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# FIRST INDUSTRIAL ACTION IN 17 YEARS COMES TO WINNING CLOSE

Secretary's Report | Luba Grigorovitch

The RTBU has had a significant year on the industrial front with members in the Rail Divisions, Locomotive Division and Tram & Bus Division voting for and taking protected industrial action in pursuit of their respective Enterprise Agreements (EAs). Our Union has been front and center in the battles with both Yarra Trams and also Metro Trains.

The protected action ballots saw resounding support for the Industrial Action with over 98% of both Metro and Yarra Trams members voting in favor of industrial action. This overwhelming result was a striking confirmation of the unity and frustration of members who were ready to make a stand and fight to secure important workplace rights, conditions and a fair wage outcome.

Despite attempts by both Yarra Trams and Metro to stifle the right of RTBU members to take protected industrial action, applying to the FWC to terminate our 4 hour strike action, the FWC dismissed the companies' applications on both occasions. Members in the Operations Divisions at both Metro and Yarra Trams went out on strike for the first time in 17 years.

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An in-principle agreement has now been reached at Yarra Trams in the Operations Division and with Metro Trains in the Operations Division.

Hit with another round of industrial action, including further work stoppages, indefinite uniform bans, overtime bans and other work bans across Metro and Yarra Trams, the tune of bargaining changed and the companies were now all ears.

As members know, an in-principle agreement has now been reached at Yarra Trams in the Operations Division and with Metro Trains in the Operations Division.

Voting should take place for both workplaces in coming weeks.

Negotiations still continue with other companies, but employers now know that an industry standard has been set

Members from across the entire RTBU should be thanked for their solidarity which they showed during this dispute. It was your unity that allowed a strong outcome which we can all be proud of.

United we stand – Divided we fall, R

## HomeSafe

Members should be aware that HomeSafe is an initiative of the newly elected Andrews Government. The proposal of 24 hour public transport is in theory a winner, however the State Government, PTV and the Operators have gone about the roll-out in a very strange way.

The Government's August announcement to introduce HomeSafe, with only 35 of the 78 premium stations being staffed, was utterly unacceptable. The RTBU publicly opposed this proposal.

We demanded that at a minimum all Premium stations needed to be staffed and I am pleased to report that this commitment has now been given by Metro.

The RTBU will remain open during the Christmas break this year to ensure members needs are attended to incase there are any disruptions during the implementation of HomeSafe.

Across V/Line, Yarra Trams and Metro there have been major issues around questions going unanswered. Although we have now received a response to some of the important questions, many still await a response. The RTBU and the relevant companies have each established a HomeSafe working party. If you have any further queries please call your Organiser. R





## Building a stronger Union

Bob Nanva | RTBU National Secretary

The RTBU National Council has met in Sydney to set the course for our Union's future.

The National Council is the highest decision making body of the RTBU and comprises around 80 elected Council Delegates from around the country.

Our focus was on building a stronger union by investing in the skills and capacities of our army of Workplace Delegates.

The National Council agreed on five key proposals.

The first was the creation of an online Delegates Portal, which will be an addition to our new national website (www.rtbu.org.au) and will provide Delegates with instant access to critical information.

We'll be employing a National

Delegates Training Coordinator within National Office. This new role will have responsibility for ensuring all of our Workplace Delegates have access to a consistent and comprehensive training syllabus.

The third initiative was the introduction of a national Delegate of the Year Award to recognise the outstanding achievements of our Workplace Delegates and highlight the importance of their role.

It was also agreed to hold a National Delegates Conference, bringing all of our Delegates together in one place to discuss the issues they are dealing with on the shop floor.

And finally, National Council agreed to develop a national growth campaign to increase our density, and therefore increase our strength.

Of course, we don't spend all this time and all this energy building a stronger union just for the sake of it.

The RTBU exists for one reason and one reason only – to advance the interests of its members.

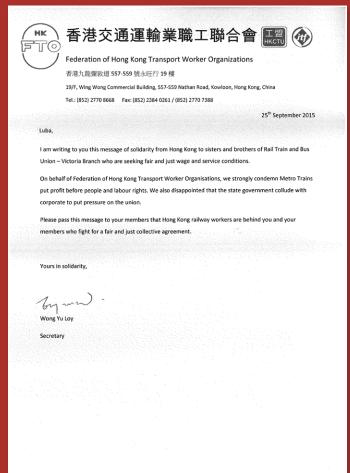
And when you look across the country at what we've been doing, it's an incredible sight.

We've stood up to companies like Aurizon, Metro Trains Melbourne and Yarra Trams.

The RTBU is showing Australia, showing the world, that there's power in a union. R

### INTERNATIONAL MESSAGES OF SOLIDARITY





Pushing through our recent industrial disputes, solidarity has poured in from our international brothers and sisters – not only from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), but also from our Comrades who work on the Hong-Kong urban metro network for Metro's major shareholder MTR.

The ITF is an international federation of transport workers' trade unions. Globally, the ITF membership is constituted of 700 unions representing over 4.5 million transport workers. The

following aims are set out in the ITF constitution:

- To promote respect for trade union and human rights worldwide.
- To work for peace based on social justice and economic progress
- To help its affiliated unions defend the interests of their members
- To provide research and information services to affiliates
  - To provide general assistance to transport workers in difficulty.

The RTBU Victoria has long proud history of working closely with our comrades in our fellow transport unions – the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and the Transport Workers Union (TWU) – in the persuit of international transport workers' solidarity in the ongoing global battle for better workplace conditions. R



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