

RTBU EXPRESS

The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch
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Letter from Secretary

DEDICATION TO THE MOVEMENT



**Luba
Grigorovitch**
State Secretary

I am honoured to be awarding more than 40 RTBU members with loyalty plaques in recognition of their 30 years standing membership with the Rail, Tram and Bus Union.

These members come from across the broad spectrum of workers represented by the RTBU. From Station Masters, Administration Clerks, Authorised Officers, Signallers to Conductors and Labourers. Some have moved across different parts of our industry over the years; many have held the same job their entire working life. However they have all maintained an unwavering loyalty to our union throughout their working lives.

The commitment these members have shown to the collective mission of the RTBU cannot be underestimated. Their personal loyalty, conviction and sacrifice are their legacy to our membership. Their stories and struggles are what inspire us to keep our union strong. We ought never forget what they achieved.

Rail workers in Victoria were the first in Australia to organise into a single industry union in the early 20th Century. Before then, different workers on the railways unionised separately from one another. Whether you were a Driver, Station Clerk, Signaller or Shunter, you would organise in "craft unions" based on the grade at the time.

Experience has shown that we will always be stronger when working together as one true industry union.

Whether it was establishing a permanent basis for cooperative unionism in the early 1900s, or our final amalgamation in 1993 to create a union that is organised along industry lines – our custodians have avoided the constraints and divisions



Andrew Irving, one of the many RTBU members who this year has been recognised for 30 years members to the Union

imposed by so many unions trying to act independently – despite their unity of purpose.

Our Union has prospered and grown over the years, despite the many economic highs and lows, strikes and disputes that are too numerous to name in a rapidly changing industry.

Following the effects of privatisation in the 1990's on public transport throughout Australia, the Australian Railway Union's members along with the members of other public transport unions voted to amalgamate into what is today known as the Rail, Tram and Bus Union. This took place out of the firm belief that public transport workers across the board could only meet the challenges of a contracting industry together under a single umbrella. The members we are honouring for 30 years loyalty this year have also weathered the ups and downs of industrial disputes, the gruelling damage done to public transport during the Kennett years and the challenges of amalgamation.

To these members we owe everything – we have remained strong thanks to their commitment and dedication.

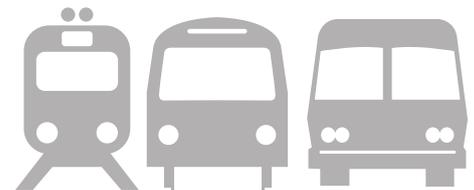
The vehicle of unionism exists to strengthen and protect workers - through our union, the victories and progress of one generation of workers become the gains of the next to defend and build upon, because the fight for rights and conditions at work is a never-ending mission.

Solidarity, throughout our industry and across generations, is the glue that holds the union together. Those who built our union understood that unity is the key to the success of all workers, and disunity brings with it setback and defeat. United there is no challenge the RTBU cannot conquer - so long as we work together we will be able to continue to do justice to the struggles and build on the triumphs of those that came before us.

United we stand, divided we fall.

Again thank you to our long-serving members, it is my pleasure to be able to present each and every plaque. ■

Luba Grigorovitch
State Secretary



RTBU
The power of Union

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RTBU WOMEN'S COMMITTEE REPORT BACK:



Kath Larkin
Women's Officer

AMENITIES AUDIT

For some time now members of RTBU Women have been raising issues with female facilities: with some members being expected to use unisex facilities, not

having access to sanitary bins, or being made to walk past urinals (potentially in use) to access a toilet cubicle. I am pleased to report that in the process of union negotiations with management at various levels improvements are beginning to be made. There is however still much work to be done.

Over the next few months I will be visiting stations alongside a representative of Metro HR to check out the facilities our members use. This will include not just toilets but also change rooms, lockers, shower facilities and meal rooms. Under scrutiny are issues such as cleanliness, accessibility, separate facilities for men and women, hygiene standards, adequate storage, availability of tea and coffee among other issues. We have identified through RTBU Women a number of particularly problematic stations which will be among the first to be inspected.

As we go through we are compiling a list of "quick wins" to recommend be actioned immediately such as cleaning ventilation fans, simple maintenance work like reattached broken toilet roll holders to the walls and more medium term

projects that require serious attention

So far I have to say there have been some sights which have caused serious concern. At Werribee station facilities available to staff are certainly sub par and I was shocked to hear that women were using a space behind a signal panel as a changing area because no appropriate facilities are provided. We are told that this area will be undergoing renovations within the next 12 months and hope to see the renovations lead to this issue being rectified. Members from the Cross City Loop area attended the last meeting of RTBU Women and past a motion recommending the problems at werribee station be addressed immediately. I was further appalled as I went along stations and found that many women staff did not have access to sanitary bins. I heard pretty distressing stories of women having to ask permission from their station mast to go off site to use toilets with sanitary bins or having to place sanitary items in bin in communal areas.

I want to make it very clear to all women members that this sort of indignity is totally unacceptable. Metro has fully agreed that all of these places should have sanitary bins and has agreed to put sanitary bins in all staff women's and unisex toilets. Any members who do not have a sanitary bin please report this to your Station Master and let me know if the situation is not speedily rectified.

This initiative came from RTBU Women but benefits all our members and has subsequently been supported by the union as a whole.

If you have particular concerns regarding amenities don't hesitate to call or email me on 9600 3030 or women@rtbuvic.com.au.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of RTBU Women will be 10.30am on Tuesday 7 October at Clifton Hill Station. All members are encouraged to attend to discuss ideas, raise questions, put forward issues in the workplace and to network with other women members from across the RTBU over refreshments. If you are rostered to work at this time, please be in touch so we can pursue your release.

Paying In



Grant Wainwright
Organiser

It is the position of the RTBU that Metro's request that members "pay in" when a deficiency is found in the float is fundamentally unfair. After consultation with Customer Service Managers and reviewing the policy it has been confirmed by Metro that members are not obligated to "pay in." Paying in is optional, it is not compulsory and there is no disciplinary action attached to a choice not to "pay in"

We encourage members not to pay in.

If you are feeling pressured please contact your union delegate or official immediately.

For more information contact myself on 0421 122 437 or the Union office on 9600 3030 ■

RosterOn Update

Members have been contacting the office in relation to Metro's propaganda around the rollout of the new time and pay system "RosterOn" which Metro want to introduce.

The RTBU is still in early negotiations with Metro management regarding their proposal and expect full and proper consultation to occur before any implementation.

We have also made it clear that the RTBU will definitely not entertain the biometrics aspect of the machine.

The RTBU has NOT approved the rollout of the ROTA system.

There will be a meeting of Union delegates to keep members informed, however if you would like more information please call your organiser.



I didn't want my TAC claim to hurt me financially.

1800 555 777

Motor Vehicle
Accident

Slater & Gordon
Lawyers

Not a problem.

Contact us

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State Secretary
Luba Grigorovitch

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