



NZ Amalgamated Engineering, Printing & Manufacturing Union Inc.

17 October 2012

Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety

By email: secretariat@hstaskforce.govt.nz

Submission on the Workplace Health and Safety Review

This document is submitted on behalf of Amalgamated Engineering Printing and Manufacturing Union members who work for

is often held up as a champion of Health and Safety in New Zealand; on the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment website they are a case study for investing in health and safety as 'good business sense'. <http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/>

Our union's experience of and health and safety is a case study of how to evade health and safety obligations whilst collecting health and safety awards.

Concerns regarding Health and Safety outcomes at

- o appoint health and safety representatives; they are not elected by workers
- o have more senior staff (managers) at health and safety meetings than workers, outnumbering health and safety representatives
- o requires health and safety committee members to come to meetings on their days off without compensation. Many workers have a long commute and have to pay for petrol to get there. This creates disincentive for participation in meetings
- o The annual pay review system can discriminate against outspoken employees This is a disincentive for employees to participate in health and safety
- o Under the current restructuring project employees are rated by team leaders and superintendent's on their capability. This creates a huge disincentive to reporting injury. We are told anecdotally by our members that, since the restructure was announced our workers are keeping injuries to themselves to avoid redundancy.
- o The Employee Participation System has not been approved by the employer, the employees and the union as is required under the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992. have failed to engage in good faith negotiations with our union on this matter.
- o health and safety representatives were not trained in accordance with the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 requirements until this year when EPMU raised this issue with the company.
- o The union is extremely concerned over the number of elbow and shoulder injuries that have occurred at the site. 43 employees have had work claim injuries accepted by ACC since 2007.
- o We are further concerned that the company retraining policy serves only to ensure that the company is not liable for ACC payment obligations, as employees with injured arms stay employed up until such time as the ACC case is closed and the period by which one could dispute the closure has expired.
- o We are even further concerned that the recent ACC audit of reported nothing of this, though it was raised by us in the course of the audit

We therefore present the following recommendations for the consideration of the Independent Taskforce on Workplace Health and Safety:

- A national register of trained health and safety representatives should be established, and workplaces should be obliged to have trained representatives lodged.
- The Health and Safety auditors should refer to this data basis and be obliged to speak to representatives when visiting any worksite.
- That Union Officials should be able to issue hazard notices to employers as they are not employed by them and would have no fear of retribution from the employer.
- That it should be unlawful to have policy disincentives to reporting injury and full participation in health and safety committees.

Thank you for your consideration,

Trevor Hobbs

District Organiser

New Zealand Amalgamated Engineering Printing and Manufacturing Union