wasn't surprising that China came up as part of that conversation with the President. "Our engagement in our region has to be on our terms respectively and not be in response to the engagement of anyone else, particularly if it's going to be consistent," she said.

On gun reform, Ardern said when leaders experience face-to-face grief of a family member who has lost a loved one to a "crime like this" the experience is shared. "Whilst we might have different circumstances, whilst there might be different legislative environments, that is something we have both seen and experienced, and it is horrific."

Asked by Newsroom what it meant to be at the White House and the significance of that as a leader, Ardern was diplomatic at first, before letting the stateswoman veneer crack and admitting she had a little political nerd moment while spending time in the Oval Office.

Ahead of her meeting with Biden, Ardern briefly met Vice-President Kamala Harris, a discussion which focused on two areas within Harris' remit – space cooperation and the Christchurch Call.

Ardern said she and her business delegation had taken time to meet tech companies while in the US and that more work needed to be done.

"I hold an optimistic view that whilst things have been too slow, there's an acknowledgement often that that has been the case by some, and we will continue to seek progress particularly on the transparency of some of these issues that are thought to, in some cases, potentially contribute to radicalisation. "Issues around, for instance, the use of algorithms," she said.

As expected, there were no tangible outcomes from the meeting with Biden, but Ardern did again raise the issue of tariffs on New Zealand steel and aluminium. "This is one of those issues we have consistently raised, and I believe that will be something that will be looked into."

The White House visit concludes Ardern's 10-day visit to the United States. She returns to NZ on a commercial flight, while the RNZAF plane that has transported the delegation is being repaired in Washington DC.

ILO Report Finds Labour Market Recovery Goes into Reverse *Europe/Geneva.* As reported by the International Labour Organization.

According to the latest **International Labour Organization** (ILO) report, recovery in the global labour market is threatened by multiple and interlinked global crises, as well as increasing inequalities.

The latest (9th edition) of the ILO Monitor on the World of Work, indicates that after significant gains during the last quarter of 2021, the number of hours worked globally dropped in the first quarter of 2022, to 3.8 per cent below the pre-crisis benchmark (fourth quarter of 2019). This is equivalent to a loss of 112 million full-time jobs, representing a significant downgrading of figures published by the ILO in January 2022.



Multiple new and interconnected global crises, including inflation (especially in energy and food prices), financial turbulence, potential debt distress, and global supply chain disruption – exacerbated by the war in Ukraine – means there is a growing risk of a further deterioration in hours worked in 2022, as well as a broader impact on global labour markets in the months to come.

The report also finds that a great and growing divergence between richer and poorer economies continues to characterise the recovery. While high-income countries experienced a recovery in hours worked, low- and lower-middle-income economies suffered setbacks in the first quarter of the year with a 3.6 and 5.7 per cent gap respectively when compared to the pre-crisis benchmark. These diverging trends are likely to worsen in the second quarter of 2022.

In some developing countries, governments are increasingly constrained by the lack of fiscal space and debt sustainability challenges, while enterprises face economic and financial uncertainties and workers continue to be left without sufficient access to social protections.

More than two years after the start of the pandemic, many in the world of work are still suffering from the impact on labour markets. Labour incomes have not yet recovered for the majority of workers. In 2021, three in five workers lived in countries where labour incomes had not returned to the level seen in the fourth quarter of 2019.



The gender gap in hours worked also grew during the pandemic. In the first quarter of 2022, the global gender gap in hours worked was 0.7 percentage points greater than the pre-crisis benchmark (fourth quarter of 2019) when a large gender gap was already present. Women in informal employment have been worst affected. And in terms of income groups, low and middle-income countries saw the largest increase of the gender gap.

The sharp rise in job vacancies in advanced economies at the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022 has led to a tightening of labour markets with a growing number of jobs available relative to job seekers. But overall, there is no strong

(ILO)

evidence that labour markets are generally overheated, given the considerable pool of unemployed and underutilised labour in many countries.

Driven by disruptions in production and trade exacerbated by the Ukraine crisis, the increase in food and commodity prices is badly hurting poor households and small businesses, especially those in the informal economy.

"The global labour market recovery has gone into reverse. An uneven and fragile recovery has been made more uncertain by a self-reinforcing combination of crises. The impact on workers and their families, especially in the developing world, will be devastating and could translate into social and political dislocation," said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder. "It is now more essential than ever that we work together and focus on creating a human-centred recovery."

The report spells out a series of measures as a way forward, which are in line with ILO's Global Call to Action for a human-centred recovery, and the ILO-led UN initiative, the Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection.

They include:

- * Timely and effective support to maintain the purchasing power of labour income and the overall living standards of workers and their families.
- * Urgent tripartite dialogue to support appropriate and fair wage adjustments including to minimum wages, strengthening of social protection systems and income support, and the provision of food security measures where necessary.
- * Careful adjustment of macroeconomic policies so that they address pressures related to inflation and debt sustainability while supporting a job-rich and inclusive recovery.
- * Assistance for hard-hit groups and sectors, particularly vulnerable workers and those making the transition from the informal to the formal economy.
- * Long-term, well-designed sectoral policies that promote the creation of decent and green jobs, support sustainability and inclusiveness, and assist enterprises, especially micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

Carpenters' Union Representing 15,000 Striking Workers In Ontario Ratify Latest Offer

Canada, Ontario. As reported by Global News.

The carpenters' union representing 15,000 striking Ontario workers has reached a tentative agreement with various employer bargaining agencies.

Since May 9, 15,000 members of the Carpenters District Council of Ontario (CDCO), **United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America**, have been on strike after voting down a prior tentative agreement.

The affected members work in the industrial, commercial and institutional sector of the construction industry.

The union has said it had wanted to see an increase in wages for its workers amid high inflation and the rising cost of living.

"A condition for this to be ratified province-wide requires what is known as a 'double majority' which is a majority of locals (of 14), and a majority of members voting must vote acceptance," the union said.

CDCO president Mike Yorke said the latest agreement "reflects the current economic affordability the Carpenters' District Council of Ontario (CDCO) announced...that its members have voted to ratify the latest offer from their employer bargaining committee, thus ending the strike that began May 9.

The deal gives workers raises ranging from 10 to 12.5 per cent over three years across the 14 locals.



(Flickr)

"I think it's a fair agreement on both sides. It's a reflection of the reality of the affordability crisis in a province," said CDCO president Mike Yorke.

Ratification votes were held at locals across the province today with votes tabulated immediately. Ratification required a double majority, with a majority of the locals and a majority of members accepting the tentative deal negotiated earlier this week.

Seventy-seven per cent of workers voted to ratify.

Trump Officials, Meat Companies Knew Workers Were At Risk For COVID-19, Report Says *United States, Nebraska.* As reported by Fortune.

During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the meat processing industry worked closely with political appointees in the Trump administration to stave off health restrictions and keep slaughterhouses open even as the virus spread rapidly among workers, according to a congressional report released last week.



(RWDSU FB/AP)

The report by the (US) House's Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis said meat companies pushed to keep their plants open even though they knew workers were at high risk of catching the coronavirus. The lobbying led to health and labour officials watering down their recommendations for the industry and culminated in an executive order President Donald Trump issued in spring 2020 designating meat plants as critical infrastructure that needed to remain open.

Democratic Rep. Jim Clyburn, who leads the subcommittee, said U.S. Department of Agriculture officials and the industry prioritised production and profits over the health of workers and communities as at least 59,000 workers caught the virus and 269 died. "The shameful conduct of corporate executives pursuing profit at any cost during a crisis and government officials eager to do their bidding regardless of resulting harm to the public must never be repeated," Clyburn said.

Former Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, who now leads the University System of Georgia, declined to comment. A spokesman for the university system said Perdue is focused on "serving the students of Georgia."

The report is based on communications among industry executives, lobbyists and USDA officials and other documents the committee received from government agencies, Tyson Foods, Smithfield Foods, JBS, Cargill, National Beef, Hormel and other companies. Those firms control 85 per cent of the beef market and 70 per cent of pork production nationwide.

The North American Meat Institute trade group said the report distorts the truth and ignores the steps companies took as they spent billions to retool plants and purchase protective gear for workers.

"The House Select Committee has done the nation a disservice," the trade group's President and CEO Julie Anna Potts said. "The Committee could have tried to learn what the industry did to stop the spread of COVID among meat and poultry workers, reducing positive cases associated with the industry while cases were surging across the country. Instead, the Committee uses 20/20 hindsight and cherry picks data to support a narrative that is completely unrepresentative of the early days of an unprecedented national emergency.

A major union that represents workers at the processing plants condemned the way the Trump administration helped the industry.

"We only wish that the Trump Administration cared as much about the lives of working people as it did about meat, pork and poultry products, when we wanted poultry plants to shut down for deep cleaning and to save workers' lives," said Stuart Appelbaum, president of the **Retail, Wholesale and Department**

Store Union.

The report said meat companies were slow to take measures to protect workers from the virus and pushed to make government recommendations to require masks to be worn, install dividers between work stations and encourage social distancing in their plants optional.

But JBS spokeswoman Nikki Richardson said the company "did everything possible to ensure the safety of our people who kept our critical food supply chain running."

Tyson Foods spokesman Gary Mickelson echoed that sentiment and said Tyson has worked closely with both the Trump and Biden administrations, along with state and local officials, to respond to the pandemic's challenges.

Smithfield spokesman Jim Monroe said the industry reacted quickly, and Smithfield has spent more than \$900 million so far to protect workers. He said it was appropriate for meat companies to share their concerns with government officials as the pandemic unfolded.

But the report cited a message that a Koch Foods executive sent a lobbyist in the spring of 2020 that said the industry shouldn't do more than screen employees' temperatures at the door of plants. The lobbyist agreed and said, "Now to get rid of those pesky health departments!"

To that end, the report said USDA officials — at the behest of meat companies — tried to use Trump's executive order to stop state and local health officials from ordering plant shutdowns.

Even with those efforts, U.S. meat production fell to about 60 per cent of normal during spring 2020 because a number of major plants were forced to temporarily close for deep cleaning, widespread testing and safety upgrades, or operated at slower speeds because of worker shortages. Companies closed plants in consultation with health officials after outbreaks were confirmed.

"Throughout the pandemic we've worked hard to maintain safe and consistent operations. At the same time, we have not hesitated to temporarily idle or reduce capacity at processing plants when we determined it necessary to do so," Cargill spokesman Daniel Sullivan said.

Documents the companies provided to the committee showed that meat companies pushed hard for the executive order partly because they believed it would help shield them from liability if workers got sick or died — something a federal appeals court later rejected in a lawsuit against Tyson over worker deaths at an Iowa plant. Emails show the companies themselves submitted a draft of the executive order to the administration days before it was issued.

Early on in the pandemic, meat companies knew the virus was spreading rapidly among their workers because infection rates were much higher in the plants and their surrounding communities. The report said that in April 2020, a doctor at a hospital near a JBS plant in Cactus, Texas, told the company and government officials in an email that there was clearly a major outbreak at the plant because every COVID-19 patient at the hospital either worked there or was related to a worker. "Your employees will get sick and may die if this factory remains open," the doctor warned.

The report also highlighted the way meat companies aggressively pushed back against safety recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. That led to the final guidance including language that effectively made the rules optional because it said the recommendations should be done "if feasible" or "where possible."



(Flickr)

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