



UNION NEWS

MEAT COMPANY BOSSES LOOK TO FAST TRACK IMMIGRANTS INTO MEAT INDUSTRY

Your employer wants to be able to ring up the Department of Labour, Immigration Section on the Monday and 5 days later have overseas slaughterman/Boners/knifehands/packers walking in your gate and working next to you. Up till now the Union has been involved in a consultation process that has been reasonably fair. There are aspects we think can be improved upon, such as the Union having access to all documentation surrounding the company application, a "Good Employer Test" introduced, a right of review should the department get it wrong.

As an example one company in the last couple of weeks has applied for 40 overseas "process workers" for all their meat plants. Coincidentally at a time of a drought and meat plants are at maximum production & overtime. As you all know once the rains come plants will be shedding labour. Immigrants will be kept on. You will be seasonally laid off.

As said in a previous Union News - the number one issue for the meat industry - is "**RETENTION**" of labour. For every new meat worker starting, two of your mates go through the gate looking for better jobs around NZ or in Australia.

Meat workers wages, terms & conditions were "slashed downwards" from 1991 through to 1999 under National's Employment Contracts Act 1991.

Today your wages and allowances are well behind other occupations in NZ & Australia. Other reasons why meat workers leave the meat industry, high risk of injury, unsociable shift patterns, pressure to meet high production levels, long hours of work with minimal breaks and lack of job security.

BREAKING NEWS

- ☑ Alliance looking for industry support for a \$5 billion Mega meat company. The concept has many hurdles to overcome. The NZ Meat Workers Union is a large stake holder in the meat industry and should be included in the process
- ☑ 3 sacked workers at Crusader Meats NZ Ltd are awarded \$3,000 each plus their jobs back. All union members were locked out again in Jan '08. This Benneydale employer prefers to spend \$2 to save \$1
- ☑ Minimum wage increased to \$12.00 from 1st April '08
- ☑ We are seeing more meat companies using temps & casuals for 3 months. Does your Boss pay the temps & casuals the agreed rates per your Employment Agreement ?

SMOKO BREAKS

Many meat workers do not get reasonable breaks to wash down, walk to smoko & drink a cup of tea. Most meat workers work as per the table headed "A typical working day". In our example - this worker only worked on the chain for 7 hours 15 minutes in the 8 hour day plus 3 paid wash downs & 2 smoko's. You can write down your own run times, and physical working times. Physical working time includes putting on safety gear, washing your gear for hygiene requirements. Today 9 to 10 hours on the chain seems to be "creeping in" by employers. **Little wonder we see 'absenteeism'**. A physical working day of 9 hours would require 3 paid smoko breaks plus a lunch break. In the USA the Supreme Court ruled in favour of workers being paid to put on safety gear and wash down as per the hygiene regulations.

A Typical working day - 8 hours (all times in minutes)

Run Times	Walking & wash down (paid)	Smoko (paid)	Lunch (unpaid)	Physical Working time
8.00am - 10.00am				120 mins
10.00am - 10.20am	5 mins	15 mins		
10.20am - 12.00am				100 mins
Noon - 12.05pm	5 mins			
12.05pm - 1.00pm			55 mins	
1.00pm - 3.00pm				120 mins
3.00pm - 3.20pm	5 mins	15 mins		
3.20pm - 4.55pm				95 mins
Total = 8 Hours or 480 mins	15 mins +	30 mins +	Unpaid	435 mins + (7 hours 15 mins)