



AMALGAMATED WORKERS UNION SOUTHERN NZ INC

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WELCOME TO OUR SOUTHLAND NEWSLETTER

EASIER TO HOLD ONTO IF EVERYONE ELSE HAS IT !

MEMBERSHIP IS GOOD INSURANCE!



OF INTEREST

CONTACT HOURS

Mon to Friday 8am to 5pm and 7pm till 9m evenings; mobile or landline. Contact outside these hours urgent or pre-planned—emails are welcome anytime

Owen: 029 477 6026

Employment Law
research employment law through the Department of Labour web site (Employment Relations) and look for Fact Sheets.

- **Emails using modern media to enhance services to members. If you have an email address send Owen an email confirming your email address.**
- **Sign up on line thank you to new members singing up online through our Awunz web page, real simple and no hassle!**

“AWUNZ has been looking after Kiwi workers for 129 years’ That’s impressive!

NOT ON THE JOB MATE!

Beware all drivers and workers generally who indulge in drugs and alcohol !

It is legal for employers to put in place drug and alcohol testing policies; as a result of an Employment Court Hearing in 2004 random testing of employees who work in ‘safety sensitive’ areas is justified. Drug testing is on the increase for all employees, management as well.

Workers subjected to drug testing should ask ‘is the person doing the testing NZQA qualified’. If not request someone who is. Sue Nolan from ESR recently addressed members at Bond Contracts and she advised workers to ask this question.

In answer to the question last week; the on site drug test will show ‘negative’ or ‘not negative’ if your negative you go back to work if ‘not negative’ you are usually suspended and enter a rehabilitation phase’ check your employment agreement.

Raise Your VOICE !

Work desk (snapshot) where to start? Dismissal - worker is given final warning for misconduct; further allegations soon follow leading to dismissal within 3 weeks of the final warning. .AWUNZ defends the worker and finds numerous flaws in the way the dismissal was carried out . His explanation was not properly investigated, (witnesses not spoken to); the agreement had no warning procedures, you get the picture. We focus on fixing the problem first and saving jobs but sometimes this is not possible; on this occasion it cost the employer \$8,000.

Driver taken off duty for alleged drug use, AWUNZ contacted, employer brings in drug testing agent, we stop the process because we find out the employee has no written employment agreement even though he had worked their for 12 months, (breach of the law) therefore the worker was not covered by the employers drug and alcohol policy! Agreed no drug test start

back with a clean slate but now subject to employers drug policy. .

Bullying worker bullied over a long period. AWUNZ asked to help. Mutual disengagement agreed to the satisfaction of the worker, including compensation. How do you measure the cost of damaged self esteem and self worth?

Toxic Personalities

Mary Jane Thomas Lawyer (Preston Russell Law) in her weekly ‘Work to Rule’ column, Southland Times, has featured two articles on this subject. This term covers any employee (management included) whose attitude and behaviour toward others poisons the workplace climate and culture. These people are easily identified, I know of a few and some in particular; the reality is they cost the business big time and can open the employer up to stress claims under the H&S Act; they should be reeducated, placed in a no people zone, or removed all together; workers don’t come to work to be bullied or subjected to constant harassment! Managers with toxic personalities are protected by uncaring employers when they shouldn’t be.

Job Losses AWUNZ is working through a number of workplace restructuring situations. Sadly this involves job losses. We audit the process to ensure employers follow fair and proper procedures; sometimes is flawed; for example no consultation or selection criteria made available.

Employment Agreements make sure AWUNZ looks over your employment agreement before you sign; your allowed an independent opinion to by law, it’s a wise to have it checked before signing!

Keeping a note book Every time an action or comment is made which you consider unfair, offensive, or unreasonable write it down Give a short explanation, date it, note witnesses or something to help you recall the event. A powerful way of staying strong emotionally and of gathering evidence! Watch for **TOXIC** personalities - a good note book!

Raise Your VOICE !

Spotlight - AWUNZ Executive

The AWUNZ Executive is the governing body of our union. **Evelyn Soalo** is one our Executive Members. Along with other Executive members Evelyn is responsible for the management of the union; as an employee of the union I have to prepare a report of my activities for the previous 3 months which is read by the Executive. I am accountable to our members and the Executive.

Evelyn started working for the Ministry of Works in 1985 with the road gang, she was always interested in helping others to achieve better for themselves and to speak out about what mattered to them, hence she was voted to become their union representative, a position she held for 16 years.

While undertaking this she was later voted onto the Executive where she is still today. Previously she was also union delegate with the allied liquor trades union while working for Lane Thompson Ltd up until it closed in 1985.

Evelyn worked her way through the ranks passing 12 licenses, learning how to operate most of the machinery, completing several courses, and learning most aspects of the Rooding network. She went through several rounds of redundancies due to restructuring, and name changes in the company.

All this paid off for her as she became a leading hand, qualified instructor, charge hand and supervisor in the 19 years working out of Invercargill. Evelyn was then offered and took the position of Area Regional Manager in Oamaru for the Waitaki Region, spanning her time with Downer EDI Works to 24 years. ‘Good friendships were made and interesting times were had’. **AWUNZ members are fortunate having Executive members like Evelyn.**

SIGN UP! on our web site
www.awunz.co.nz

Cheers Owen

