



UNION NEWS

November 2009

NATIONAL, ACT, UNITED FUTURE & MAORI PARTY HAVE INTRODUCED INTO PARLIAMENT RADICAL CHANGES TO ACCIDENT COMPENSATION [ACC] - Injury Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Compensation Amendment Bill 2009

MEAT WORKERS ARE GOING TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF SOME SAVAGE ACC CUTS - SUCH AS...

1. This ACC Bill reverses the Labour Government's mandatory consideration for vocational independence, for a person's pre-injury earnings to be considered. This means that a person who previously had a very high income did not have to return to work, unless a job would provide a similar level of earnings.
2. They are also reversing the changes made to the vocation independence test to be better in line with the standard definitions used by WINZ and Statistics New Zealand, 30 hours per week (was 35 hours/wk). **What this means - is that someone who is earning, say, \$1500 a week before their accident will lose their weekly compensation if they are found able to do a job for 30 hours a week for the minimum wage – that's \$375 a week -and no matter that it might be do something way below their experience, education or capability.**
3. They intend to reverse the changes in respect of the three-part test for workplace gradual process disease or infection that is simpler to apply and removes the presumption that automatically ACC should provide cover
4. The next four changes in the Bill relate to the way weekly compensation is calculated and returns the scheme to the principle that ACC provides 80% of earnings for the first four weeks based on the person's average earnings for the previous four weeks and then after that earnings' compensation is based on income over the past 12 months. Changes are also being made to the calculation for longer-term weekly compensation for casual or seasonal workers. They are also reversing the change around part-time workers so that their compensation again is based on the same averaging principles. **What this means - currently if you have been employed 3 months & earned \$6,000 & cut a tendon at work - your entitlement is 80% of \$500 (6,000 ÷ 12 weeks) = \$400 weekly. When the ACC Law is changed you will only be eligible for 80% of \$115.38 (6,000 ÷ 52 weeks) = \$92.31 weekly. If you want to oppose these drastic ACC changes individually - GO TO - the following excellent web page <http://www.greens.org.nz/factsheets/submission-guide-injury-prevention-rehabilitation-and-compensation-amendment-bill>**
5. There are other changes such as increases in levies - e.g. motor bikes etc.

PAY FREEZE FOR MEAT WORKERS ? WE THINK NOT !!

- i. Meat Industry needs to attract good NZ workers now and into the future. Early days, no kill days, low wages, employed "at will", long hours of work, high work speeds, high accident rates, seasonality - all contribute to high labour turnover and absenteeism
- ii. Employers complain the \$NZ is too high - last year the \$NZ averaged .760. This year it has fluctuated between .506 & .759 well below last years average
- iii. 1st April 2009 the minimum wage was increased to \$12.50 from \$12.00, A 4.2% increase
- iv. Inflation is running at 1.7% to September 2009
- v. The volume of meat exported per person employed has risen from 23 tonnes in 1980 to 35 tonnes today - *a productivity gain of 52 percent."*

1980	23 tonnes per person
2009	35.4 tonnes per person

FARM PROFIT BEFORE TAX	
1990 - 91	\$23,100
2000 - 01	\$96,439
2004 - 05	\$73,265
2005 - 06	\$41,698
2006 - 07	\$29,110
2007 - 08	\$9,491
2008 - 09	\$56,300

VALUE OF NZ EXPORTS

	1997	2008	% change
Lamb	1,302.1	2,171.7	+66.8%
Mutton	200.8	360.9	+79.7%
Beef & Veal	992.3	1,657.8	+67.1%
Other Meats	58.5	125.6	+114.7%
Total Meats	2,774.6	4,779.3	+72.3%

AVERAGE EXPORT CARCASE WEIGHTS [KG]

Sept year	Lambs	Sheep	Cattle	Calves
1985	12.52	19.37	239.4	14.88
2000	16.61	23.53	259.8	16.45
2005	17.54	24.76	265.2	16.34
2009	17.39	24.95	261.3	16.61

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IS INTRODUCING OTHER LAW CHANGES THAT WILL "CUT" INTO YOUR TAKE HOME PAY

☑ 1st April 2009 - Labour Government passed a Law for paid Rest and Meal Breaks. This Law is currently being reviewed. Meat workers need time to wash down per Hygiene Regulations. It is expected to be changed for more employer flexibility & unpaid.

☑ 1st April 2004 the Holidays Act became Law. Relevant Daily Pay [RDP] for Sick leave, Bereavement leave & Public Holidays, 3 days before a medical certificate required etc. This Law is currently being reviewed with RDP being "scrapped" and with more employer flexibility.

☑ The Government is also reviewing the Employment Relations Act 2000. Again some of the changes "being discussed" will not benefit meat workers & their families.