

RTBU EXPRESS

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

RTBU FORCES METRO TO THE BARGAINING TABLE



**Luba
Grigorovitch**
State Secretary

Members would be aware that this year the RTBU will be negotiating enterprise

agreements (EAs) for the three major public transport operators in Victoria; Metro, V/line and Yarra Trams.

With these EAs all reaching nominal expiry dates on 30 June 2015, as a Union we have been engaging with members and preparing for this round of bargaining since last year. This process has included writing to both V/Line and Metro requesting a meeting to review the current EAs and establish a schedule leading up to the formal commencement of bargaining.

Despite our initial letter being sent out in December 2014, not all operators were prepared to come to the party. V/Line was quick to respond and representatives from both the Rail and the Locomotive Divisions met earlier this year to flag issues with the current EA and had discussions about a timeline for bargaining. Yarra Trams have also held a meeting with the RTBU, and similarly, have set a schedule for the commencement of bargaining and upcoming negotiation meetings. Disappointingly the RTBU heard nothing back from Metro who instead disappointingly chose to ignore not only our

request to conduct a review of the current EA, but to further refuse to commence bargaining for a replacement EA.

Our Union was not about to accept this obstructionist behavior on the part of Metro or any other company. In response to Metro disrespecting our members in this way, the RTBU lodged a dispute against the company. On 30 March 2015, the RTBU represented members at the Fair Work Commission (FWC) over Metro's ongoing refusal to review the current EA in accordance with the EA provision, where after dragging their feet, Metro finally agreed to meet with the RTBU to review the current EA on 10 April 2015.

Further, after months of deliberately delaying the commencement of bargaining, Metro has agreed to commence the bargaining process for a new EA by issuing formal Notices of Representational Rights on 17 April 2015.

Metro management's refusal to meet with the RTBU was not only an effort on their part to delay the re-negotiation of the EA, it displayed a blatant contempt towards their own employees in Metro Operations to be represented and collectively bargain for their rights and conditions at work. We were not going to stand for this.

Along with the right to strike, there is no right more sacred to the worker than the right to collectively bargain - allowing the advancement of the wages and conditions of workers. When Metro management threatened the premise of collective bargaining, RTBU members at all levels of our Union swiftly retaliated to set them straight.

The overwhelming response of members against attacks to your fundamental right to bargain collectively, within days of the majority support determination application petition being circulated by the RTBU, demonstrated the true power of union. The Application would have been lodged with the FWC had the above outcome not been achieved. The

number of delegates who worked tirelessly collecting signed petitions and getting them back to our office was overwhelming and does not go unnoticed. Thank you to the thousands of members who got behind the petition.

We will need more of this spirit as we continue through the bargaining period for the bargaining of the upcoming EAs. So long as we stay on the front foot and are prepared to call a spade a spade, there won't be a single hard-won condition the employers will be able to strip away from us. RTBU members will not be pushed around. We are one Union.

Luba Grigorovitch
State Secretary

Have you moved house or changed jobs recently?

Please let us know if your details have changed by calling us on **9600 3030** or send us an email on the address below.

Do you have an email address?

Do you have a mobile phone number?

send us an email:

rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au

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Members of the RTBU branch exec. with Minister Allan

PUBLIC TRANSPORT MINISTER ADDRESSES RTBU EXECUTIVE

The RTBU was pleased that the State Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan accepted an invitation to attend our March RTBU Branch Executive meeting. We would have to reach a long way back in our memory to remember the last time the Public Transport Minister has paid our Union a visit to discuss their plans for our industry going forward in this realm, so this was a welcome development.

At our Executive meeting, Minister Allan conveyed that public transport is a top priority for the Andrews Labor Government in its first term in office. The Minister outlined some of the areas in which the State Government has taken action. Among the most welcome of the Andrews Labor Government’s announcements since coming to power last year has been the fast-tracking of a number infrastructure projects in our industry. These include allocating \$100 million towards the much-needed renovation of Flinders Street Station, the removal of the 50 most unsafe level crossings in Victoria and plans to build the Metro Rail Tunnel, a project which will create 3,500 new jobs and revolutionize Melbourne’s metropolitan rail service. Minister Allan also noted the State Government’s

interventionist move to protect Ballarat train manufacturer Alstom by committing 30 new X’tropolis carriages to be built at the plant.

These initiatives are good news for our industry. Investment in public transport was severely lacking in the agenda of the previous conservative State Government, as was a commitment to local content in manufacturing. Major projects such as the removal of unsafe level crossings and the renovation of Flinders Street will provide new jobs in the public transport sector.

Parallel to these policy announcements from the Andrews Government and imperative for our members is the need for State Government to take the lead in promoting the safety of front-line staff. The number of incidents in which staff have found themselves the victims of violent and anti-social behaviour whilst on duty demands action. Central to any effort to improve the safety of public transport staff is the need for government and the network operators to launch a public campaign encouraging the traveling public to respect the work performed for them by front-line staff.

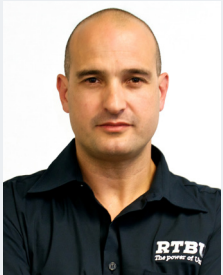
Another pressing issue is the implementation of the Government’s Homesafe policy. Homesafe, which will introduce 24 hour public transport on Friday and Saturday nights, will obviously require an all-night rostering of a number of members from varied grades. The RTBU believes it is imperative that the State Government roll-out this policy in consultation with the major stakeholders to ensure that adequate staffing is allocated, along with rosters that members can cope with. The RTBU is prepared to cooperate with any trials of Homesafe in the interests of our members and public safety, providing through consultation occurs.

The RTBU welcomes the cooperative approach the Andrews Government has bought to public transport thus far. The most progress can be achieved for our industry and members when government, network operators and our Union is willing to sit down and talk through the issues at hand. So long as the State Government remains prepared to consult and work to provide our industry with new projects and investment, our Union is ready to work with them.■

WORKERS COMPENSATION 1800 555 777

The compensation meant I wasn’t also hurt financially.

AROUND THE TRAPS



Darren Galea
Organiser

Authorised Officer Hand-Held Device update

Members in the AO grade know just how heavy and behind the times the current hand held devices are. Irrespective to which company the AOs work for, the hand-helds are not what they should be. The RTBU has been lobbying Metro, V/line, Yarra Trams and PTV for sometime now in relation to these devices.

Just this week the RTBU has been approached by Metro Management regarding the proposed introduction of Generation 2 hand-held devices. This is the beginning of the process and members should be aware that no agreements will be made around the introduction of new devices without proper consultation with affected members. There has also been discussion regarding the possible introduction inside Metro of iPhone 6 for Authorised Officers and iPads for Station Masters.

To date we have not been consulted by any other company, however the RTBU will continue to lobby for a better device and I will keep members updated.

Members Representational Rights

Issues have again arisen around members going into meetings with management unrepresented. This has in the past resulted in members getting more heavily disciplined than would normally be the case. Members pay union dues for the right to be represented by union officials and in all situations before agreeing to any meeting with management members should contact their Delegate or Organiser and ensure full representation.■

ROSTER SAGA CONTINUES

For the past three years the RTBU has been in negotiations with Metro around re-rostering of members in the station grade.

These are not union rosters - the union has not designed or endorsed them.

The RTBU does not want to unnecessarily slow down the re-rostering process. However it is critical that the rosters do not disadvantage our members. We will continue to represent our members where they have concerns.

Over the past weeks Metro has circulated a series of proposed draft rosters. The RTBU has been visiting stations and meeting with members to discuss the various problems members have identified. Some of the major issues are:

ROTATIONS

- In many outstations the first proposed rosters had rotations which forced PT members into shifts which radically changed their lifestyles, and which pushed FT members off shifts which incur penalty rates.
- Metro has agreed that where a majority of members prefer the current rotations, rosters will be altered to reflect a pattern as close as possible to the current existing rotations.

FINACIAL DISADVANTAGE

- The RTBU opposes our members being

financially disadvantaged. In some instances members were going to be up to eight thousand dollars worse off a year.

- Metro has now agreed to a series of compromises that will reduce financial disadvantage. Negotiations continue on this question as we strive to get the best possible outcome for members.

SHIFTS OF OVER 8 HOURS

- The RTBU has been against the introduction of any additional shifts of over 8 hours, to protect members’ work/ life balance and to prevent fatigue. Many of the proposed rosters include shifts of over 10 hours.
- Metro has agreed in SOME instances to return the weekend shifts to 8 hours and utilise a PT member to cover the mid. Negotiations continue on this matter.

DISPLACEMENTS

- Many of the new proposed rosters have less positions on the roster for the station than currently exists. In such situations some members will be “displaced” There is an agreement between the RTBU and Metro to ensure the protection of any displaced members: there are no job losses, people cannot be forced to move to stations where it is totally unreasonable to work. The preference is that members be moved within their current work area or closer to home.

The RTBU will represent members and be present at all meetings concerning displacements.

- The RTBU is also supporting members where they are making an argument for retentions of staff at their station.

While these represent some positive steps the RTBU has still not endorsed any rosters- this can only come from the members. In some instances we have not yet seen new draft rosters that reflect these compromises.

For more information contact:

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FAREWELL DOUG BRADY

The RTBU wishes Doug Brady all the best into his retirement after a committed 48 years on the job. A union activist his entire working life, since even before joining the tramways, Doug has been a pillar of support for the Victorian Branch of the RTBU.

Starting out as a tram conductor, Doug later made the transition into driving before becoming a trainer and finally a full-time union official. First becoming a delegate in the 1970s, he has worked relentlessly for the membership whilst always maintaining a true fighting spirit. It was in 1993 that he became delegate for Tram & Bus Division from amalgamation into the PTU and in 1998 was

elected Tram & Bus Divisional President and Senior Vice President of the RTBU Victorian Branch. Finally in 2011 Doug was elected to the full time position of Assistant Divisional Secretary for Tram & Bus division.

Doug has made an outstanding contribution to workers in our industry and has been a warrior for the union cause, both in tramways and public transport. Comrades from all Divisions of the Union can attest that Doug's heart has always been in the right place and the Union cause has been front and center to his decision making. All the best Doug, wishing you a happy and well deserved retirement. ■



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RTBU



Caps: \$5



Navy T-shirts: \$20



LIMITED STOCK

White T-shirts: Free

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State Secretary

Luba Grigorovitch

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