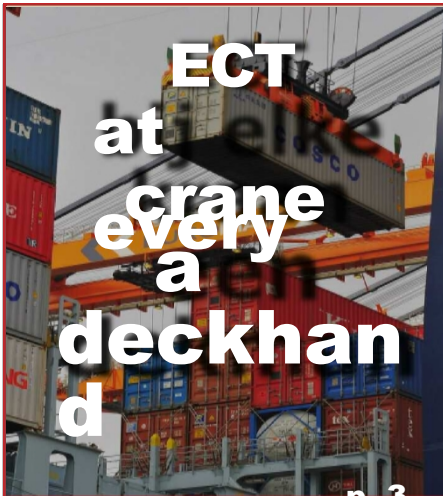


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2 September 2026 – Published by Volle Lading Group



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48-hour strike in German ports

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Nationwide trade union protest — Government be must scrapped

On 4 September, every dockworker

be part of the nationwide protest movement against the government. Proud that the trade union movement is leading the way in the fight against the government.

Proud to come together on 4 September trade unionists to kick off the long struggle for metalworkers and

following two weeks of industrial action.

Port, metal, construction, work civil servants, social

schemes, care, public transport

On 4 September, dockworkers went on strike nationwide and the



metal and construction sectors in various regions. Regional strikes in the construction and metal sectors will continue on 10 and 11 September. DAF and Scania form the backbone of the action.

On 8 September, civil servants working for local authorities, provincial authorities and central government will go on strike, as will workers at social development organisations.

On 8 September, workers in nursing homes, care homes and home care will also take action against the government, against the dismantling of the care sector and in favour of a decent collective agreement.

From 2 to 14 September, sit-ins will be held in various hospitals. On 9 September, public transport will be brought to a standstill.

Government of the big capitalists

The government is (like every government) a government of the rich and big business. It's a bit laughable when right-wing parties call this a left-wing government.

Cuts are being made to everything that matters to ordinary people: particularly benefits and healthcare, but it is also becoming easier to make people redundant. The right to demonstrate is being curtailed, whilst the powers of the security services are being expanded.

Environmental pollution is not really being tackled. Hardly any housing is being built for ordinary people.

And to divert attention from these fundamental issues, asylum seekers are used as scapegoats. In this way, large corporations and the wealthy are shielded from scrutiny, and the fact that, once again, more taxpayers' money is going to the big capitalists and towards preparing for their wars is concealed.

Expanding action, making bold demands

These two weeks of action are an important political act by working people, but they are not enough to make the government back down.

The way forward is to expand the actions – particularly by having different sectors strike and demonstrate simultaneously, rather than each one separately – and to fight for offensive demands.

Fighting to keep what you have means losing your future, because capitalism offers workers no future.

We need better benefits, better healthcare, more housing, a liveable world, and a future for young people!

Next time in town?

The nationwide port strike is a wonderful step forward. But there is also a point of criticism. The strike would be far more effective and generate much more enthusiasm if people gathered in the city centre and if a demonstration across a bridge or through the tunnel were organised as part of it. That would make the strike much more visible and make it easier for others to join the protest. Why remain invisible?

ECT at every crane a cover man

ECT has once again brought in more money for Hutchison in the first half of the year. More than ever before, in fact, according to *Nieuwsblad Transport*. But Greedy Gijs is never satisfied. The ECT management sees an opportunity to squeeze more money out of the same workforce. Eight extra shifts a day, without taking on a single new employee. The way to achieve this: one operator for two cranes.

Fighting together – that's why you're a union member

At the other major terminals, there's a deckhand at every deep-sea crane. At ECT, it's always been vague: unclear in-

structions. As a deckhand or crane operator, you're left to set the limits yourself – only to be told not to moan so much. Taking on management policy on your own is difficult, in fact impossible. Workers join a trade union to take up that fight together. What cannot be achieved individually can be achieved collectively.

FNV Havens Congress 2021: a deckhand at every crane

In 2021, at the FNV Havens port congress, clear and well-reasoned decisions were taken regarding the necessity of having a deckhand at every crane. Here

Continued from

below, we quote from the magazine, which was published especially for the congress and can be read on the FNV Havens website.

Pages 28/29 on health and safety:

“The foremost priority for port workers is their health and safety. These must continue to be safeguarded as effectively as possible, even as automation advances. That safety is jeopardised if there is no careful supervision of loading and unloading operations on deck. Someone must be able to warn of and intervene in the event of (unexpected) people being present in the hold or on deck, jammed stackers and other incidents that may occur. Good radio contact between that deckhand and the crane operator is also essential. Another requirement is that the deckhand must not be distracted by the fact that he is also supervising the loading or unloading of

other crane.”

On page 30, the requirement is set out in black and white:

“FNV Havens demands that loading and unloading on all ships always takes place with a Deck Radio Operator assigned to each crane on the vessel, regardless of the ship’s size.”

On page 33, Richard Schouten (trade union executive member) explains this further in an interview:

“Companies want to make ever-increasing profits. As a result, the workload is increasing. The consequence: dangerous situations ... We demand at least one Radioman Dek per crane. Because when the crane is on remote control, you cannot see the person standing beneath it. Given the dangerous circumstances, employers will really have to deliver on their promises.”

Well said – now let’s get on with it!



Attack on Delta II colleagues

This is simply not on!

ECT has launched an attack on both Delta II staff and the position of the trade unions at Delta II. Delta II colleagues, the trade unions and the works council had assumed that the Omega project would go ahead. Under the Omega project, MSC and Hutchison were to build a new automated terminal on the site currently occupied by Delta II and ECT DDN.

Staff, the trade unions and the works council were prepared to fight to avoid ending up in a 'dying organisation' scenario. The works council had taken the matter to court. The trade unions refused to cooperate with a pilot scheme on staff secondment between companies as long as the position of Delta II staff within the Omega project had not been properly resolved.

ECT took its colleagues by surprise in August with the announcement that the Omega project had been put on hold. This announcement was immediately accompanied by the news that as much cargo as possible would be transferred from Delta II to ECT, and that ECT intended to transfer as many staff as possible from Delta II to ECT at the same time. ECT is advertising vacancies for this purpose. 'Well,

where that leaves your battle plans', thought the ECT management.

A new situation calls for new battle plans

A new situation has arisen, and so it is time for new strategies. Our colleagues at Delta II have always fought with one voice: for fair terms following the takeover by ECT, for the retention of price compensation, and for a generous redundancy payment. That unity and fighting spirit are needed once again.

That is the foundation of militant trade unionism.

We need to consider what demands should be made. And we need to consider how those demands can be backed up. If young and old join forces, a great deal is possible. Older members can contribute their experience of campaigning, whilst younger members can bring their enthusiasm.

Omega on hold, reorganisation too

First and foremost, the reorganisation, which is currently underway in



Principles of De Volle Lading

1. We champion the interests of dockworkers and the young people who will be working in the port by putting forward bold demands.
2. We help organise the struggle for these causes, amongst other things, through the fortnightly publication of *De Volle Lading*.
3. We operate democratically. Everyone can have their say. Friends who support the dockworkers' struggle are welcome.
4. We campaign for trade unions that fight for workers' interests in a militant and democratic manner.
5. We are independent, including financially. We only accept financial contributions if they are given without conditions.
6. We are open to ideas about a different society free from the exploitation and oppression of working people – this guides our struggle.
7. We are working to strengthen international solidarity amongst dockworkers.

De Volle Lading is a publication by the De Volle Lading Group – by colleagues for colleagues in the port. At De Volle Lading, you can learn to fight against injustice and against the root cause of injustice: capitalism. And please feel free to put some money in the pot to support us. De Volle Lading operates without subsidies – because we want to remain independent.

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NL54INGB0004428359, quoting 'DVL'

have been put on hold. Article 8 of the collective agreement stipulates that in such situations, consultation shall take place between the unions and management, 'with a view to reaching social policy arrangements by mutual agreement'. Ignoring this agreement constitutes an attack on staff rights and the position of the unions.

Transition to ECT whilst retaining terms and conditions of employment

The terms and conditions of employment at ECT are generally worse than those at Delta II. That is why many colleagues are not particularly keen on transferring to ECT. One of the first agreements must be that Delta II colleagues who transfer to ECT retain their better terms and conditions of employment. This will serve as an incentive for ECT staff.

No compulsory redundancies: Retention of all jobs through reduced working hours

19 seafarers killed

On 28 February, the US and Israel launched a war against Iran. The IMO (International Maritime Organisation, part of the United Nations) announced at the end of August that during

ECT's management has dryly stated that colleagues who are unable to transfer to ECT may make use of the agreed severance pay. This may offer an individual and financial solution for colleagues who can quickly find another job with a comparable salary, or who are approaching retirement.

For most colleagues, however, this scheme offers no prospects. In a lower-paid job or on unemployment benefit, you'll quickly use up that payment. Unemployment benefit is temporary and leads to social security – which is of no use at all. That is why: no compulsory redundancies.

For workers as a class, as a collective, the preservation of every job is important: to keep working themselves and to offer young people prospects. This can only be achieved by working shorter hours whilst retaining full pay and by retiring earlier at the company's expense.

~~During the conflict, at least 70~~ ships have been attacked, resulting in the deaths of 19 crew members. Unscrupulous shipowners send their vessels through the Strait of Hormuz, with all the risks that entails. Profit over people: capitalism.

Following the initial 24-hour strike, there will now be **a strike** on **3 and 4 September** in German ports



On 17 August at 10.00 pm, the Ver.di trade union called on its members at the seaports of Hamburg, Bremen, Bremerhaven, Wilhelmshaven, Emden and Brake to take part in a 24-hour warning strike.

The union is demanding a pay rise of 8.2 per cent, but at least a rise of €2.50 per hour, for a twelve-month contract. Over 75 per cent of members rejected the meagre offer from the port management and voted in favour of the strike. Cargo handling in Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Bremen was severely disrupted. De Volle Lading sent a message of solidarity. Statements of solidarity are greatly appreciated by our colleagues.

Majority in favour of a new strike

During the strike meeting at the Buchardkai in Hamburg, the negotiating committee announced that the port management wished to present a new offer. That new offer has since been rejected by the members – this time by over 80 per cent.

Once the workers have fought a battle, their belief in their own power grows. Workers in Germany are continuing their series of warning strikes: on Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th, the ports in northern Germany will come to a standstill. On Friday, colleagues in Hamburg will march through the port and the city: 'Let's show who's port is!'

Ver.di cites as one of the reasons for calling the strike: *“dockworkers in the Netherlands have also announced a warning strike”*.