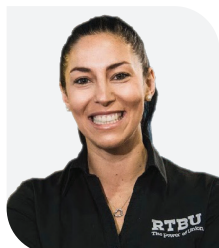


RTBU EXPRESS

The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch
VOL 8 | Issue 6 | Wednesday 21 July 2021



Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

YOUR HEALTH, OUR PRIORITY

Growing Patronage

While the current lockdown has setback the slow progress of bringing commuters back to the network, the RTBU worked quickly to ensure services would be upheld and COVID practices were promptly reinstated. We are currently now in constant contact with our brothers & sisters from the NSW branch of the RTBU who are currently facing service reductions and new challenges. We stand committed to standing by each other and supporting all grades from other states.

Even on the other side of the current lockdown in Melbourne there will be a very significant way to go to reach pre-COVID patronage. In a good sign for our industry and public confidence in Melbourne, overall patronage numbers have been climbing up to the current lockdown, as well as myki registration numbers. With new COVID settings for office workers likely upon the conclusion of the current lockdown, the RTBU will continue to work with members to find member driven ways to sustain current efforts. Despite many commuters having shifted permanently to cars or alternative modes, now more than ever is the time we can work as a union collective to ensure that members are safe and passengers can feel confident travelling.

To achieve this the RTBU has continued to work with the Department of Transport to ensure a more reliable contact tracing system on the network, while also working with Delegates and members locally to uphold COVIDsafe practices. Now is not a time for shortcuts.

QR Codes are now available across the network with each station visitor expected to check in at each point of their journey. Provisions for Members have been further negotiated, including paper options as well as additional flexibility for frontline staff to support the tracing effort. The RTBU is currently exploring ways in which ticketing can be used to more accurately trace outbreaks and how booking offices can be better equipped to add value and longevity to the work we all do.

Increasing numbers and heightened risks from Sydney means now is a time to be vigilant. Now is no time to drop our guard. If you see anything you think is unsafe or are concerned about how it might affect you and fellow workmates, contact your Delegate, HSR or RTBU Organiser ASAP. We are here to ensure these matters get addressed as a matter of urgency.

Don't take a chance - call the RTBU.

Your Union Health

Members may be aware that RT Health (former industry health fund) has been acquired by HCF a major private fund. This means that your health fund is no longer member owned. It is no longer run by members for members.

The RTBU sees health options for members as a key priority. Having fought to save the fund from private ownership, we have partnered with a new member owned fund supporting union members across Australia.

Union Health is a health fund with union values at its core and RTBU members deserve better. To find out more, members can visit: unionhealth.com.au/partner-rtbu/cover

We will be in touch in the coming weeks with more information regarding this opportunity. Should you need any more info, don't hesitate to contact your Organiser.

Luba Grigorovitch
State Secretary

Make the Move to Union Health

The health fund with union values at its core

1300 661 283 | unionhealth.com.au/partner-rtbu

RTBU
The power of Union

Operations | Infrastructure | Workshops | Salaried

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Bryan Evans

Industrial Officer / Organiser

WORKSHOPS UPDATE BALLARAT

The RTBU along with the ETU and AMWU have long campaigned and pressured the government to bite the bullet and develop and manufacture the Xtrapolis 2.0 retaining skills and creating a Rail manufacturing pipeline for Ballarat.

Recently the State Government announced that 25 New Xtrapolis 2.0's will be built at Ballarat workshops representing a huge win for Ballarat Rail Workers and securing the future of the site. Clearly this is great news for the Rail, the Ballarat workshops, and the entire region.

The Alstom Ballarat workshop members are currently working at Ballarat East workshops maintaining Velocities under a union led "secondment arrangement" designed to retain jobs and skills certainly appear to be required on an ongoing basis.

With approximately 100 jobs required to manufacture the Xtrapolis and the incumbent work force fully engaged a unique environment appears to have developed in Ballarat, a skills shortage for the rail sector.

The only problem? No one seems to have notified UGL yet.

For Years UGL have begged and pleaded its workforce to accept modest pay arrangements under the threat of closure, claims have focused on closure packages, and increased redundancy. Now with their EA under negotiation, and members skills in high demand, members want an industry standard deal and they have had enough.

As it stands the company is offering wage increases that are strictly self-funded, ie, wage

conditions will be generated on the basis of sold conditions notably stripping away members time with families by removing paid days off and other so called "efficiencies. All at a time when it is raining railway gold in Ballarat.

A Mass meeting was held, and industrial action unanimously endorsed by members of all unions, a formal AEC vote is now underway.

The ball is now firmly in the companies' court, negotiate an EA in line with the rest of the Rail Industry, as Workshop members across the state have stood up, fought for and delivered ground-breaking results, UGL Ballarat Members will be no different.

If you don't fight, you lose.



Joe Dennis

Organiser

PROGRAMMED/SKILLED WIN!

A major win for Members at Programmed/Skilled receiving back-pay for superannuation over the past 7 years. The company have not been paying super on overtime, weekend or night shifts. In coming weeks everyone will receive correspondence in relation to the backpay.

This month has also seen Programmed skilled lose the supplementary labour contract in V/Line projects. This contract has been awarded to a non-union company who have no Enterprise agreement. This is clearly cost cutting by V/Line as new contractors are paid \$1000 less a fortnight than previous programmed skilled workers, some of who have now jumped ship to the new company. The union have raised this issue with V/Line and the State Government and are waiting on answers.

I have been out and about on the projects throughout the entire state. From the Warrnambool line upgrade (WLU) to the Metro tunnel works in West Melbourne. Some new works are coming up soon including the WLU part 2 and Gippsland line upgrade (GLU). This school holidays saw major works around Swan Hill and Echuca taking place. With COVID-19 hitting most industries, rail projects are still working and with the support from the union, we will continue to push ahead.

If any members would like me to attend a prestart on their project, please contact me on 0403 863 869.



Contact us

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**Infrastructure, Workshops
& Labour Hire**
Organiser: Bryan Evans
Organiser: Joe Dennis



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Industrial Officer
Amanda Swayn

**Industrial Officer /
Organiser**
Vik Sharma





Vik Sharma

Industrial Officer / Organiser

Victor Moore

Senior Branch Vice-President

METRO STATIONS CAMPAIGN

The date of 14th July now marks 3 months since this initial reckless and hugely upsetting announcement for all those directly impacted by Metro's cost cutting antics. It is worthwhile remembering that Metro on April 14th via online Teams notified Station Masters and PSL's of a major restructure that had a number of members in the gun sights for "Forced Redundancies".

RTBU members responded to this threat by rallying and campaigning to prevent Forced Redundancies.

This has been successful, but we still have some way to go and the campaign continues as members remain willing to fight for the rights of their workmates regardless of their grade

The last fortnight has seen a range of matters arise due to Metro Trains managements preference selection process for Station Masters across the network. Management have recently sent out to a number of Station Masters letters advising of a station position selection process including the initial outcome of any movement of location or identifying any requirement to access salary maintenance provisions of the EBA if the position is in a lower grade.

Management at short notice advised some Station Masters that Local leave relief rosters would now be reinstated but only to those positions already identified as been retained. The washup of this matter meant that confusion then surrounded managements initial offer of a members accepted preference for a station position which was not a relief role then suddenly became one.

Members contacted the union office to advise they had received a phone call at short notice to advise them of this change. To date they had not received any written notification from management of this alteration to their preference.

Also, several Station Master Local leave relief who currently perform this role are now disputing why they had not received the Local leave relief role as their preference option.

As a result, and in support of Station Masters the RTBU has written to management on behalf these members outlining members concerns regarding either the negative impact of the reduction in grade or the reduction in numbers of staff at a particular station.

We are also assisting several members in disputing their allotted preference often on the basis of excessive travel or family or personal needs matters.

Proposed new master rosters were supposed to have been forwarded on Friday 2nd of July at the time of going to press no new proposed rosters had yet to be sighted.

Once the rosters are circulated several significant issues may need to be addressed and we will need to hit the ground running.

The RTBU have held regular catchups almost on a nightly basis online during this period of Covid restrictions, with meetings held nightly at 6pm to update members on any progress or issues that have arisen.

Regular job meetings and nightly online meetings are continuing to be held any member wishing to go online are advised to speak to your delegate for meeting details.

OUT & ABOUT



**BEANIES
ON SALE
\$20 \$15**

**WINTER WARMERS
SALE!**

**BEANIE & HOODIE
BUNDLE - SAVE \$10!**

**USE CODE:
UNIONPOWER**

The advertisement features a dark, textured background. In the center is a dark blue hoodie with a white cross design and a small eagle logo. Flanking the hoodie are two dark blue and white striped beanies with pom-poms, both featuring the RTBU logo and the tagline 'The power of Union'. A large, red, distressed-style banner at the top right reads 'WINTER WARMERS SALE!'. A smaller, red, distressed-style banner at the top left reads 'BEANIES ON SALE \$20 \$15'. At the bottom, large, bold, white text with a red outline reads 'BEANIE & HOODIE BUNDLE - SAVE \$10!' and 'USE CODE: UNIONPOWER'.

Head to rtbuvic.com.au/store

Contact us

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