



# Fact Sheet

---

**21 February 2012**

## Union Misinformation

Over recent weeks the Maritime Union's (MUNZ) publicity in the news media, online, in public advertising and leaflets has included several comments that are incorrect.

The Port wrote to MUNZ on 8 February asking it to withdraw the misleading statements from its campaign website and other publicity materials, but has yet to receive a reply.

With the potential for misleading information to continue, Ports of Auckland has filed an application with the Employment Relations Authority (ERA) to rule on what it considers is a serious and calculated breach of good faith in the Maritime Union's current publicity campaign. The Port is asking the ERA to decide whether this is a breach of MUNZ's duty of good faith in the current collective bargaining process.

The Port respects the Union's right to communicate with its members and the public, and has no issues with its communications provided they are factual and accurate.

Ports of Auckland would like to highlight the misleading statements of particular concern and address each of them below.

## MUNZ claim

---

*Management is demanding we sign contracts that take away any guaranteed weekly hours; or be made redundant and our jobs outsourced.*

## Ports of Auckland position

This statement is untrue.

Ports of Auckland is continuing to bargain for a new collective agreement while also consulting with the Union and employees on the possibility of contracting out work, through a parallel process.

We've already lost around \$27.5m in business since early January. With more jobs on the line, we have to find the earliest possible resolution to achieving a sustainable solution.

The offer we've put forward in the bargaining process guarantees full time stevedores 160 hours in each four week period and 2,050 hours per annum.

Guaranteed hours have also been offered for part time employees.

---

*We won't know whether we'll be sent home after three hours or told to work a 12-hour shift; or have any work at all.*

*No worker in their right mind would agree to this.*

This statement is misleading and inaccurate.

As above, our current offer includes a guarantee of 160 hours work per month.

Staff have the opportunity to choose their own preferences for shifts, overtime and rostered days-off up to one month in advance, and the Port will use its best endeavours to meet these preferences.

---

*Workers will have to stand by the phone to know whether they have any work or not.*

Fixed weekly shipping calls mean the shipping schedule, and staff rostering are by and large known many months in advance of when a ship arrives.

The offer we've made to staff in bargaining gives them the opportunity to choose their own preferences for shifts, overtime and rostered days off up to one month in advance. The Port will use its best endeavours to meet these preferences.

---

*Management has quoted ridiculous figures about what we earn.*

Accountancy firm Ernst & Young has independently verified that the average annual remuneration for a full-time stevedore is \$91,000, including a range of allowances, benefits and shift payments. The average number of hours paid per week is 43.

The issue at the basis of this dispute is that for every 40 hours a stevedore gets paid, they work just 26 hours under the current work structure. This has to be addressed to ensure a sustainable, competitive and customer-focussed Port in future.

---

*Management has offered us a 10% pay rise over 30 months. We only asked for 2.5% over 12 months and job security.*

This statement is not correct.

The 2.5% increase mentioned by MUNZ has always been stated to us in bargaining to be 2.5% "on top of what non-union employees receive as their hourly rate" - not a 2.5% increase on rates under the current collective agreement.

---

*Port workers want to negotiate. Management are refusing.*

*The company walked away from negotiations despite our agreement to help improve productivity further and introduce further rostering.*

These statements are not correct. Ports of Auckland has always been willing to attend negotiations and mediation.

The most recent negotiation was held on 10 February and occurred at our initiative.

We have asked MUNZ to return to the negotiating table on several occasions. Their response was an extension of the strike. This could compromise the livelihoods of their own members and families, not to mention thousands of Auckland businesses.

---

*Contracted workers have few of the health and safety protections of directly employed workers.*

Health and safety is paramount on site at Ports of Auckland. There is no distinction of health and safety standards between contractors and employees - our internal policies and the Health and Safety in Employment Act apply to the entire site. MUNZ is well aware of this.

---

*They have a plan to privatise our port.*

This statement is completely wrong. There has never been any suggestion of privatizing the port. The Port is a significant contributor to Auckland's economy. Any decisions about future ownership of the Port would be a matter for our shareholder, Auckland Council Investments Limited to decide.

---

*The Port wants to "casualise" our jobs.*

At no stage have we proposed casualisation. In fact, the opposite is true. Through the current offer the Ports wants to turn more casuals into permanent staff (with a new permanent lasher role).

Were we to settle a CA or decide to contract out, the relative mix of permanent, part-time and casual staff on Port is unlikely to change.

---

*The Port makes it sound like it's losing money. It's not.*

We've been operating in a volatile economic environment for some years, with profits increasing and decreasing as a result. The bottom line shows we are not able to meet the cost of capital. Until we can do so the Port is unsustainable and uncompetitive. More jobs will be lost, and Auckland ratepayers will lose further value in their investment.

Like any organization in the current climate, we must take prudent steps to secure a more sustainable future.

---

*Union members have helped this year to break productivity records.*

It is true that improvements in productivity have been achieved in recent years, with some records broken this year.

However productivity in Auckland is at least 25-30% behind behind our nearest competitor in Tauranga on all key measures.

To sustain the business and preserve jobs, we need to lift efficiency and productivity not just in stevedoring operations but across the entire organization.

As hard as it is, we are taking the necessary actions today to ensure we secure jobs for the future.

---