

EDITORIAL

**Elvis Presley:
"Return to sender" ... but
"address unknown"?**

The second phrase of Elvis Presley's song *Return to Sender* explains why his letter *keeps coming back*: "address unknown". However this is not the case for the mail that NZ Post is instructing posties to mark up as "return to sender". The address is known - it is shown clearly on the address panel of the envelopes.

Instead as NZ Post tries to prepare to lay off the posties and have the mail delivered by couriers, the company is trying to return to sender all mail addressed to the street address of businesses and institutions with PO Boxes or Private Bags.

The Union continues to hear of posties around the country defying management instructions and delivering mail which has a deliverable address and the correct postage.

The expression "the mail must go through" has its origins with the founding of the Pony Express in the USA in 1860. A proud tradition, continued by many dedicated posties today who are going the extra mile - even against the instructions of NZ Post.

**not
The mail must go through**

NZ Post's new Box Mark-Up/Return to Sender policy (BMU/RTS) is resulting in large volumes of mail being returned to sender every day.

There are senders who do not know of NZ Post's new Return to Sender policy. Posties have been defying management instructions and delivering to the street addresses of some businesses and institutions.

The Union has written to the Chair of NZ Post's Board seeking a return to marking up, which could also include the delivery of mail with the correct postage to a deliverable address.

Collective Agreement expires 30 June this year

Will the NZ Post management and Board again "be proud" to say it pays the Living Wage?

In August 2022 when the current Collective Agreement was finalised, NZ Post's Chief People Officer posted this message to NZ Post employees:

"We're proud to be able to say that all NZ Post employees will now be paid above the level of the 2022 NZ Living Wage. This has been an objective of the Board and senior management for some time ..."

That was 2022. Now it's 2025 and over the last three years the cost of living has gone up far more than the wage rates that NZ Post pays to its workers.

The Living Wage in Aotearoa is currently \$27.80 per hour. A Grade 2 Step 2 employee at NZ Post is currently paid \$25.46 per hour and needs a 9.19% pay rise to claw back up to last year's Living Wage. The

Living Wage for 2025 is expected to rise again when it is announced in April.

The Living Wage Movement Aotearoa NZ website contains this quote:

"A Living Wage is the income necessary to provide workers and their families with the basic necessities of life.

"A living wage will enable workers to live with dignity and to participate as active citizens in society."

At the Collective Agreement negotiations in May and June the company's employees will be eager to see if the Board and senior management of NZ Post will again be proud to lift all of the company's employees above the Living Wage so they can once again have the basic necessities of life and live with dignity.

CA negotiation dates with NZ Post set down for 20 - 22 May and 10 - 11 June

Both the Postal Workers Union and E tū have been meeting together with NZ Post representatives on-line discussing arrangements for the negotiation of new Collective Agreements.

The two unions have confirmed to NZ Post that there will be one set of combined negotiations for the two Collective Agreements.

Dates have already been agreed to in May and June for negotiations to be held in Wellington.

The PWUA is distributing a Collective Agreement claims form for members to put forward any changes or improvements they would like to see in

the Collective Agreement. These can include pay rates, allowances, rewards for service, leave entitlements, commitments to job security or any other condition of employment.

The Union is asking that claims from union members be returned to arrive at the union offices in Auckland or Wellington by Friday 11 April (and no later than 28 April).

The forms can be posted or emailed.

The claims do not need to be written on the claim form - an email setting out the claim will suffice, along with any necessary reasoning or background.

Tūpuna delivery redundancies - lawful or not?

The Employment Relations Authority will shortly be considering the evidence and submissions of both the PWUA and NZ Post over whether the company's announced future lay-offs of 700 delivery employees is lawful or not.

The Authority is expected to issue its

determination before July this year.

The losing party will likely have the right to appeal the determination to the Employment Court, which would mean a hearing and a decision from the Court would likely not occur until some time in 2026.

Contractors as employees - NZ Post tried to conceal a witness 'pay-off' from the Employment Court Judge

The Postal Workers Union case for two contractors to be declared by the Employment Court to be employees has been delayed.

For more than two months NZ Post had been trying to get one of the two couriers in the case to accept a 'settlement' to withdraw from the case.

Late on the last business day before the case was to begin in the Employment Court in Wellington on 24 February one of the Union's witness finally succumbed and accepted a reportedly substantial sum from NZ Post to withdraw from the case.

However it became clear that NZ Post did not want the Judge to know that the witness had withdrawn from the case as a result of a cash 'settlement'.

NZ Post believed that both the fact of the cash settlement, as well as the

amount, were confidential.

However the Union was aware that although the amount of cash was confidential, what was not confidential was that NZ Post had paid money to get the witness to withdraw from the case.

When the Court convened the Union's lawyer explained to the Judge the reason that a key witness had withdrawn - a cash 'settlement' from NZ Post.

The Judge remarked that without knowing there had been a cash payment he could have concluded that the witness had withdrawn because of dissatisfaction with the Union when this was clearly not the case.

The Union has refiled in the Employment Court with a small representative group of couriers and the Union is waiting for the Court to offer new dates for the case to proceed.

NZ Post call centre work in the Philippines

NZ Post has been transferring to the Philippines some of the call centre roles covered by the Postal Workers Union/NZ Post Collective Agreement.

The Union wanted to know why, if NZ Post was moving work to the Philippines, the company was not able to maintain a stable local call centre workforce.

The Union has asked NZ Post what it had learned from the Voice of the People survey of call centre workers and what changes it had made following its Better Work By Design survey.

The Union has also asked NZ Post about its responsibilities under the OECD Guidelines for Multi-national Enterprises on Responsible Business Conduct, especially human rights.

The Union is opposed to NZ Post moving jobs overseas to low wage countries and non union worksites.

Important to report discomfort and injuries

When the Union raises what appears to be a pattern of discomfort or injuries with NZ Post, it is important that the incidents have been lodged with Vault or a H&S form.

Clause O11 was put into the Collective Agreement at the time of the introduction of Paxsters for mail delivery:

"Any issues that may arise in which the operation of the Paxster appears to give rise to OOS [Occupational Overuse Syndrome] or other injuries will be assessed and managed in accordance with risk management processes."

While some SWAG groups may be working well, the Union has been urging the company to have a central point for receiving and analysing the minutes of all SWAG groups to assist in identifying any patterns of injury.

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Does NZ Post care if 2025 is the last year of postal voting?

Local Government NZ will decide at its annual conference in Wellington in July whether to stop postal voting in 2028 or 2031, meaning that this year could be the last year of postal voting.

The Postal Workers Union had made two submissions to Select Committees at Parliament reviewing the 2016 Local Authority elections. In one of the submissions the Union called on the Government to require NZ Post to maintain the infrastructure for postal voting.

NZ Post ignored invitations from the Union to attend the Select Committee hearings either in support of the Union's submission, or for NZ Post to make submissions of its own.

The Union has seen no evidence since 2016 that NZ Post had any interest in postal voting.

The Union will be making a submission to Local Government NZ before its July conference.

Having dismantled much of NZ Post's physical infrastructure by pulling out more than 1,500 street receivers, and continuing to pull them out, the Union will not be surprised if NZ Post continues to show no interest in postal voting.

REDBACK is published by the Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa ♦ Trades Hall, 126 Vivian St, Wellington 6011 ♦ pwu@tradeshall.org.nz



POSTAL WORKERS UNION OF AOTEAROA (NORTHERN)

6A Western Springs Road, Kingsland, Auckland, 1021

I hereby appoint the Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa incorporated to be my authorised representative under Sections 18 and 236 of the Employment Relations Act 2000. For the purpose of this authority any duly appointed representative of the PWUA is empowered to act on my behalf in any matters related to or arising out of the negotiation and application of any Employment Agreement or any other matter relating to my employment at my request. This authority shall continue in force until revoked by myself, giving two weeks notice.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)

Signed.....Date...../...../..... Appointment No.....

Employer.....Site.....

Department.....Position.....

Home Address.....

Suburb.....City..... Post code.....

Phone..... Email.....

Deduction Authority for Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa (Northern)

I authorise my employer to deduct:

\$6.95 per week when I am employed for 30 or more hours per week, or

\$3.45 per week when I am on-call, or employed for less than 30 hours per week from my pay and credit the Postal Workers Union of Aotearoa Northern District.

Please stop any other deductions from my pay to any other union.