



Joint International Transport Federation (Australia) media release 17 September, 2006

Australian workers join NZ picket

Australian transport unions send delegation and dollars in solidarity with comrades across the Tasman

A delegation of six Australian transport workers will leave for Auckland, New Zealand today in solidarity with the 600 NZ distribution workers locked out the gates of Woolworths subsidiary Progressive Enterprises.

Members of the Maritime Union of Australia, the Transport Workers' Union and the Rail Tram and Bus Union, all affiliates of the International Transport Workers' Federation, will join the picket in support of the distribution workers' campaign for a collective agreement.

The three unions have also raised \$15,000 towards the distribution workers, members of the National Distribution Union and Engineering Printing & Manufacturing Union, now into the third week of their dispute with the Woolworth's subsidiary in Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch.

"This union has a long history of solidarity across the Tasman," said MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin. "We will not stand by and see an Australian-based multinational bully workers. This is just the beginning."

"Progressive, a Woolworths subsidiary, should immediately sit down with the distribution workers' unions and develop a satisfactory outcome," said Tony Sheldon, TWU National/NSW Secretary. "Congratulations should be also sent for the proposed settlement being reached by the union for Progressive shop assistants.

"It's all about global solidarity," said RTBU National Secretary Bob Hayden. "We are building a united front with TransTasman unions against unjust corporate attacks on workers."

The dispute also has the support of the ACTU and its NZ counterpart NZCTU. It made headlines in New Zealand last week after police were brought into forcibly remove people from the picket over the weekend.

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The International Transport Federation is the global peak body for 681 unions with over 4.5 million members in 148 countries.