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MUA launches pre-Christmas Industrial Campaign with Nationwide Strikes

The Maritime Union of Australia has launched an aggressive round of nationwide strikes during the peak pre-Christmas freight period.

The actions consist of strikes and work bans at the largest container terminals in Australia, including Sydney, Fremantle and Melbourne, as well as rolling industrial action in Brisbane.

Patrick has been negotiating with the MUA since February last year and has held nearly 70 meetings in search of a new enterprise agreement.

Patrick CEO Michael Jovicic said “The MUA is clearly embarking on a major pre-Christmas industrial campaign. For more than a year, we have been dealing with overtime and other bans at ports around the country.

Last week they announced strike action at Port Botany commencing next Friday.

“Then late on Friday, the MUA hit Patrick with forty notices of industrial action in Melbourne in addition to industrial action and stoppages at our other terminals in Sydney, Fremantle and Brisbane.

This means there will be continuous rolling industrial action in Patrick Terminal’s Melbourne container terminal with strikes every Monday, Wednesday and Friday of October and impacts across all other days of the month.

Mr Jovicic said, “The MUA’s actions are frankly bewildering. It seems to have completely lost the plot. This blatantly aggressive strike action demonstrates that it has no regard for the suffering of everyday Australians who have felt the impact of COVID-19 lockdowns, job losses and restrictions over the past 18 months.

It seems that the union is trying to starve the Melbourne public of Christmas presents after all that Victorians have gone through over the past 18 months - it is truly mind-boggling.”

Mr Jovicic said, “We have bargained with the MUA for over 19 months and provided a very generous pay increase, guaranteed no redundancies and provided a commitment to preserving jobs.

They clearly have no intention of reaching a deal. They just want to cause maximum damage to the company and the economy.”



Over 40% of all container freight in Australia comes through Patrick terminals and the impact of this selfish industrial action will have ramifications for all Australians.

The Peak Industry body Shipping Australia published an update on Friday stating that: Given the central and vital importance of freight, shipping and ports, it is fair to say union-led disruption to their activities will adversely impact the lives of everyday Australians. It can really cause a lot of problems to large numbers of people who are not involved in the dispute. It's a mess.

Shipping Australia CEO Melwyn Noronha commented: "The national economy is under pressure because of the ongoing lockdown. Many Australians are unable to work because of lockdowns. And it is now, during these times of a twin health and economic crises, that the maritime union seeks to try and cripple the waterfront? It is now that the union wants to engage in action that will adversely affect everyday Australians?"

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BACKGROUND

Patrick has offered the following to the MUA over the past 12 months:

- 2.5% year on year increase for four years
- Guaranteed job security with no forced redundancies
- Commitment to preserving jobs with a focus on permanent roles
- Caps on usage of casual labour

Existing pay and conditions before pay-rise.

Port Botany

On average a full-time employee at Port Botany on a 35-hour roster earns \$172,124 per annum inclusive of bonuses and overtime. The average number of days worked for this is 198.

Melbourne

On average a full-time employee at East Swanson Dock on a 35-hour roster earns \$151,048 per annum inclusive of bonuses and overtime. The average number of days worked for this is 162.

Brisbane

On average a full-time employee at Brisbane on a 35-hour roster earns \$153,880 per annum inclusive of bonuses and overtime. The average number of days worked for this is 173.



Fremantle

On average a full-time employee at Fremantle on a 35-hour roster earns \$166,464 per annum inclusive of bonuses and overtime. The average number of days worked for this is 181.

Top 10 earners (full-time) – Average gross, including OT & bonus

Port Botany - \$212,325 – 224.8 days worked

East Swanson Dock - \$187,920 – 178.2 days worked

Brisbane - \$166,227 – 180.3 days worked

Fremantle - \$192,373 – 203.8 days worked

Media interviews: CEO Patrick Terminals, Michael Jovicic, is available for interview.

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