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## Unions rally at besieged terminal in support of MUA

Friday, December 08, 2017, 3:21pm

The Victorian union movement turned out in force today to support the MUA in its dispute with a new "robo" stevedore at the Port of Melbourne.

About 1,000 protesters, including ACTU secretary Sally McManus and VTHC secretary Luke Hilakari, and many unions, attended a support rally at the operations of Victoria International Container Terminal Ltd (VICT).



 **Sally McManus**  
@sallymcmanus

We are fighting unjust laws at Webb Dock. Casuals sacked, delegates sacked, big pay cut. Front line of the fight to change the rules

11:15 AM - Dec 8, 2017

19 208 217

Attendees included CFMEU construction and general division Victorian branch secretary John Setka; the Catholic priest and social entrepreneur Father Bob McGuire (who has a Twitter following of about 123,000); and State Labor MP Mark Gepp.



 **John Setka**  
@CFMEUJohnSetka

Great to see the Victorian community out in force today standing up for @MaritimeUnionAU members.

If we can't protest against employer attacks, we are effectively slaves.#auspol

2:01 PM - Dec 8, 2017

3 31 42

VICT last week won an interim injunction against the MUA from organising a picket at its operations at Webb Dock (see [Related Article](#)).

The injunction prohibits MUA officials and members from a "no-go zone" of 100 metres around the site's access points, but a "community protest" has been in place for 12 days and transport companies say about 1,000 containers are stuck inside.

VICT argues the disputes began over it refusing to give more shifts to a casual worker who was refused a Maritime Security Identification Card (MSIC).

The company has flagged that it might seek damages of up to \$100 million over the dispute, which comes as it seeking to ramp-up business at the Port of Melbourne's new third container stevedoring operation.

A VICT spokesperson said today the company is "continuing to tot up the damages" and is keeping its legal options open.

VICT is owned by the Manila-based International Container Terminal Services Inc (ICTS), which has been criticised by international transport unions over its operations in Africa, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea.

The MUA has claimed that VICT denied the casual employee more shifts after he took action against management over workplace bullying and harassment.

MUA deputy national secretary Will Tracey also claimed the VICT enterprise agreement paid penalty rates and a casual loading that was below the industry standards and was voted on by five workers chosen by the company.

He said the MUA had been seeking to establish minimum standards for wages and conditions, but the company has refused to negotiate with the union.

The lead union for the deal was the AMOU, but the MUA sought to be covered by it.

**However**, VICT has since released [paperwork](#) showing the MUA signed off on the agreement.

The chief executive of the Victorian Transport Association, Peter Anderson, today told Radio 3AW that a ship, the Glasgow Express, was tied at the VICT operation for six days and then left for Adelaide to unload its cargo.

"The owners of that freight now have to truck or rail that freight back to Melbourne," he said.

Anderson said the dispute was "about a casual worker who was found ineligible to get onto the wharf with a security pass because he's since had a conviction and, of course, the stevedoring company would not let him on site."

He said disputes were supposed to be worked through the IR system but "unfortunately the union has refused to continue on with this process."

Earlier this week, Anderson said in a statement that the Port of Melbourne risked becoming an "international laughing stock" if the industrial action continued to shut down the VICT operation.

"It is an affront to every Port of Melbourne stevedore and freight operator working in and around the port that the Victorian economy is continuing to be held to ransom by the MUA over what we now understand is a legal reason for this individual being ineligible for employment at the docks," he said.

"The effects of this ongoing action at our busiest time of the year are being felt right throughout the economy when you consider that the more than 1000 containers and their contents sitting idle at Webb Dock cannot be brought to market and sold to consumers during our peak retail trading period."

Anderson called for all stakeholders involve to put the interests of the Victorian economy first and work constructively to bring an end to industrial action which raised "sovereign risk" concerns for the state.

"This is not the time for our leaders to run and hide but rather confront the real issue of adverse union action that is brutal and selfish, and has a negative effect on the livelihoods all Victorians," he said.

The nearby Melbourne International RoRo & Automotive Terminal (MIRRAT) issued an advisory to users yesterday saying that it operation at Webb Dock West would be affected by today's protest.

"Whilst this action is not targeted at MIRRAT there is potential that access into the precinct and by association our facility will be impacted."

It said automotive and RoRo cargo will still be available for collection as usual but break bulk collection was suspended until Monday.



**FatherBob**  
@FatherBob

Workers' community event Webb Dock Drive 10am this morning.  
Hope weather shines on this event.

7:52 AM - Dec 8, 2017

1 2 5



**Luke Hilakari**  
@lhilakari

Nearly 20yrs on and we are back at Webb Dock. Unions will always stand up for workers being targeted, sacked and forced on to low wages. [#Solidarity](#)



**Corey Rosevear**  
@CoreyRosevear

Time to change the rules. #mua #webbdock @sallymcmanus  
@MaritimeUnionAU @RTBUnion

10:46 AM - Dec 8, 2017



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