

# RTBU EXPRESS

The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch  
**VOL 2 | Issue 13 | 22 July 2015**



## FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT TO STRIKE



### Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

The RTBU is preparing for protected industrial action against Metro in our fight for a fair

and decent outcome for members covered by the Metro Rail Operations Division Enterprise Agreement (Metro Operations EA).

Now that the Fair Work Commission (FWC) has approved the RTBU's application for a protected action ballot, RTBU members covered by the proposed Metro Operations EA will be receiving a postal ballot from the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) from this Thursday, asking them to vote on a series of questions as to whether they wish to pursue protected industrial action in support of reaching an agreement for a replacement EA with their employer.

The timeline for the protected action ballot is as follows:

**Wednesday 22 July** – Roll of voters closes at 5.00 pm

**Thursday 23 July** – Ballot opens – AEC posts ballot material to eligible voters

**Friday 7 August** – Ballot closes at 10.00 am. AEC to count ballot and advise of result

This gives RTBU members covered by the proposed Metro Operations EA a two week window to return their ballots.

If you do not receive a ballot by 30 July, please call the AEC returning officer (details below) to confirm if you are eligible to vote.

It is important that all members eligible to vote return a "Yes" vote in favour of protected industrial action. Metro management has consistently stonewalled on our Union's claims

for a decent rise in wages and conditions, despite our negotiating team's best efforts to bargain in good faith.

It has been a long time since we have taken industrial action in the Metro Rail Operations Division. A clear mandate for industrial action will place significant pressure on Metro alone. But to win this fight we must be ready to move and act as one Union when the time for strike action comes.

It is worth taking stock of how current industrial relations legislation in Australia deals with the right to strike. Under the Fair Work Act 2009, employees can pursue protected industrial action under set circumstances - namely, if it is in pursuit of reaching an enterprise agreement, after the expiry of an existing EA and where the FWC is satisfied that grounds for a protected

---

**"It is important that all members eligible to vote return a "Yes" vote in favour of protected industrial action."**

---

action ballot exist. Hence while there are existing avenues for pursuing industrial action under the law, the right to strike is significantly curtailed and is by no means guaranteed as a civil or human right from a worker's point of view.

That is why it matters so much when we take strike action. Should we pursue industrial action in Metro, not only will we be demonstrating our resolve to fight for better wages and conditions in our workplace - we will be affirming our fundamental right as workers to withdraw our labour in our collective interest. The right to strike is the worker's basic weapon from which all of our Union's collective power flows.

The American labour scholar, Paul Clark put it best:

"The only thing workers have to bargain with is their skill or their labor. Denied the right to withhold it as a last resort, they become powerless. The strike is therefore not a breakdown of collective bargaining - it is the cornerstone of that process."

Should members covered by the proposed Metro Operations EA vote in favour of protected industrial action, we will be in a position to enter industrial action in August. Our actions can range from a variety of items and include industrial action by all grades. Without any way to enforce valid travel or operate the network, we hope Metro will soon see reason and agree to negotiate for an agreement that includes terms and conditions acceptable to our members.

Despite Metro's unacceptable offer to date, the RTBU bargaining team will push on with negotiations in good faith towards reaching a fair outcome for members.

It is also important to emphasise that the leaderships of all Divisions of the RTBU are working closely together leading up to any industrial action that might be taken. Our Union's leaderships in the Rail, Locomotive and Tram and Bus Divisions (who are pursuing their own industrial action against Yarra Trams) all recognise the need in having to take industrial action in pursuit of claims relevant to their particular EAs. But the unity of purpose between our Union's Divisions can only have effect if it is reflected by our members on the ground. In the weeks and months ahead we must stand as one Union and be prepared to back each-other up with our feet.

Metro has been put on notice. It now comes down to us to stand as one Union.

**Luba Grigorovitch**  
State Secretary

---

**RTBU**  
The power of Union

Operations | Infrastructure | Workshops | Salaried  
[rtbuvic.com.au](http://rtbuvic.com.au) | (03) 9600 3030

Level 2, 365 Queen Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000 E [rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au](mailto:rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au) F 03 9600 3363



# RTBU STANDS FIRM ON BARGAINING



**Bryan Evans**  
Organiser

On Wednesday the ETU and APESMA announced the results of their respective votes to management at EA negotiations. As members are all

no doubt aware these Unions have elected to accept the offer of 2% and give up their right to bargain for 6 months by signing an MOU that they would not take industrial action during this time.

We respect these unions' rights to make these decisions - however the RTBU will not spend the next 6 months with our hands tied behind our backs knowing full well the scope of the changes Metro wish to implement.

Metro have agreed to hold two meetings per week, the first of which will be held this Wednesday at EGate where we can finally return to negotiating this agreement in good faith.

If members would like any further information about bargaining, please contact me directly on **0457 006 739** or **bryan.evans@rtbuvic.com.au**

# V/LINE ONGOING VISITS ARRANGED



**Jamie Porter**  
Organiser

Over the last few months I have been out and about visiting all 5 regional lines and have discussed the benefits of an

improved communication structure from Union → Management → Delegates → Stations and other workplaces.

It was great visiting all regional stations and being able to chat directly with our members at

V/Line. I am also proud we were able to recruit some new members along the way.

Moving forward I will be visiting two lines per month which will include a full list of stations and times that will be put out in future editions of *RTBU Express*.

I received great feedback and established point of contacts at every station to ensure we can avoid a breakdown of communications along the line.

These points of contact will be noted upon my next visit which will be completed over the coming months.

On top of this, meeting schedules have been organised for each line that will be attended by the Area Manager, Delegate and myself on a bi-monthly roster.

All lines will be conducted separately to ensure all relevant issues are being raised and meeting minutes will be distributed to all stations across the line.

If there are any issues that need to be raised in future meetings, please feel free to contact me on **0403 863 869**.

The RTBU is here for you.

# METRO RAIL OPERATIONS DIVISION EA UPDATE MEETINGS

RTBU Union officials will be visiting a location near you.

Please ensure you are in attendance to get a full update about your Enterprise Agreement.

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Monday 27 July	South Morang Station	2.30pm
Tuesday 28 July	Laverton Station	3.30pm
Wednesday 29 July	Lillydale Station	11.00am
Wednesday 29 July	Ringwood Station	1.00pm
Wednesday 29 July	Belgrave Station	3.30pm
Thursday 30 July	South Yarra Station	3.30pm
Friday 31 July	Carrum Station	12.00pm
Friday 31 July	Mordiallic Station	2.00pm

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Monday 3 August	Cheltenham Station	11.00am
Monday 3 August	Elsternwick Station	1.00pm
Tuesday 4 August	Williams Landing Station	3.30pm
Wednesday 5 August	Bell Station	9.30am
Wednesday 5 August	Reservoir	11.00am
Wednesday 5 August	Thomastown station	1.30pm
Thursday 6 August	Box Hill Station	2.30pm
Friday 7 August	Eltham	11.00am
Friday 7 August	Macleod Station	1.30pm
Friday 7 August	Ivanhoe Station	3.30pm

## UPCOMING RTBU WOMEN'S MEETINGS

Wednesday 22nd July 10.30 am Broadmeadows

Wednesday 19th August 10.30 am Ballarat Station

Wednesday 16th September 10.30 am Glenferrie Station

Wednesday 14th October 10.30 am Geelong Station

Wednesday 2th November 11 am RTBU Head Office (Annual Morning Tea)

December: RTBU Christmas party, details to be confirmed.

### Contact us

**rtbuvic.com.au**  
**(03) 9600 3030**

Level 2, 365 Queen Street,  
Melbourne, VIC 3000

E [rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au](mailto:rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au)  
F 03 9600 3363

**State Secretary**  
Luba Grigorovitch

**Rail Operations / Administration**  
Organiser: Grant Wainwright

**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

