

Etū

STAND TALL



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For member support

call 0800 1 UNION (0800 186 466)

Website www.etu.nz

Email support@etu.nz

Twitter @EtuUnion

Facebook www.facebook.com/EtuUnion

Presidents

Don Pryde and Muriel Tunoho

National Secretary

Bill Newson

Assistant National Secretary

John Ryall

National office

7 McGregor Street, Rongotai, Wellington
PO Box 14-277, Kilbirnie, Wellington 6241

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Editor: Sam Gribben

Designer: Eleanor McIntyre

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Editorial: stand up for the future

By Assistant National Secretary John Ryall

On 7 October we launched a new union with a new name – E tū.

E tū literally means “stand up”, but it is more than the physical action of rising from the floor.

E tū is a challenge to stand up for ourselves as workers, to stand up for other workers, to stand up for all working families and working class communities.

E tū is the largest private sector union in New Zealand and brings new hope not just for currently unionised workers, but also to those hundreds of thousands of workers who are not in a union but would like to be.

For the last 30 years the voice of workers through their unions has been under attack – not just in New Zealand, but around the world.

We know there are tens of thousands of workers out there who want to join a union to get a greater say in their work and better wages and conditions. E tū is up for this challenge and through our larger size and renewed energy we will offer these workers a real voice.

Our economy has been systematically deregulated, our state assets have been stolen from the people and privatised, the wealthiest New Zealanders have received tax cuts while ordinary workers and their families have been told to tighten their belts, and over a hundred years of laws promoting the role of trade unions and collective bargaining have been decimated.

All these things have seen the transfer of wealth from ordinary workers and their families to big business interests.



National Secretary Bill Newson and Assistant National Secretary John Ryall

At the same time the world of work has massively changed. Large numbers of workers are now employed by contractors, sub-contractors and labour hire companies. This has created an invisible workforce with no access to collective bargaining or their direct employer and with very little power to lift their wage rates.

The result of these seismic changes has seen a massive growth in the wealth gap in our country with the top 1% owning a staggering three times more wealth than the bottom 50% of our population.

E tū is part of a new force that is committed to changing this situation.

We know that stronger unions are needed to achieve more equal distribution of wealth.

We know that stronger unions are needed to exert the political influence necessary to achieve decent social support for those in need.

We know that stronger unions give workers a real voice in their workplaces and industries.

We know there are tens of thousands of workers out there who want to join a union to get a greater say in their work and better wages and conditions.

E tū is up for this challenge and through our larger size and renewed energy we will offer these workers a real voice.

We bring a new commitment to organise the unorganised using our combined power to drive up new forms of organising amongst the new workforce.

We bring our experience of building power in the community with the Living Wage Movement and the campaign for Equal Pay, and we have a rock solid commitment to working in partnership with faith and community organisations and other unions to change the discussion about wages, poverty and inequality.

The result of these seismic changes has seen a massive growth in the wealth gap in our country with the top 1% owning a staggering three times more wealth than the bottom 50% of our population.

We will be a union that has a strong voice on the issues that matter beyond the workplace — issues like housing, health, education and the publicly owned services our communities need.

Together we have the resources, together we have tens of thousands of active members and together we have the commitment to transforming the lives of workers, their families and communities.

We are standing up together and moving forward to meet this challenge.

What's in a name?

By National Secretary Bill Newson

E tū means to stand, to stand up, to make a stand for something, to stand together and sometimes to stand in front. When we do so we stand with pride, we stand tall!

E tū takes our name from the Māori saying 'E tū Kahikatea' to stand like the Kahikatea tree which only flourishes and grows in the forest surrounded by a multitude of others. The use of the tukutuku in our logo represents the weaving together of our unions for a new dynamic future together.

Before deciding on a name our joint-National Executive set out the following criteria:

- Strong and relevant
- Recognisable and unique
- Articulate our purpose
- Galvanise our membership and other workers
- Provide a sense of community and respect
- Carry the union into the future

E tū hits the mark on all counts and it is short, simple and accessible as a domain name.

We have been getting very positive feedback from many members.

E tū allows us to reach out and be more relevant to the emerging youth demographic that will be entering our industries over the next ten years, including a relative increase in young Māori and Pacific workers.

We know that we must form relationships with Iwi business interests, particularly in the wider food, hospitality and tourism industries.

Among the common phrases that most New Zealand primary school children will hear every day is 'sit down' and 'stand up' said in Maori – E noho and E tū.

Those kids coming into the workforce of the future might not know much about unions, but they will know exactly what E tū means and will more readily understand who we are.

Members can be very proud of our new name. It is contemporary and stylish, and it is respectful, bold and purposeful.

Launch event



Assistant National Secretary John Ryall and our Presidents Don Pryde and Muriel Tunoho cut the first of many E tū celebration cakes

The 7th of October was an historic day for the union movement in New Zealand, when after years of planning, EPMU and SFWU merged to become E tū, our union, and the biggest private sector union in the country.

200 representatives from across the labour movement met at Wharewaka Events Centre on Wellington's waterfront including fabulous E tū members, staff and representatives, officials, politicians, and activists. The hall was packed to the brim with people eager to learn about the new union.

The main attraction was of course the revelation of our bold new name, E tū. Our Presidents Muriel Tunoho and Don Pryde spoke together after the



A Cook Island drum group from Home-Grown Heroes Porirua keeping the energy alive

announcement and offered an inspiring explanation of our new name and vision.

"E tū embodies mana and collective strength. But most of all, it's a call for something – to stand for something, to stand up for something together," said Muriel.



The fantastic Te Kura Māori o Porirua kapahaka group



Retiring CTU President Helen Kelly and Deputy Labour Leader Annette King

“E tū embodies our values, our pride and our strength. It is a strong name and it’s *our* name! Both yours and mine. E tū embraces everyone.”

We heard from our national secretary Bill Newson, who explained that we needed to reinvigorate the union movement, and that “we can’t be satisfied with the status quo.”

“We face fundamental changes in how work is organised and how we engage with it. Unions must adapt to be relevant and effective for workers in that environment,” said Bill.



Wellington's Deputy Mayor Justin Lester and Mayor Celia Wade-Brown



Tegel members in Auckland celebrating the launch from afar

“Our members are hard-working and aspirational. They aspire for a better, fairer deal at work for themselves and their children.”

Another highlight was hearing from Helen Kelly, the outgoing President of the Council of Trade Unions. Helen said the formation of E tū was one of the most exciting developments for the movement that she had seen during her presidency.

Helen’s tireless work for New Zealand workers earned her E tū’s first official life membership, and there was not a dry eye in the house as E tū’s National Campaign Director Annie Newman delivered a lovely tribute to Helen and her achievements.

Other speakers included the Labour Party’s Annette King and Wellington Mayor Celia Wade-Brown, who both spoke about the importance of unions in driving change across our communities.

The event ended with four members signing up as founding members of E tū; Equal Pay hero Kristine Bartlett, Green Party industrial relations spokesperson Denise Roche, EPMU life member Tony Wilton, and Living Wage activist Daniel Fetu.

E tū was launched with the passion, vision and enthusiasm that reflects a revitalised union movement in New Zealand. We’ve started something special, and the best is yet to come. Stand tall!

Member profiles

INTRODUCING: PETRIA MALLOCH

Aged care E tū member

Petria loves her job working at Selwyn Village in Pt Chevalier, Auckland. Her job changes every day, and she plays a number of professional roles as well as personally supporting the residents.

"I'm a hairdresser, a physiotherapist, a nurse, a laundry assistant, sometimes I'm a boxing bag, a spittoon when residents get aggravated and violent," she said. "I'm a grievance councillor, a mother, a brother, an aunty or a grandchild. All in one day."

The variety keeps her on her toes, but it's a deep sense of caring that keeps her in the industry. "The people you care for are what's important. We all want to do a great job because we know how important it is that our elderly can get as much enjoyment and peace out of their retirement as possible."

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Petria Malloch

After three and a half years Petria is only paid \$15.45 an hour and works around the clock to be able to look after her family. If she didn't also have a job as a member-organiser for E tū, she would hardly be able to see her family at all. That's why Petria is part of a wider local community calling for Selwyn to pay the Living Wage.



Petria Malloch

This community campaign means local residents, the residents of Selwyn Village and their families, members of Grey Power, the Anglican church and the unions are all working together to influence the employer to pay decent wages.

"Once I've finished my qualifications, the best pay I'll be able to get is \$18.10. Hardly anyone in aged care is even close to getting the Living Wage," she said. "Selwyn are pleading poverty, saying they can't afford to pay us anymore. But they are spending huge amounts of money on new building developments, so it's crazy they can't find some money for their staff."

Petria is excited about the E tū because she knows that our campaigns like Living Wage and Equal Pay will benefit from having a bigger voice.

"It's about standing together, and showing that we'll fight and support each other all the way through."

INTRODUCING: KERRY RANGINUI

Welder, manufacturing industry
E tū member

Kerry has worked at A E Tilley's Metal Manufacturers in Rongotai, Wellington, for 15 years.

He reckons it's a good job, with a good collective agreement and conditions, but they pay could always be a bit better.

Kerry is a fulltime welder and plays a very active union role at work. He's been the delegate for two years and is keenly involved in health and safety at work. He knows his way around a first aid kit. "I take pride in being there for my colleagues, to keep them safe at work," he says.

He's done a lot for Tilley's over the years, from helping out as a cleaner on Saturday mornings to a stint overseeing the company's building warrant of fitness programme.

"In bargaining you've got to be reasonable, but so do they. The union and employer getting around the table is the only way to get the best possible outcomes."

E tū, Stand Up, that's what we do."

Kerry Ranginui

Kerry hails from Whanganui, is of Te Āti Haunui-a-Pāpārangī descent, and first moved to Wellington about thirty years ago. He loves sports, "obviously including rugby," but has a special passion for following motorsports (particularly big V8s).

"I've dabbled in owning big cars but I've learnt that buying magazines and t-shirts is a far more cost-effective way to follow my passion."

He lives in Newtown with his partner, three daughters and a son. With a reasonably big family to support, Kerry knows the value of a regular, secure job.



Kerry Ranginui

"I don't know how you would provide for your family if you didn't have the guaranteed hours," he says.

His recent experience in collective bargaining has made him realise the issues that the employers face, but that hasn't stopped him fighting for job security and retaining conditions for his local members.

"In bargaining you've got to be reasonable, but so do they. The union and employer getting around the table is the only way to get the best possible outcomes."

Kerry thinks E tū is a brilliant name for our union. He understands the need to be large, strong and effective, and to stand up for workers' needs and interests.

He understands his responsibility in representing his members at work and the need to have a well-resourced union to support them.

"E tū, Stand Up, that's what we do."

Living Wage update

E tū stands tall for a Living Wage. E tū is a Living Wage member and a Living Wage Employer continuing the tradition of EPMU and SFWU to campaign for a just wage for our members, their families and their communities.

For over three years unions, faith groups and community organisations have been campaigning together for better wages as a coalition called Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand.

Living Wage movements are an international phenomenon, and community-led campaigns in cities from London to Wellington have had plenty of successes.

The New Zealand Living Wage rate was calculated in 2013 by the Family Centre Social Policy Unit to be \$18.40. Since then, the rate has risen based on movements in the average wage. For 2015/16, the Living Wage here is \$19.25.

One of the most important things we have done is injecting the language into discussions about wages and inequality. People now get it – a Living Wage is enough money to thrive – not just survive.

This means enough money for the essentials, for school trips, for modest leisure activities such as the occasional family trip to the movies, and for everything else that a hard working family should be able to afford.

The New Zealand Living Wage rate was calculated in 2013 by the Family Centre Social Policy Unit to be \$18.40. Since then, the rate has risen based on movements in the average wage. For 2015/16, the Living Wage here is \$19.25.

Some of the most exciting Living Wage news in our country is the Wellington City Council's (WCC) commitment in their Long-term Plan to pay a Living Wage to contracted workers such as cleaners. We have already won a Living Wage for WCC's directly employed workers, but to be Aotearoa's first Living Wage Council means a Living Wage for everyone.



The Mop March – showing Wellington City Council that the community supports the Living Wage

Wellington is lucky to have a majority of Councillors supportive of the Living Wage campaign, who were proud to use a Living Wage commitment as a campaigning tool in the last local body elections.

However, it didn't just happen that way – it's the strong community network which keeps the pressure on Council with events like the Mop March (pictured) and constant community organising.

Some more great news is that the number of Accredited Living Wage Employers this year has doubled to 40. These are businesses and organisations who have decided to be leaders in their sectors by paying at least \$19.25 to directly and indirectly employed staff.

It's not all altruism for these Living Wage Employers. They have seen improvements in things like productivity and absenteeism. They are experiencing extra business and kudos from communities that believe in better wages. They are proving that being a good employer makes good business sense.

If you are keen to get involved in your local Living Wage network, or maybe even start your own network if you live outside of the main centres, then please contact Living Wage Movement Aotearoa New Zealand by sending an email to info@livingwage.org.nz or visiting www.livingwage.org.nz.

E tū promotes participation in health and safety



Members at Tegel (pictured at their E tū launch event) are bargaining for union representation in health and safety

A new Health and Safety at Work Act and regulations come into force on 4 April next year and E tū already has an action plan underway.

New Zealand has a very poor record of workplace health and safety. In 2014 there were 3504 serious harm notifications and 46 deaths at work.

Five years ago 29 miners died at Pike River resulting in a Royal Commission and Taskforce that made sweeping recommendations for changes to health and safety laws.

In the new law the company is responsible for the health and safety of all workers in the supply chain. Where there are more than 20 workers or where there is high risk, the company must hold an election for a health and safety representative. If there is a committee, half of the committee must be worker representatives.

E tū is promoting worker participation agreements for health and safety. These agreements provide for health and safety representatives and committees, they outline the roles, rights and responsibilities of reps, how the reps are trained and how the system will be reviewed among other things.

If you are a health and safety rep you can direct unsafe work to cease, represent workers in health and safety matters, monitor health and safety measures, make recommendations, request information and play many other important roles in workplace health and safety.

E tū will be running delegate training in the new law and how to organise around health and safety on the job. If you would like to receive training contact your local office or organiser.

Health and safety participation at Tegel

Members at Tegel told us why a health and safety worker participation system is important to them:

- It balances what the workers want with what the employers want.
- Workers see and experience what is happening on the line every day, but health and safety reps are not on the floor.
- When workers nominate the reps instead of the employer, we believe they can be trusted to represent the workers more effectively and report back to us immediately.

A message from our first life member – Helen Kelly



E tū National Campaigns Director Annie Newman and former Co-President of SFWU Barbara Wyeth present Helen Kelly with a Life Membership

Helen Kelly has recently stood down as Council of Trade Unions president after eight years. As president she has been at the front of some of the most important union issues in the last decade including the Hobbit dispute and the forestry safety campaign. Her personal commitment to fighting for the most vulnerable is inspiring.

We were devastated to learn earlier this year that Helen has been diagnosed with lung cancer, and she has stood down as a result. But in typical Helen style, she will continue to fight for all workers and campaign for a fairer country.

E tū makes me very happy!

I am so excited by the formation of E tū and particularly honoured to be its first life member. Congratulations to everyone who made this work!

All of us in one of the original unions were in it because we want the strength, dignity and voice that working together in union gives us, so it makes so much sense to make these things even stronger through this partnership. Many of the workplaces where members of the three unions (SFWU, EPMU and FARSA) work will have had members of at least

two of these partners and it is logical and common sense that these workers join together.

There are also thousands of our family members who do not have a union at all in their workplace and this is a challenge all unions in this country need to sort out and change. We don't even have a chance of doing this unless we are logical and committed to maximising our strength and resources, as we have done with E tū.

I am looking forward to seeing the new union work. I wish I could come to the first paid union meetings that E tū holds and see the energy that I know the combined membership will bring. You need to think about what you would like to see the new union prioritise in its campaigns. What campaigns would excite your members and your community? What are the core issues that your members want addressed?

Become a delegate. Become a health and safety rep. Recruit your workmates. Get involved in the sector committees. Union work is interesting work. This new union will be brilliant but even more brilliant if you and others get involved.

Congratulations again and as the first Life Member – I intend to get involved!

Lift-off for E tū Aviation



Flying in New Zealand? Chances are you'll meet an E tū Aviation member at work. Whether it's flight attendants, border protection, engineers, customer service representatives, cleaners, ground staff, aviation security, or anyone else, airports are E tū Aviation territory.

The aviation sector is taking off, with solid membership growth and big plans for the future.

The cabin crew members of the Flight Attendants and Related Services Association (FARSA) are on board as part of an operational merger and next year they vote on whether to join E tū Aviation completely.

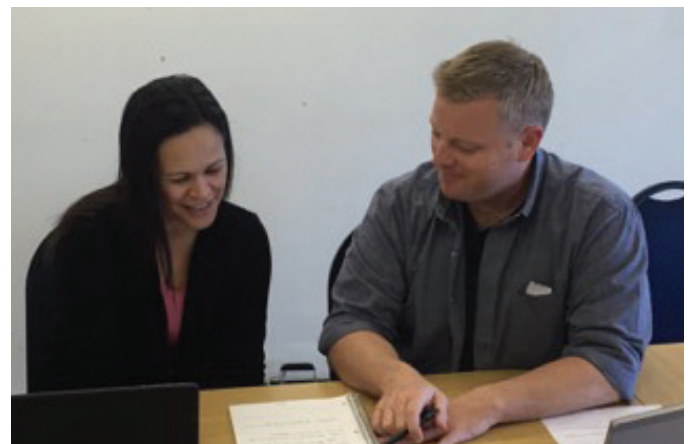
We're leading the way on High Performance Engagement (HPE) – a way of working that puts the focus on workers through their unions. We have a good relationship with Air New Zealand, agreeing to respect each other and work together for mutual advantage.

It's been a challenge to end years of industrial turmoil, outsourcing and legal action, but it has meant that delegates have come to understand the business and have learnt how to change it.

This year Air New Zealand achieved record profits and shared them by giving each employee \$1400. We still have a way to go, but both the company and union members are benefitting from HPE.

We've also been able to bargain differently, settling three major agreements in the second half of 2015, delivering real wage growth for members.

Next year is going to be a busy one – we'll reshape the aviation industry as E tū Aviation and FARSA work closely together and consider a full merger. EPMU and SFWU coming together has strengthened our movement, and so too will the addition of FARSA.



E tū Aviation delegates Tracy Williams and Dan Gregory

“More than half of Air NZ's workforce all standing together for a united voice in Aviation that's a great platform for us”

**Tracy Williams, Longhaul Schedule 200
E tū Aviation delegate.**

“Our merger is a great opportunity to see us combining the expertise of FARSA in Flight Attendant issues with the organised structure of E tū Aviation.”

**Dan Gregory, Air NZ Longhaul FSM and
FARSA delegate**

TPP Agreement condemned at Biennial Hui



Northern region reps – Liz Heta, Brendan Peters-Tahitahi, and Jamie Toko



Central region reps Tina Reid, Haimona Carter-Hadfield, and Ngahuia Washer

The E tū Biennial Hui has condemned the New Zealand Government’s secrecy around the details of the recently-negotiated Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement.

The 50 Maori members at the hui expressed concern about the potential loss of sovereignty, displacement of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, increasing costs of medications and the further control of the New Zealand economy by global corporations.

Newly-elected E tū Runanga Convenor Sharryn Barton said that the TPPA was no ordinary trade agreement but had the potential to allow global corporations to veto the democratic decisions of the New Zealand Government and its citizens.

The Biennial Hui, which met under the banner of He Whanau Kotahi (We are one whanau) welcomed the formation of the new union and passed a unanimous resolution in support of the new name and brand.

Rotorua member Virgil Iraia said that he and thousands of young workers were looking for a strong active organisation that could wage campaigns that were relevant to them.

“I think that while the unions that formed E tū have proud histories, the new union is looking forward to give workers hope and attract into its ranks a new generation of activists,” said Virgil.

An important speaker at the hui was Maori Women’s Welfare League National President Prue Kapua,



Southern region reps Ani Broughton, Gus Taukamo, Ngahuia Thomas, and Nelson Tainu

who extended the best wishes of the league for the formation of E tū and said the league had recently joined with E tū and other unions in its membership of the Living Wage Movement.

The hui endorsed the valuable work of kaumatua Joe O’Connor and elected a 10 person Runanga to guide its activity over the next two years. If more Maori members want to get involved in our Runanga activities, they can call 0800 1 UNION for the contact details.

He aha te mea nui o te Ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata. What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, people, people.

We're on the way to equal pay!

The Government has commenced negotiations with E tū and other unions to deliver equal pay for nearly 8000 E tū members in the care and support sectors.

"The government action to negotiate a settlement of the Kristine Bartlett equal pay case is historic and may deliver the largest single increase in pay that care and support workers have received in the last 30 years," said E tū Assistant National Secretary and union negotiator John Ryall.

Kristine Bartlett, a senior caregiver in residential aged care, successfully argued before the Court of Appeal that in order to comply with the Equal pay Act in a women-dominated sector, the employer had to look at what male workers with similar experience, skills and working with the same degree of effort would be paid for the work if the gender undervaluation associated with the work was removed.

The Supreme Court rejected a further appeal, and the case was destined to return to the Employment Court to work out the principles that would determine pay rates in the sector. Instead, the government has come to the table and has agreed to negotiate a settlement for all care and support workers in residential aged care, home support, disability support and community mental health.

Meetings have commenced across the country of all workers in the care and support sector to hear a report on the negotiations and for these workers to



Women MPs support union members at the Equal Pay Day picnic

have their input into likely outcomes.

The Government has also commenced a process with the NZ Council of Trade Unions and Business NZ to agree on a set of principles that can guide the courts and direct negotiations about other equal pay cases.

These are very promising developments in a campaign which has captured the hearts and minds of New Zealanders.

Kristine Bartlett and the thousands of other women in aged care, home support, mental health and disability support are leading the way for all women-dominated industries.



Kristine Bartlett and Green Party MP Jan Logie

Our first E tū Delegate Forums



Lots of energy at the Hamilton Delegate Forum

Excitement about the new union and its name E tū spilled over into the 24 Delegates Forums that were attended by around 1200 delegates last month.

The forums were the first opportunity for delegates from the two previous unions to get together to discuss issues from their workplaces and from the wider economy.

Newly elected Hamilton Delegates Forum Convenor Robyn Spedding said that the forum she attended was a great opportunity for delegates from different industries to share their experiences and knowledge.

"I really like positive people and there were heaps of them at the forum I attended. We are building a great union," Robyn said.

Newly elected Northland Delegates Forum Convenor Glen Chaplin thought the way members of merged unions gelled was fantastic.

"It was really positive, the way the two groups became one, got together and discussed the issues," Glen said. "More numbers is a great thing.

"I got talking to some members who worked in disability support, and I couldn't believe the

unfairness of their situation. I'm looking forward to fighting for them."

The main business of the forums was for delegates to become familiar with the pending changes to the Health and Safety in Employment Act, to get an overview of where E tū is heading and elect Regional National Executive representatives, local forum convenors and local delegates to attend next year's Inaugural Union Conference.

National Secretary Bill Newson attended nearly all the forums and talked with delegates about the opportunities and challenges that E tū had in front of it.

He said that despite the National Government's programme of removing employment rights E tū was heavily involved in some exciting initiatives around the living wage, equal pay and the protection of wages through our existing multi-employer collective agreements.

"E tū is now the largest private sector union in New Zealand but we will not be sitting back and resting on our laurels. The next 12 months is going to be hard work building our organisation and power, but the outcomes will be worth it."

What's all this about Talley's?

The E tū National Executive has voted to support the Meat Workers Union in its fight against meat company AFFCO, owned by the Talley family.

The Talley family is one of New Zealand's wealthiest families. Their operations include seafood, frozen vegetables, dairy and meat. One member of their family, Peter Talley, was recently knighted for services to business and the community.

In 2012 AFFCO Talley locked out Meat Workers Union (MWU) members in their North Island meat plants for 84 days. It was the support of unions, communities and iwi that finally got a new collective settled.

But now: different year, more union busting.

Since the previous lockout Talley's AFFCO have waged an unrelenting struggle to cripple the union and to destroy the job description for meat workers through removing a provision from their collective agreement that allows them to be re-employed each season.

Following the expiry of the collective agreement in 2014 Talley's AFFCO seized the opportunity to force the workforce to either sign up to a new Talley's oppressive individual agreement or have no job. At the same time they sought to end collective bargaining with the union under the Government's March 2015 employment law changes.

While most workers were forced to sign up to continue their employment, union members at the Wairoa site refused to return to work on these conditions and have now been without work for months.

In early October, the MWU argued before a full bench of the Employment Court that the company's actions constituted an unlawful lockout because meat workers have continuity rights from season to season.

The court supported the union and agreed that an unlawful lockout had occurred and that Talley's had breached good faith in their dealings with the union during collective bargaining.

MWU Organising Director Darien Fenton said the court decision was a fantastic boost for meat workers and their families.

"With everything the company have put the workers and their communities through, they really deserve this brilliant outcome," said Darien.

"The AFFCO workers don't want much. They say a rollover of the 2012 agreement would settle the agreement. They haven't had a pay rise for years, but just want to keep their current work conditions."

Despite the court win Darien Fenton said that to defeat Talley's would take all the forces of the union movement, the public, international links, community and iwi support.

"We are very pleased with the support from E tū and other unions, but the stakes are high. If we don't succeed Talley's de-unionisation strategy will spread to the rest of the highly unionised meat industry, and to other workers as well."



E tū members stand with Talley's workers in Wairoa

Less for Middlemore



Retired Middlemore workers fighting for a fair deal

Eleven dedicated women workers at Middlemore Hospital were dismayed to learn after months of negotiations that their employer is refusing to pay out their retiring gratuity.

Tearoa Potoru (“Mama”) started working at the South Auckland hospital on 21 October 1975, and she has been slaving over a hot stove day in day out for 40 years to provide tasty and nutritious meals for Middlemore patients.

“We put love in our food for the patients. And we were a team. We worked hard and we laughed a lot. Now there is no laughing in the kitchen,” Mama said.

Under her collective agreement, Mama and the other women are entitled to early retirement, including both a severance payment and a retiring gratuity worth around \$30,000 each.

They would have kept on working, but the Counties Manukau District Health Board (DHB) agreed to adopt the food services model promoted by the now defunct Health Benefits Ltd (HBL) and made radical changes in the hospital kitchen and on the wards.

Instead of freshly cooked food prepared on site at the hospital, bags of cook chilled meat and vegetables, baked goods and frozen ‘meals on

wheels’ are being brought in to be re-heated. When the changes were introduced in July, the highly skilled, long serving cooks lost their jobs.

“We feel they targeted us older workers,” Mama said. “Now we have to get by on the pension. It is very hard.”

The model is now being rolled out across the country where Compass has the food services contract – Tairāwhiti DHB and Auckland DHB before Christmas, and Nelson-Marlborough DHB, Southern DHB, Taranaki DHB and Bay of Plenty DHB in 2016.

Industry Co-ordinator Jill Ovens said the redundancies are bad enough, but the refusal to pay the retiring gratuities is downright scandalous.

“We are sure Compass would have paid out the retiring gratuities if the DHB had agreed to fund them. After all these women had worked for successive hospital boards for most of their 40 years’ service. Compass only came in a few years ago.”

Jill said the union has tried persuasion, but Compass and the DHB are refusing to budge so E tū is off to the Employment Relations Authority.

“We have a strong case and a heartfelt message – cutting entitlements to save money is disgraceful.”

Christmas holiday closedowns

With Christmas rapidly approaching, many workers are facing the prospect of being required to take some or all of their annual leave over the Christmas holiday period. That is because some employers have a 'closedown period'. For some it won't be a problem but for others it can be a difficult time.

The following is a quick guide the law around closedown periods.

What is a closedown period?

A closedown period is a period when an employer *customarily* closes down its operation and discontinues the employment of one or more employees. This means that there must be an established practice of closing down the operation. If there is an established practice of closing down the operation it should be recorded in your collective agreement. In some cases the employer might want to keep a skeleton crew on or carry out annual maintenance work during the closedown period, requiring some workers to stay on.

Are there laws governing closedown periods?

Yes. The *Holidays Act 2003* governs when and how employers are legally entitled to have a closedown period.

When can employers have a closedown period?

The Holidays Act only entitles an employer to have one closedown period each year. However the employer, workers and the union can agree to more than one closedown period each year. If your employer wants to have more than one closedown period in a year, talk to your organiser.

What if my employer wants to have a closedown period for the first time?

If your employer has never had a closedown period before then it is not the *custom* to do so, and they will need to first try and reach agreement with workers and the union.

Do I have to take leave when the employer has a closedown?

Yes. If the employer is legally entitled to have a closedown period you will be required to take some

or all of your annual leave over the closedown period. The employer must give you at least 14 days notice of the requirement to take annual leave over the closedown period.

What if I don't have enough annual leave to cover the closedown period?

If you are entitled to annual leave but do not have enough to cover the whole closedown period then you and your employer may agree to make up the balance with *annual leave in advance*. If you need to take some of the closedown period as annual leave in advance but your employer doesn't agree to it you should contact your organiser or the Union Support Centre (0800 1 UNION).

What if I have been employed for less than 12 months?

If you have not completed 12 months continuous service then you are not yet entitled to any annual leave. Instead of paying you annual leave over the closedown period your employer must pay you 8% of your gross earnings since you started your employment, even if that works out to be more than you would have earned if you had been working over the same period.

Can my employer change my anniversary date?

Yes, in certain circumstances. If you have not completed 12 months continuous service at the time of the closedown period your employer can change your official anniversary date to a date on or near the starting date of the annual closedown period. This will ensure that in future you will have a full annual leave entitlement over future closedown periods. In other words, for your first closedown period you will be paid 8% of your gross earnings since you started your employment but for all future closedown periods you will be paid normal annual leave, like everyone else.

What do I do if I have any concerns about my employer's closedown period?

If your employer has said that they want to have closedown over Christmas and you think they are not doing it properly or have any concerns at all call the Union Support Centre for help.

Industrial updates

PACKAGING WORKERS SEAL THE DEAL

Following an overtime and paper work ban and a threatened full strike by 85 Porirua packaging members, American-owned company Sealed Air has agreed on a three-year collective agreement that achieves wage increases of between 5.8 and 7.5%.

Lead Organiser Mark James said that members had been forced to take action after they were offered a wage increase less than had been offered by Sealed Air at its plants in Australia and a wage that was less than other packaging workers doing the same job in the Wellington area.

“Our members don’t like being treated as second class citizens compared to their Aussie cousins and their strong action showed the company that they needed to do something,” said Mark.

“While the company huffed and puffed and threatened to suspend our members over their overtime ban and even to close the Porirua plant, they knew that they had to come up with a deal that our members would ratify.”

Sealed Air shop steward Dean Rauhihi said that the parity issue was the widely and deeply-felt issue and the slogan “same job, same region, same pay” was one that was supported by all members.

“The deal hammered out by the union negotiating team delivers a decent pay increase, a new roster with more time off and more money, and a union/management working party to continue the work on parity,” he said.

DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD MECA RATIFIED

The District Health Board national collective agreement for nearly 1500 orderlies, security, home support, food services and cleaning members has been ratified and the first pay increase will occur from the beginning of January.

While the collective agreement is for a 33 month term it includes two separate 2% pay increases, up to 7% pay increases for those on grade 6 of the respective wage scales, large increases in broken shift and meal allowances, a new wage scale for security workers and the restoration of double time pay after the first three hours of overtime.

E tū Industry Coordinator Jill Ovens said the multi-employer collective agreement (MECA) normally set the tone for settlements with Spotless, Compass, OCS and ISS, the large contractors in public hospitals, who employed another 1700 union members.

“While not all of the contractors have yet settled, a new feature of the negotiations has been nearly all of them, including the DHBs, agreeing to a bargaining

fee process, whereby non-members pay the union for the privilege of picking up our negotiated conditions.”

A big feature of all of these negotiations was putting in place better systems for members being able to access the higher rates at the top of the scales, which are reserved for those who have a Level 3 qualification.

“While there are still some difficulties, we have imbedded more processes in the latest collective agreements to commit the employers to promoting and delivering the training necessary for members to complete this qualifications and move up to the higher rates,” said Jill.

One of the big issues in the next 12 months will be examining how the other stand-alone collective agreements with DHBs and contractors covering public hospital trades members can be integrated into a larger bargaining arrangement that will give all E tū members more leverage.

METALS SETTLEMENT

Over 70 manufacturing companies have signed up to the E tū national metals agreement since a 1.925% wage increase was negotiated in June and E tū has a goal to get up to 100 by the end of the year.

The success of this and other E tū multi-employer collective agreements (MECAs) in plastics manufacturing, mining and public hospitals flies in the face of National Government legislation that tried to undermine collective agreements that covered more than one employer.

The legislation allowed employers, within ten days of receiving a notice to negotiate a MECA, to walk away from the agreement and the industry standard.

TEGEL BARGAINING UPDATE

Tegel Henderson bargaining began on the 22nd and 23rd of October. Tegel Henderson has been a growth priority for the E tū campaign team leading up to bargaining, so it was fantastic to have 16 (mainly new) delegates at the bargaining table and about 70 new members behind us.

The top priorities for the union for bargaining are the Living Wage and worker participation in health and safety.

We are putting a model forward that would shift the payscale upward, so the bottom rates would be no less than the Living Wage by the end of the agreement. The company is valued at close to \$1 billion and could easily afford to make this commitment to their lowest paid staff.

E tū Manufacturing Industry Coordinator Louisa Jones said that MECAs were a great way to set a strong wage increase standard within an industry and organise around it.

“We mapped worksites in the metals manufacturing industry, educated our members about the benefits of the MECA and initiated bargaining with those employers who were on board with our industry strategy,” said Louisa.

“Since our settlement we have been approaching other employers to join the MECA and have been surprised by the numbers who support the industry approach and the standard we have set.”

With impending government changes to health and safety legislation, bargaining is one way we can promote genuine worker participation in health and safety systems that may not be an entitlement under the Act, such as health and safety reps.

We have developed a model participation system which we have presented to Tegel. Their current health and safety system is controlled by management and a recent health and safety survey showed areas for serious concern. We know genuine worker participation leads to a safer workplace.

The progress of this bargaining is of great interest to E tū members on Tegel sites across New Zealand. They have shared objectives in achieving decent wages and worker participation in health and safety.

E tū wins Vice-Presidency

E tū National Director of Organising Rachel MacKintosh was elected as the NZ Council of Trade Unions Vice-President at its recent conference.

With NZCTU President Helen Kelly not standing again, PSA National Secretary Richard Wagstaff was elected NZCTU President. He joins Sam Huggard (Secretary) and Syd Keepa (Maori Vice-President) as the other two NZCTU officers.



Union democracy

MEMBERSHIP VOTE REPORT

The National Executives of the EPMU and SFWU both conducted membership votes between June and August to determine whether the respective union memberships supported the formation of an amalgamated union, since named E tū.

These votes were overseen by appointed returning officers.

In the case of the EPMU, once its National Conference had endorsed the amalgamation proposal, there was a secret postal ballot of the full EPMU membership. In the case of the SFWU, the vote was done by way of a secret ballot of members who attended the union annual meetings or applied for a special vote under the SFWU rules.

	For	Against	Invalid	Result
EPMU	4128	810	6	83.6% in favour
SFWU	3588	154	23	95.8% in favour

The vote to support the formation of a new amalgamated union was passed by the membership of both unions who participated in the ballot.

Inaugural Union Conference

The first E tū National Conference is to be held in Auckland on 22 and 23 March 2016.

In attendance will be the current combined National Executive, delegates elected at the 24 local Delegates Forums, Runanga and Komiti Pasifika representatives and representatives of the Industry Councils.

The National Conference will elect the National Secretary and will consider and vote on the strategic plans and policies of the new union.

On the day prior to the conference E tū will hold its first National Women's Conference.

E tū Youth Conference

The E tū Biennial Youth Conference is being held in Auckland on 26 and 27 February.

If any young members, especially from Auckland, want to attend the conference please e-mail amy.hansen@etu.nz

Inspiring E tū women

Would you like to be part of the inaugural E tū Women's Conference?

Auckland
21 March, 2016

Expressions of interest for Women's Conference to:
Support@etu.nz
0800 1 UNION

NOMINATIONS FOR E TŪ NATIONAL SECRETARY

Nominations are hereby called for the position of E tū National Secretary, to be elected at the March 2016 Inaugural Union Conference for a four term.

Nominations must be in writing, signed by two financial members of the union and authorised by the person being nominated.

Only persons who have been members of either the EPMU or SFWU for one year or more are eligible for election to this position.

Nominations must be received by no later than noon Friday 12 February 2016 and must be sent to:

Deirdre Stewart
Returning Officer
E tū
Private Bag 68914
Newton, Auckland 1145

Email: deirdre.stewart@sfwu.org.nz , or
Fax: 09 375 2681

If you have any questions you can call

- Deirdre Stewart or Greg Lloyd, EPMU 0800 1union
- Our 0800 organisers will have copies of the nomination form available

Name this magazine!

Our union has a great new name, and now our magazine needs one.

Can you think of a flash new name for this magazine? Something that tells the world what this magazine is all about.

The winner will be sent two E tū t-shirts and a handful of E tū badges, and will have a credit in the next magazine.

Enter by sending your suggestion to **sam.gribben@etu.nz**

Entries close 1 January 2016



Contact your union

UNION SUPPORT CENTRE

To speak to a union organiser about union membership, issues at work or any other matters please get in touch with the Union Support Centre:

0800 1 UNION (0800 186 466)
support@etu.nz

CONNECT ONLINE

www.etu.nz
facebook.com/EtuUnion
twitter.com/EtuUnion

Bill Newson

National Secretary
Mobile: 027 538 4246
Email: bill.newson@etu.nz

John Ryall

Assistant National Secretary
Mobile: 027 520 1380
Email: john.ryall@etu.nz

PRESIDENTS

Don Pryde

Mobile: 027 434 1595
Email: donpryde@xtra.co.nz

Muriel Tunoho

Mobile: 027 618 5467
Email: healthcareotearoa@gmail.com

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