

RTBU EXPRESS

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

RTBU DELEGATES CONFERENCE



**Luba
Grigorovitch**
State Secretary

The Rail Divisions held its annual Delegates conference at Victorian Trades Hall

on Wednesday 19 November. This conference is an all-day event where delegates from Rail Divisions of our Union come together to strategise, network and share their experiences about the varied companies within our industry.

This year's conference was based around the theme of Empowering Delegates. I believe that it is the Union's responsibility to ensure that our delegates have the right tools to be equipped to best represent our members. Our morning session featured an address from Brendan O'Connor MP, the Federal Opposition's Shadow Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, who promised that Federal Labor would stand by workers against attacks on penalty rates and stand by unions against attacks from the Liberals' Royal Commission witch hunt, and continue to work with unions like ours to make Australia's industrial relations system more equitable into the future. Brendan was followed by our National Secretary, Bob Nanva, who opened by remarking how impressed the entire Union from a National level was with the unity shown in Victoria in our latest dispute. He commended the membership on the fight which we collectively embarked on.

Delegates also participated in a panel discussion on the role of the 'Modern day union Delegate'. On the panel was Bob Nanva,



Victorian Trades Hall Council's Wil Stracke and the ACTU's Sally McManus. This was a great opportunity for robust discussion between delegates and panel members.

Victorian Trades Hall Council Secretary, Luke Hilakari also addressed conference, who briefed us on shipping company Alcoa's recent decision to sack its all-Australian crew on its vessel, the M.V. Portland, and replace them with cheap foreign crewmen. This only emphasised the need for transport workers to remain united and provide effective solidarity to one-another in the face of attacks from greedy employers given a free leash by the Turnbull Government.

The Conference broke into Divisional workshops in the afternoon, in which delegates discussed issues specific to their areas of work and brainstormed new ways of engaging with rank-and-file members. These workshops came together at the end of Conference.

I am pleased to report that there were lively contributions from the floor throughout the day. The RTBU Delegates Conference is not only an opportunity for our hard-working delegates to pick up new skills and share war stories, but for us to assert where we are going as one Union.

I would like to thank all Delegates from across the Rail Division's who made the effort to attend Conference.

Luba Grigorovitch - State Secretary

RTBU WOMEN INVITES YOU TO MORNING TEA

**THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER
11.30AM RTBU OFFICE**

**PLEASE RSVP FOR CATERING &
TO BE RELEASED FROM WORK**

BRINGING TOGETHER MEN AND WOMEN MEMBERS FROM ALL SECTORS OF THE RTBU

FUNDRAISE FOR THE BREAST CANCER NETWORK AUSTRALIA & PROSTATE CANCER FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

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NEW LEADER, SAME AGENDA: TURNBULL DELIVERS EMPLOYERS EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT



Rima Tawil
Industrial Officer

Almost one year ago, the current Federal Coalition Government sought to introduce Industrial

Relations "reform" legislation which delivered nothing more than an attack on the right of workers to bargain for fair wage increases and better conditions.

One year on, and under a new Prime Minister, this Government's absurd attempt to further strip away the rights of workers goes on.

An impasse in the Senate had previously delayed the Abbott and then the Turnbull Government's Fair Work Amendment Bill from becoming law - but a deal recently struck between Turnbull and the Senate crossbenchers means changes to the Fair Work Act 2009 (FW Act) have now been pushed through Parliament.

Whilst lobbying by the union movement and the Federal Opposition has forced many of the unfair and exploitative proposals to be dropped - in particular rules that put further restrictions on right of entry laws, the return of WorkChoices style individual contracts, the

option to sack workers on their holidays and sham restructuring arrangements - this has not stopped this Government from staying true to its anti-worker agenda and pushing through anything it can get through the Parliament that delivers for the bosses ahead of the Christmas break.

Key changes to the FW Act include:

- Further restrictions on your right to strike - a new requirement for protected action ballot order applications to be conditional on a majority agreement from all employees where an employer refuses to bargain. The amendments also include a limit on the ability of unions to take protected industrial action before genuine bargaining has begun.
- Greenfield agreements - increased power to employers negotiating greenfield agreements (enterprise agreements that are made between an employer and one or more unions in circumstances where the employer is establishing a new enterprise) to break deadlocks with the union by seeking approval by the Fair Work Commission (FWC) of their proposed greenfield agreement if no deal has been reached

with the union after a six-month 'negotiating period'. This amendment will take away the incentive for employers to engage in genuine bargaining and allows employers the ability to make unilateral deals that undermine the basic rights of workers to a fair deal.

- Unpaid Parental Leave - the addition of an obligation on employers to give employees a reasonable opportunity to discuss extending unpaid parental leave beyond the initial 12-month period, however the obligation doesn't compel employers to accept the request.

With a Federal election looming we can only guess what else this Government has in-store, but what we do know is that Mr Turnbull supported the Liberals' cuts to penalty rates, the minimum wage, rights at work and selling out of Australian jobs. The RTBU will not stand for these attacks on our members and working Australians and will continue to fight alongside our brother and sisters in the union movement to do what must be done to restore fairness and dignity to our workplace relations system.

RTBU FAREWELLS TWO RETIRING LEGENDS



Grant Wainwright
Organiser

The RTBU last month farewellled two legends - Comrades Clabby Williams and George Zanelli.

Clabby was a Delegate an OH&S representative an induction coordinator for MURL, worked closely with firies & copies to ensure all procedures around evacuation procedures were kept up to date.

George worked for almost 50 years at the one location doing a variety of different jobs. We wish both George and Clabby all the best in retirement and thank them for their exemplary many years of loyalty and service to our Union.



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Infrastructure Division
Secretary: Kevin Killender

Admin & Salaried Division
Secretary: Steven Kozmevski

Rail Operations Division
Organiser: Darren Galea

Admin & Salaried Division
Organiser: Jamie Porter

Workshops Division
Secretary: Paul Jumpertz

Industrial Officer
Rima Tawil

Infrastructure, Workshops & Labour Hire

Organiser: Bryan Evans

