

# RTBU EXPRESS

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

### THE POWER OF UNION HOLDS STRONG IN BALLARAT



**Luba  
Grigorovitch**  
State Secretary

On Friday 27 February, I had the honour of attending the Ballarat Trades and Labour

Council's annual Labour Day dinner along with members from Ballarat and Organiser Bryan Evans.

It was a great pleasure to see two of our long-serving RTBU members, Tony Russell and delegate Bob Bassett, recognised for their loyalty to the union movement in Ballarat at the dinner - with Tony receiving a life membership award and Bob receiving a recognition of service award. Tony and Bob's recognition is testament to the commitment of RTBU members to the labour movement in Ballarat and regional Victoria.

On the night I addressed those in attendance where I discussed the ongoing importance of regional trades and labour councils to the Victorian union movement and the connection our Union maintains to Ballarat through its workforce in the numerous companies that we represent members within Ballarat.

I also stressed the gravity of the situation around train-manufacturer Alstom. As of last week, Alstom's Ballarat plant, which



**Branch Secretary Luba Grigorovitch with RTBU members from Ballarat**

employs around 60 workers including RTBU members, indicated that it may have to cease operations due to a lack of new projects being commissioned by State Government. I said that while Alstom's dire future was an indictment of the previous Coalition State Government's negligence when it came to securing local jobs and content in manufacturing, the union movement was now looking to the Andrews Labor Government to provide leadership on this issue, and to act to save the jobs and livelihoods of the workers employed by Alstom by commissioning new work at the plant.

The State Government's announcement since last Friday's dinner is a welcome relief to Alstom's workforce and the Ballarat community, and a vindication of the pressure sustained by the labour movement to protect local industry.

The Labour Day dinner was a huge success, with nearly 300 people in attendance including Federal Shadow Transport Minister Anthony Albanese, Federal Shadow Health Minister Catherine King, State Member for Wendouree and Parliamentary Secretary Sharon Knight, and President of Victorian Trades Hall, Colin Long. The RTBU commends our comrades at Ballarat, including Trades and Labour Council Secretary Brett Edgington, for putting on such a successful dinner and wish them all the best for the struggles ahead.

**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**

**RTBU**  
The power of Union

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## VICTORY FOR MEMBERS AT ALSTOM

RTBU members at Alstom in Ballarat have won a huge victory, with the State Labor Government's announcement last week that it has ordered 30 new X'Trapolis train carriages to be built at the train-manufacturing plant.

The company's Ballarat plant had been struggling since the previous conservative State Government's decision not to commission new work at Alstom late last year and instead offer the job of assembling carriages to overseas consortiums. This was despite Liberal Premier Denis Napthine having previously commended Alstom and its workforce for their "excellent work... in terms of delivering these trains ahead of schedule and in top condition."

Like Coalition governments everywhere, the previous State Government had an ideological aversion to protecting manufacturing, despite the grave threat that their inaction posed to the future of local jobs and industry in Victoria. Alstom not only provided secure jobs and employment to its workforce but a lifeline to countless other small businesses and industries in regional Victoria.

Alstom's employees, which include RTBU, AMWU and ETU members, had been lobbying for new work for some months, and had suffered a virtual flatline in work prior to last week's announcement. The RTBU have been pushing for State Government to intervene to guarantee the plant's future since 2013. On Friday 27 February, the State Government

finally announced that they would order 30 new X'Trapolis train carriages, or the equivalent of 6 metropolitan trains, to be manufactured at the plant.

It was thanks to the fight of the Union movement and the change of Government that has intervened to guarantee Alstom Ballarat's future. This decision will guarantee the security and livelihoods of Alstom's workforce in Ballarat and the security of many more local jobs and small businesses which rely on the plant.

By campaigning to achieve this outcome, the Victorian union movement can be proud of its resolve to stand by those employed by local and regional industry, and has proven that the power to save manufacturing and local jobs lies at the feet of governments everywhere. ■



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Gordon**  
Lawyers

**RTBU**  
The power of Union

# METRO UP TO OLD TRICKS



**Bryan Evans**  
Organiser

Metro are continuing to push their proposal for members in the Workshop Division to drive trains.

In their latest chapter, a letter which was addressed to RTBU Branch Secretary Luba Grigorovitch from Metro's Manager Michael Brown was 'somehow' circulated. This letter, dated 23 February, makes threats to our Branch Secretary, telling her that the RTBU's behavior is "unacceptable", and further Metro threatens to take the Union to the Fair Work Commission if we don't hold back on "coercing" members.

Given the document had no substance we are still puzzled as to why it was sent, however

members should know that our Branch Secretary responded by informing Metro in a formal letter that the RTBU would not back down from doing what we are supposed to do, and that is to represent our members.

We believe that our members deserve fair pay and conditions for additional work and that our members have a right to know why Metro has asked them to volunteer for work outside of their current classification and performance description.

As far as Metro's claims in their letter go, we have asked the manager involved to identify which proceeding or proceedings Metro intend to issue in the FWC by close of business on Thursday 26 February 2015.

To date we are yet to receive a response from Metro.

Metro are very keen to roll this practice out however are yet to speak to our brothers and

sisters in the Locomotive Division. Until Metro are prepared to have proper conversations about this proposal we refuse to support it. This position follows on from meetings held at every Metro Workshop where members unanimously supported a motion off the shop floor to remain united and stand together against the proposal.

I thank each and every member who has remained united against this proposal. Driving belongs to Drivers. The RTBU is totally against one grade stealing work from another grade. If we were to agree with this it would only be after full consultation and agreement has been made with the Locomotive Division. This has not happened to date and consequently the Workshop Division of the RTBU continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Locomotive Division. ■

**METRO LIES**

- The RTBU demands fair pay & conditions for additional work
- The RTBU has the right to represent its members
- The RTBU will not be bullied out of the workplace.

**NOT QUALIFIED TO DRIVE? JUST SAY NO!**

**KNOW THE FACTS, CONTACT YOUR UNION ORGANISER**

**Thank you** to the many thousands of members who filled in the RTBU Enterprise Agreement survey.

**Congratulations!**

The winner of the competition is **Quing Guo from the Rolling Stock Division of Metro.**



# ACKNOWLEDGING SERVICE TO THE UNION



**Darren Galea**  
Organiser

I recently had the pleasure of presenting two plaques to RTBU members for their long service and loyalty to our Union.

I presented loyalty plaques last week to Authorised Officers George Maniatis from Hawthorn Depot and George Thompson from Malvern Depot for their 30 years membership of our Union.

Congratulations to both Georges on their outstanding example of commitment to the movement.



# RTBU JOINS FORCES TO FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS

I was proud to be joined by comrades from all Divisions of the RTBU at the Fight for our Rights nationwide protest on March 4. This national day of action was the opportunity for the labour movement to protest against the attacks to the values, incomes, fair and equal opportunities and rights of working Australians.

Thousands of workers and unionists from across Victoria joined in the protest to fight for our rights at the rally. It was an incredible turnout. This is the first step of the push to throw out this rotten anti-worker Coalition Government and its attacks on basic working rights and conditions.

The RTBU will be part of this fight every step of the way and I thank members who made the effort to attend the rally. ■



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**Infrastructure Division**  
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**Rail Operations Division**  
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Organiser: Jamie Porter

**Workshops Division**  
Secretary: Paul Jumpertz

**Industrial Officer**  
Rima Tawil

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

