

## **“We are grateful to the Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa for actively contributing to the safety and harmony of our community” – Islamic community**

Posties in the four NZ Post Delivery Branches which cover Wellington City were united in their concern that the misleading wording in a pamphlet from a local pressure group “Better Wellington” posed a threat to harmonious community relations and the safety of a vulnerable section of the community. The posties have not delivered the circular for two days.

The Islamic community has been in discussions with the Wellington City Council about an appropriate way to commemorate the murder of 51 members of the Moslem community during Friday Prayers in two Christchurch mosques on 15 March 2019. This could include the broadcast from Wellington mosques of the Islamic Call to Prayer at an appropriate time during the day of 15 March next year.

The circular first came to the attention of the union organisers from posties who did not agree with the instruction from NZ Post that the circular should go into every letterbox – including “no circular” letterboxes. This instruction was in breach of Wellington City Council by-laws.

Discussions about what was so important about the circular that it should go into every letterbox revealed the statement: [The Wellington City Council] *“Wants the City’s six mosques to broadcast the Islamic Call to Prayer across the City”*. The Union quickly contacted the Wellington City Council and the Islamic community and established that this statement was misleading and potentially inflammatory.

The Union sought an assurance from NZ Post management that the contents of the circular was not illegal. NZ Post management did not agree that it should seek the advice of the Human Rights Commission even though the company said it would withdraw the circular if a regulatory authority advised that the content was illegal.

From this morning NZ Post says it will issue disciplinary action against any postie who refuses to deliver the circulars. The posties work in the postal delivery branches in Kilbirnie (one block from the main Wellington City mosque), Wellington Central, Johnsonville and North City (Porirua) which delivers to the northern Wellington City suburb of Tawa.

Just as the posties stood together united in solidarity with the Islamic community, the posties will now stand in solidarity in support of each other. The Union agrees that the posties should not now face disciplinary action which would include a letter on their files which could affect their future employment. The posties will deliver the circulars from today knowing that their action has made a significant contribution in protecting harmonious community relationships and social justice in Wellington City.

There is only one letter that would be appropriate to go on the files of the posties - an email to the Union from the Islamic community in appreciation of the posties’ action which began:

“Thank you for looking out for us”.

John Maynard

Co National President



POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AOTEAROA

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