

# RTBU EXPRESS

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

## RTBU joins arms with Korean Railways Union



**Luba Grigorovitch**  
State Secretary

comrade Ho-joon Song, a fellow trade unionist from South Korea, whilst he has visited Australia.

Ho-joon Song is the Director of International Affairs and representative abroad for the Korean Railway Workers' Union (KRWU), the RTBU's sister union in South Korea. He has been staying in Melbourne for the past 3 months as part of a visit organised by the RTBU, the Transport Worker's Union and the Maritime Union Australia through the International Transport Worker's Federation (ITF). During his stay in Melbourne, Ho-joon had the opportunity of visiting our Union office and members' work sites, as well as historical sites of the labour movement in Victoria such as Trades Hall and the 8 Hour Monument. He also visited our National Office in Sydney.

Ho-joon Song's visit has been organised by the KRWU and its fraternal transport unions in Australia following a drawn out and bravely-fought strike by railway workers in his home country. The strike began in December last year in opposition to plans by the South Korean Government to privatise a large portion of the Korean rail network. Up to 15,000 members of the Korea Railroad Corporation's (Korail) workforce voted to walk off the job in response to these plans on December 9, which they recognised as a threat to the future of public transport in South Korea. During the 23 day strike that ensued, these rail workers and the KRWU faced a barrage of attacks from the government and their employers, including the hiring of scab labour and the sacking of over 4,000 workers for belonging to the union. This culminated on December 22 in a police raid on the Korean



**Ho-joon with members of the RTBU Committees of Management**

Confederation of Trade Unions headquarters - which had served as a base for the strike - and the arrests of 140 strike leaders.

Such shocking attacks on unions and workers' democratic rights might seem alien to many RTBU members and Australian workers, but is not uncommon in South Korea where the state suppression of unions and human rights violations remains commonplace. While South Korea has nominally been a parliamentary democracy since the end of military rule in 1987, the country's elected governments have continued to be influenced by the authoritarian practices of the country's military and wealthy elite, particularly when it comes to dealing with organised labour. The everyday dominance of corporate forces in South Korean society and its demands on the productivity of workers has strongly influenced the desire of the South Korean Government and establishment to attack labour at every opportunity.

The railway workers strike received widespread support from other Korean unions and the Korean public as well as strong international support. The RTBU along with the MUA and the TWU rallied in support of the Korean transport workers over Christmas 2013. The 23 day strike forced the government and Korail to call a truce with the KRWU and the question of whether or not rail privatisation will proceed is now a matter of political contention. Since then the KRWU has continued to face attacks - Korail is now seeking to seize the union's financial assets, and the KRWU's headquarters was burned down under suspicious circumstances earlier this year. Over 250 rail workers have been sacked, which the KRWU continue to support.

Ho-joon gave a presentation on the strike to the RTBU Rail Division's Committee of Management, State Branch Executive and the Tram and Bus Committee of Management in May. He also presented at a number of work sites and at the RTBU Women's committee meeting. He was strongly received, and at the end of each meeting a motion was passed in solidarity with the Korean Railway Workers' Union's struggle against privatisation.

It is noteworthy that the RTBU, TWU and MUA came together with transport unions across the world through the ITF to vocally support the KRWU during the strike - this placed significant pressure on the South Korean Government from abroad.

On behalf of the RTBU I would like once again to thank Ho-joon Song for the time he spent with our union over the last 3 months and affirm my solidarity with the Korean Railways Workers' Union in their ongoing struggle against privatisation and for democratic and human rights. As railway trade unionists we stand firmly with the KRWU in their ongoing fight. ■

**Luba Grigorovitch**  
State Secretary



# RTBU WOMEN



**Kath Larkin**  
RTBU Women's Officer

RTBU Women aims to engage more women in being active members of the union as a whole by providing them a space to discuss issues in their workplace. RTBU Women has been hosting monthly meetings around the network. In these meetings we've discussed problems with amenities, dealing with disciplinary procedures, how to tackle bullying and much more.

Some of our upcoming activities are listed below:

**Next Meeting**

Flinders Street Station, Station Masters Conference room. Tuesday 2 September at 10.30am. All RTBU women members are encouraged to attend.

**Cancer research Morning Tea**

RTBU Women host an annual morning tea for all members. Last year the proceeds from this

morning tea were donated to the Breast Cancer Network. A number of our members have been affected by this all-too-common illness. Some time ago RTBU Women organised to defend and support members who were being mistreated at work while undergoing treatment for breast cancer. This was a win for all members who face serious illness.

This year RTBU Women would like to invite all members, men and women to join us for the morning tea – with funds raised going to both breast and prostate cancer research.

The details are;  
RTBU CANCER RESEARCH MORNING TEA  
Where: RTBU Executive Room  
Level 2, 356 Queen St Melbourne  
Date: Wednesday 26 November  
Time: 10.30am

**Fundraising Initiative**

Further to the above, one our members Anne Emms has developed her own fundraising initiative to join in with the efforts of the morning tea. Anne has produced pocket hand warmers (developed with station staff in mind). The

home made wheat bags can be warmed up in a microwave (as per safety instructions on packaging) and kept in pockets to keep you warm on cold days! Anne is selling the product for \$5 each with all money going towards Australian Prostate Cancer Research and Breast Cancer Network Australia. To purchase hand warmers please contact the union office.

**Flag Competition**

Our flag competition continues. Entries are due in by Tuesday 30 October, the winning design to be revealed at the Cancer Research Morning Tea.

Each Division of the union has their own flag: The Rail division, Locomotive division and the Tram and Bus division. RTBU women is proudly made up of a cross section of members from all these Divisions and we would like one flag to stand behind in honour of this.

Enquires/Designs to be sent to:  
women@rtbuvic.com.au  
OR  
PO BOX 4716  
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

## INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS UPDATES

**Incolink/C-Bus**

All members please check that your Incolink/ Super is being paid up by your employer. It is important that your funds are up to date. Please contact your organiser for a confidential meeting to discuss.

**Timesheets**

After a long battle with Sunstone Resources common sense has prevailed. Although just a band aid fix, our members can now scan and email their timesheets in, instead of our members having to drive up to a 2 hour turnaround trip – costing fuel and tolls. The Union cannot understand why a phone app has taken Sunstone so long – we would like to thank our members for their patience and understanding.



**Tony Matuszak**  
Organiser Infrastructure Projects

# ROSTER UPDATE



**Grant Wainwright**  
Organiser

**Kath Larkin**  
RTBU Women's Officer

After the last round of rosters in the northern group which included extended hours and negatively affected our members, Metro has agreed to produce EBA compliant rosters. As a result of delegate and members agitation at the workplace level and ongoing negotiations between the Union and Metro, Metro has confirmed rosters will adhere to the following principles:

- No new additional or newly created shifts will extend beyond 8 hours.
- Members will retain at minimum the same earnings, grade and entitlements such as sick leave and EDO's as their current roster allows.
- There will be no job losses or displacement of staff created by the new roster
- Members will retain day off patterns including the 4 days or 5 days off that members were keen to protect.
- Annual leave relief ratios to be at least 1 for every 8 staff
- Costing will be done on a confidential basis and members will be able to access the figures of what they will be earning.

To this point Metro has not been able to draft reasonable rosters for the "1 up" station locations. They showed us proposals including 7 hour Monday- Friday shifts with some weekend shifts over ten hours. These drafts have been rejected

and shelved until a more reasonable offer has been produced.

The Union is now in possession of draft rosters for the city loop stations. These rosters appear to abide by the EBA and the above principles. This is a step forward. However there are ongoing negotiations around some of the finer details such as start/finish times, overlap time between shifts to allow sufficient time for hand over and going through all of the numbers in each station with a fine tooth comb.

**Staffing Levels**

According to Metro's franchise agreement, they are required to have a minimum 986 station heads. Metro claimed when they came into operation that they would increase the numbers to 1,888. However this number has never been met. At no point have Metro gone above 920 positions. Metro is proposing that the new rosters will provide for 1,020 positions. We're happy to see increased numbers in the station grades to decrease the burden on our members and provide more jobs. However it is our job to ensure this happens in a fair way and does not disadvantage our current members.

**Full Time Conversions**

With members sick of being left in part time positions, the RTBU fought to increase the number of full time jobs and meaningful training schemes. So far of the 100 Full time conversions we negotiated, 88 have been filled, with 12 more to go. These 12 will be taken from the Merit List.

**Recruitment**

Throughout the process station staff have voiced their disapproval of the Merit List. The whole process which we were made to go through was utterly ludicrous- apply for a job when you didn't

know what it was, testing which gave results inconclusive with peoples actual abilities- but what was really beyond a joke and unacceptable to the RTBU is that if you were not on the Merit List you wouldn't be given the opportunity to apply for a full time position for 12 months.

The Merit List has now been knocked off. Following the last 12 positions from the 100 agreed full time conversions the Merit List will no longer be in effect. This will allow all members equal ability to apply for full time jobs and/or promotions going into the future. This will include any new vacancies coming out of the back of this process, such as backfill for staff who move on to new positions. We have fought to ensure that where front line station staff are concerned any new recruitments will be part time LSAs, so the existing staff are given priority in advancing their careers.

**Process**

Our station proposition subcommittee made up of delegates and organisers are working on these rosters at the moment. When we feel we have a reasonable proposal on the table, we will bring in all the relevant delegates and if the rosters meet their approval- said rosters will be taken to station meetings. Our members will have the opportunity to scrutinise the rosters, give feedback and then vote on the proposed rosters. The ultimate and final say on the rosters belongs, as it should, to the membership as a whole who will be made to work these rosters.

## ON THE SPOT PENALTY FARE UPDATE



**Darren Galea**  
Organiser

As Authorised Officers (AO's) would know, the RTBU has been in negotiations with management in relation to the implementation of the On the Spot Penalty Fares.

I am pleased to announce that following an AO delegates meeting it has been agreed that AO's will participate in the roll-out of the On the Spot Penalty Fares which commenced on Sunday 10 August.

This follows a letter which the RTBU received from Metro confirming the following agreed matters:

**1. Roster Alignment**

This is to apply to all current AO's without an EDO and all future new starts with an implementation date of 7 September 2014.

**2. Additional Annual Training for AO's**

It should be noted that discussions are still ongoing between Darren Galea, RTBU Organiser and Paul D'Alessio, Manager Customer Services – AO's in relation to the detail of this training.

Thank you to all members involved in this win. If any Authorised Officers have any queries or questions please don't hesitate to call me on 0407 512 494

## Farewell Michael Overend

**Grant Wainwright**  
Organiser

Last week alongside State Secretary Luba Grigorovitch members farewelled Michael Overend. Michael is a former organiser with the ARU/RTBU and returned to work in the station and Signalling Grades.

Michael was thanked for his tireless efforts representing workers across all grades. We look forward to catching up with Michael when he joins the retired members group.

We wish Michael well in his retirement.



RTBU members join together to wish Michael Overend farewell





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