

# A MayDay Special

An appropriate date to discuss today's issues.

I was talking to my boss Ray Bianchi the other day and he remarked that the Union had invested a hell of a lot of time and money into Scaffold and Rigging Training, for very little return.

That got me thinking.

AWUNZ as a Union has been involved from day one. When we first became involved it was with two major goals

- To get Rigging and Scaffolding recognised as trades; and
- To see that Scaffolders and Riggers were paid Tradesmen's wages.

How are we doing???

I think that we can say that the first objective has almost been achieved. Certainly the National Certificates are "Trade Certificates." Some of the earlier ones might be a bit suspect, but for those

just beginning the new regime we can be very sure that the holder is in fact a competent tradesman.

Unfortunately it will be many years yet, thanks to the major back flip by OSH, before the bodgy tickets issued in 1996 are finally flushed from the system.

On balance though I think we can say that goal one is pretty well achieved.

On the wages front however it seems that very little progress has been made.

Some employers are fully recognising the Trades status of their workers and paying accordingly.

Others sadly are paying as little as they can get away with and in some cases that is not a lot.

The Industry had an excellent opportunity to increase charge out rates to allow

higher wages to be paid over the last few years.

Higher standards of work produced through Competent Tradesmen following the standards of the Best Practice Guidelines should have been worth more money.

As normal however in this Industry there are far too many interested only in undercutting - putting up crappy work with lower skilled workers.

Seems to me that there is an opportunity here for the Union (representing the workers) and SARNZ Inc (representing the Employers) to get together and look at working on something that will make SARNZ Members the Employers of choice in the Industry because they support a minimum code of terms and conditions of employment for their employees.

I look forward to talking about it the Conference.

