

RTBU EXPRESS

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Letter from Secretary

State Budget fails to provide the funding when it is needed



Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

On Tuesday 6 May the Victorian State Budget was announced. The RTBU read through the budget papers and considered public transport commitments thoroughly. One thing that stuck out was that it is obvious that this budget has left commuters out in the cold with serious improvement to our public transport system still years away.

This budget is just another example of a government hiding the devil in the detail. With the budget big on promises, it won't deliver improvements for many years to come. As members know, Victoria's public transport system is straining under extreme pressures resulting from a growing population and ageing infrastructure.

This year's budget announced funding for several major rail projects, but it leaves Victorians waiting 2 to 3 years for their commencement, with completion more than a decade away. This budget is a good start but doesn't go nearly far enough to fix the current problems that are facing our system. We need funding for today while planning for the future.

In the Budget the government announced the Melbourne Rail Link. From all assessments this is just a watered down version of the Melbourne Metro Rail Tunnel. Once again the devil was in the detail, the Melbourne Rail Link does not even have a defined completion date and it is still many years from starting.



State Secretary Luba Grigorovitch with Organisers Darren Galea and Grant Wainwright and Authorised Officers at North Melbourne

According to budget projections, Melbourne's metropolitan trains are expected to carry a further 17 million passengers in the next 12 months. Although this outcome is desirable, it seems unrealistic given there is no increase in funding for services to meet this demand.

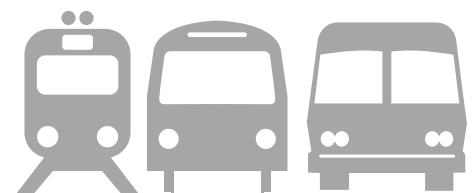
I am sure members can see that what the government has announced is funding for projects that are 'promises' in a bid to win the upcoming election. A good government doesn't just 'announce' projects that are years away. It needs to deliver when Victorians need them most.

Further, there was not one cent allocated to Trams. The RTBU has been calling for substantial funding to order new trams and carry out major overhauls of our ageing tram fleet for some time now and we are yet to see and financial commitments. Tram delays and cancellations are set to worsen following the state government's decision to snub tram maintenance and upgrades.

We are already seeing major delays and cancellations due to trams being unavailable and the decision to ignore the need for new trams and extra maintenance will just make matters worse. The state government needs to reconsider its decision to completely ignore tram funding in the budget. There is no doubt our tram network is in crisis, we have never experienced this level of cancellations resulting from defective trams in the past.

Given there is a state election looming, this budget seems like smoke and mirrors in a bid to win the election on public transport alone. All of these announcements are welcome; however no commitment to start construction until 2016 has been given which is unacceptable. The travelling public has every right to expect a reliable public transport network. ■

Luba Grigorovitch
State Secretary



Station Proposition Update

Rosters Update:

Previous rosters for the station grade included extended hours and negatively affected our members. These rosters pay and conditions were resoundingly knocked off by members who refused to participate in Metro's shonky voting scheme. These rosters are now no longer on the table.

Metro have confirmed that any new roster proposal will be Enterprise Agreements compliant and adhere to the following rostering principles that our members have asked for:

- 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 caused by the new roster
- Members will also retain day off patterns including the "4 days off" or "5 days off" that members were keen to protect
- Annual Leave relief ratios to be at least 1 for every 8 staff
- Costings will be done and on a confidential basis and members will be able to access the figures of what they will be earning.

Full Time Conversions

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

Recruitment

There is a lot about Metro's hiring processes that we dispute. We have fought to have an internal recruitment process and have ensured that where front line station staff are concerned any new recruits will be part time LSAs, so that existing staff are given priority in advancing their careers. We have never supported the hiring of outsiders into the higher grades.

In particular the Merit List has been the bane of our existence! The whole process which our members were made to go through was utterly ludicrous – apply for a job when you didn't know what it was, testing which gave results inconsistent with peoples capabilities- but what was really beyond the 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.

Earlier this month Metro confirmed that once the 100 FT conversions were complete the merit list

would be scrapped. Following this the company will revert to station based hiring with more input from local SM's. At the latest meeting on Friday Metro have attempted to go back on their word.

The RTBU organisers and delegates put Metro on notice that this would not be acceptable to us. There will be ongoing negotiations around this question and if deemed necessary by the membership further action may occur if Metro goes back on their promise.

Time Line

By now we know not to put too much faith in Metro's idea of a "time line". It is a rather fluid concept to them it would appear. However they have said that they are expecting to propose the rosters in May with implementation slated for June or July of this year.

Process

Metro have stated that they will not be running a vote on these rosters. However the RTBU will be conducting a union vote, to establish endorsement from the members before accepting any new roster. Metro is aware of and accepts this fact.

Members wishing for further information should always contact their local delegate, the Union office or Grant Wainwright on 0421 122 473. your local Delegate or the Union Office. ■

Grant Wainwright
Organiser

Kath Larkin
RTBU Women's Officer

Multi Modal Authorised Officers Update



Darren Galea
Secretary

After months of discussions an agreement has finally been reached between Metro and the RTBU in relation to the Multi Modal Authorised Officers (MMAOs). Although discussions were at times

heated, we are proud to report that we believe we have reached an agreement which is good for our current Authorised Officers (AOs), along with the new MMAOs.

The agreement reached is;

- All AOs working in the Multi Modal area will be employed by Metro and will operate under the current EA.
- Deployments will be assigned by PTV.
- Current AOs wishing to transfer over to the MMAO department will remain a Metro employee and will retain current leave entitlements.

- MMAOs will wear the same uniform as the current Metro AOs but with PTV branding instead of Metro branding. There will also be items such as ties that will have PTV branding. This will distinguish Multi Modal AOs from other operator AOs when working across the different modes.
- The MMAOs will be on exactly the same pay rate as current Metro AOs but this will be capped at Level 2. Discussions have already been had between the RTBU and Metro and we have expressed our disappointment about this decision. This is a fight that we will battle against Metro when the time comes as we believe that all AOs should be paid the same amount once training etc. is complete.
- The RTBU negotiated that Level 3 AOs who are successful in attaining an MMAO position will retain their existing Level 3 AO pay rate.
- The RTBU negotiated that current AO Crew Leader and Team Leader rates will remain the same for the MMAOs as per the EA.

- A draft roster has been developed that includes 4 rotating shifts similar to the current Metro AO rosters, including weekends.
- Southern Cross Station will be the depot for MMAOs
- MMAOs will be working across all modes of transport on the Metropolitan Network - train, tram, bus and V/Line.
- MMAOs will receive the same wage increases as according to the Metro Enterprise Agreement (3% June 2014 & 4% January 2015)
- The RTBU has had it agreed that at times MMAOs will need to sign on and off at locations other than the depot including tram and bus locations, similar to how the current Metro AOs operate.

If you have any further questions or queries please feel free to contact me on 0407 512 494. ■

Contact us

rtbuvic.com.au
(03) 9600 3030

Level 2, 365 Queen Street,
Melbourne, VIC 3000

E rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au
F 03 9600 3363

State Secretary
Luba Grigorovitch

Rail Operations / Administration
Organiser: Grant Wainwright

Infrastructure Division
Secretary: Kevin Killender

Admin and Salaried Division
Secretary: Steven Kozmevski

Rail Operations Division
Secretary: Darren Galea

OH&S, Industrial and Administration Officer
Thomas Moorhead

Admin & Salaried Division
Organiser: Bryan Evans

Workshops Division
Secretary: Paul Jumpertz

Infrastructure / Workshops
Organiser: Paul Ferraro

In-House Lawyer
Rima Tawil

Organiser Infrastructure Projects
Tony Matuszak

