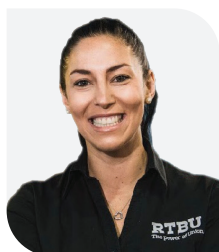


RTBU EXPRESS

The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch
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Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

METRO TUNNEL ON TRACK!

RTBU Officials recently completed a site visit of the Metro Tunnel Project.

A unique workplace and project with many considerations at each stage, the Metro Tunnel will play a hugely transformative role in the way public transport operates in Melbourne. The investment alone is phenomenal; The Metro Tunnel is the single biggest public infrastructure work underway in Victoria, consisting of two 9-kilometre rail tunnels, and is currently scheduled to be finished by 2025.

The tunnel will create a new end-to-end rail line from Sunbury in Melbourne's west to Pakenham & Cranbourne in the south-east and will introduce 5 new underground stations onto our network and link in with the planned airport rail link.

We entered the rail tunnel still in the stage of civil excavation and foundational work. This work of digging and concreting the tunnel in preparation for rail to be laid and securing inner spaces for access and stations to eventually be constructed is predominantly organised by the CFMEU. The RTBU is continuing to work and

share information with the CFMEU as has been done through all the Level Crossing Removal Projects to ensure these jobs remain good, safe union jobs from end to end.

Once operational, the tunnel will be serviced by the new generation High Capacity Metro Trains. While the trains have experienced numerous issues to date from design, to consultation, through to currently facing industrial action at the manufacturing facility, our Members have been there the whole way through. The new trains will eventually provide increased capacity and a natural evolution of turn-up-and-go rail services for Melbourne.

This additional capacity will ease Victoria's roadways by thousands of cars every day whilst also creating additional capacity within the city loop for additional services to run on other lines and providing hundreds of additional jobs in both build and ongoing operations.

Major investment in public transport like this tunnel, the airport link, suburban rail loop, level crossing removals and major line upgrades are a key area of interest for the RTBU in ensuring

stable and reliable pipelines of work, coupled with good conditions and proper operational staffing.

Many working people including our own Members recognise the importance of public transport in transitioning towards clean and sustainable energy sources.

Our Union will continue to campaign alongside other community groups to transform transport ownership, utilisation, integration and investment. The RTBU will continue to demand investment and planning that creates work, connects our community and genuinely puts people first.

Members have every right to be proud of their work in this industry, keeping Victoria moving and alive for us all is no small feat, and governments would be lost without you.

Luba Grigorovitch
- State Secretary

Delegate Training

We are pleased to announce that RTBU Delegate training is being run for the first time since COVID-19 halted all training union wide.

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We congratulate all newly appointed Delegates and look forward to working with them.

There are plenty of areas coming up where we plan to organise elections. If you feel there is lack of delegates in your area, please contact your RTBU Organiser.



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Victor Moore

Senior Branch Vice-President

STATION STAFF ASSAULTS

On Thursday 18 March RTBU Delegates at Flinders Street Station had their second meeting with station management regarding the recent assaults and threats made to station staff on barriers and platforms.

The meeting outlined a series of issues which have an important implications for all station grades.

The union Delegates got an agreement from management to run an awareness campaign about the need to report all threatening behaviour - both verbal and physical - on the internal reporting system as soon as possible. Management have agreed to facilitate staff release as quickly as possible to enable the reporting process to be followed.

The capture of timely information will enable a better overall grasp of the wide ranging anti-social issues that are occurring at Flinders Street Station especially as passenger traffic increases and special events return to the CBD.

Management are currently collating trends based on reports received from staff of verbal threats and physical attacks for our next meeting due in approximately 3 weeks. They will also provide feedback on a proposal for

refresher training for station staff. This training proposal is based on Front-Line Adaptive Communication (FLAC) training which has been put on hold throughout the pandemic and has not progressed the way it was initially intended.

Importantly the RTBU raised the issue of ongoing access to shared information. Understanding the trends of reported assaults, threats and anti-social behaviours is important to be made available for both ongoing scrutiny of Union Delegates and Health & Safety Representatives to better make decisions about improving safety at stations.

Too often there is a vacuum of crucial safety information regarding these issues and Delegates and HSRs should be able to play a more active and informed role.

Further, the RTBU has written to station management across the Metro Network to stress the importance and necessity of sharing critical safety information across the Metro stations network to enable the important Employee Safety Clause in the Metro EA to become effective.

Clause 3.28.3 Employee Safety of the Metro EA establishes a process to be followed following serious workplace incidents.

The Clause reads "Metro will undertake a risk assessment jointly with the RTBU at the stations where the highest incidents of physical and or verbal assaults and anti social activity have occurred in order rank and identify locations where staff are at the most risk and to prioritise counter strategies."

To identify and rank locations means we critically need accurate and prompt reporting of threats and assaults (both physical and verbal) in order to get Metro management to address these issues.

Out stations have also recently seen a number of vicious assaults on station staff and the process that we are currently undertaking at Flinders Street Station will be rolled equally across the network to ensure the safety of station staff no matter where they work.

We will keep members informed of progress on these important matters.

If you wish to let us know of any serious safety incident email us at safety@rtbuvic.com.au



Vik Sharma

Industrial Officer/Organiser

METRO STATION VACANCIES

Countless members have contacted us raising concerns about the high number of vacancies on the network. Staff shortage is putting excessive pressure on the members to cover the extra workload. In some instances, members are taking care of multiple responsibilities, which is completely unacceptable.

Patronage percentage is increasing every day and Metro is failing to recognise the risk of leaving the positions vacant/uncovered. Not only does this jeopardise the health of workers but there are operational risks associated

with this, which may lead to a worker making a mistake on the job and being dragged in by HR for a discussion.

We have written to the Minister for Public Transport, Ben Carroll MP regarding this issue and have since met with his office to discuss in greater detail. They are now speaking with the department of transport and we will keep members informed of any new updates.

We will be holding discussions around the network with the members/delegates and with the management to address this issue as

a matter of urgency. In the meantime, if you feel there is a health risk to you caused by the shortage of staff resulting in an unacceptable increased workload, immediately contact your organiser. We will keep you posted as the matter develops.

If you have any queries, feel free to ring me on 0413 363 923 or email

vik.sharma@rtbuvic.com.au.

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

Industrial Officer
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**Industrial Officer /
Organiser**
Vik Sharma





Darren Galea

Organiser

SHUNTERS SHUNTERS SHUNTERS

South Dynon

South Dynon was a shunting yard in the early 1950s, but in the late 1990s its shunting yard status was removed. Over the last ten years the RTBU has been working hard to rebuild this functionality and capacity.

The revamp of the South Dynon workshop kicked off in 2020. This revamp was to accommodate the Bombardier workshops, Bombardier and V/Line Yard Masters, and Shunters.

The revamp is currently at stage one, with a number of safety concerns that need to be resolved.

The Shunters and Yard Masters worked in harsh conditions to get the yard running over the last year and continue to do so each day to keep the trains running on time.

Thanks to Tim Ashcroft, Tom Ruff and Aaron Cutting who have always fought hard for better conditions for the Shunters and Yard Masters.

Geelong Shunting Car Park

We've been having many issues in relation to the car park facilities in the Geelong shunting yard. The issues have included congestion, for example, the shunters haven't been able to park their cars, or leave the car park due to being locked in by other vehicles.

The RTBU is requesting a separate shed provided for the shunters in the old cabin, or a portable facility up to safety standards, on the other side of the tracks. This would provide adequate space and remove the current issues present with the existing car park



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Caitlin Brown

Member Support Officer and Women's Committee Co-Ordinator

WORKING WOMEN ARE OUR UNION

We marked International Working Women's Day on Monday 8 March. International Working Women's Day: the day's full name has been rubbed out of popular consciousness for many years, but on this 110th anniversary in 2021, its full title bears repeating.

It is a title that should be reclaimed for working women everywhere. International Working Women's Day was inaugurated on March 8, 1908 by women garment workers in New York who went on strike to demand better pay and put an end to long gruelling working hours and inhumane working conditions in the deadly clothes-making industry. The first IWWD in Australia was held in Sydney in 1928, where women workers and unionists demanded equal pay, an 8-hour workday, a basic wage for the growing unemployed and annual holiday pay. This day was not started by the do-gooding governments or corporate bodies who claimed to celebrate it this year with their breakfasts, social media posts and pats on the back - International Women's Day is and always will be seared into the blood, sweat and struggle our shared union movement, because it was made by women workers and unionists.

IWWD this year has been especially harrowing and powerful, with the revelations of alleged sexual violence and victimising of women in Canberra politics throwing a spotlight onto the pervasive culture of sexism, misogyny, sexual violence, and victim-blaming of women in Australian workplaces and homes.

One third of women in Australia will experience sexual harassment, assault or violence in their lifetime.

Our Union was thrilled to join the March 4 Justice rally in Melbourne last Monday 16 March which took place nationwide in response to the revelations in Canberra politics and the Morrison Government's pathetic lack of response.

At the finalisation of our V/Line EA, the RTBU can proudly say we have gendered violence and sexual harassment clauses in all of our major Enterprise Agreements. We are the first union in Victoria to claim this great win for our Members.

RTBU members have long been fighting sexist attitudes and behaviours and are ready to always step up, fight against it and call it out for the benefit of all.

However, sadly, we know that sexual harassment, assault, and family violence is something many - too many - of our Union sisters are survivors of and will experience.

Fighting sexism, misogyny and sexual violence isn't just women's business - it's union business. Let's be proud and own it.

The RTBU Women's Committee will be meeting next at 11 am, 14 April, at the RTBU office, Level 2, 365 Queen Street, Melbourne.

For anyone who would like to get more involved in the RTBU Women's Committee, or anyone who hasn't been receiving our monthly meeting invites, please reach out to me via

caitlin.brown@rtbuvic.com.au

or 0448 569 178.



Contact us

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