

## Posties have “Safe Workload Allocation”

### Couriers have “push yourselves further, clear the floor”

#### An unsafe system of work for couriers and processing staff

#### The PWUA believes NZ Post is in breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act

The Postal Workers Union believes that NZ Post's instructions to its couriers and processing staff to “push ourselves further” in a company newsletter of 23 August is in breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Clause 36(3)(c) of the Health and Safety at Work Act requires “as far as is reasonably practicable the provision and maintenance of safe systems of work”.

After the Postal Workers Union had been hearing recent reports from couriers in different locations about the increased workload pressures following the new run resizings, the Union issued a PWUA Members Update newsletter about a “Safe Workload Allocation for Couriers” on 21 August 2023.

In February last year the company had issued a Team Brief to posties agreeing with the Union that *“the best judge of what can be safely done ... rests with the person actually performing the work”*. The Union says that to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act, NZ Post must apply the same *“safe systems of work”* to couriers and processing staff that it provides for posties.

The Union believes that, instead of providing a safe system of work for couriers, in the NZ Post Yammer and Team Brief of 23 August NZ Post is instructing its couriers and processing staff to push themselves further, knuckle down, keep digging in, perform higher, and clear the floors every day.

NZ Post is imposing a system of work that is especially dangerous when it already has couriers driving vans for long hours and now under increased pressure to clear the floor.

The NZ Post Yammer came out two days after a courier filled in an HS1 about nodding off to sleep at the wheel of his courier van. This incident had potentially fatal consequences.

The Union has made it clear to NZ Post on a number of occasions that it had been encouraged by the company's increased focus on effective SWAG (Safety and Wellbeing Action Group) teams with its publication of the document “Worker Engagement, Participation and Representation” dated 12 October 2022. However this company initiative is yet to be applied consistently.

The company's Yammer newsletter of 23 August again demonstrates the reasons why the Owner Driver Agreements that NZ Post imposes on its contract couriers exploits the vulnerability of individual contract couriers in the face of the multi-million dollar corporation NZ Post, in this case by its process of conducting and implementing its run redesigns.

The Union has advised NZ Post to issue a statement to couriers and processing staff that complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act and complies with the company's Team Brief of 17 February 2022 about Safe Workload Allocation - the person actually performing the work is the best judge of what can be safely done.

**You can also join the PWUA by going to the union's website, [www.pwua.org.nz](http://www.pwua.org.nz), click on the “Join Us” link, and submit the form.**