

# RTBU EXPRESS



The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch  
**VOL 11 | Issue 2 | March 19 Tuesday 2024**



**Vik Sharma**

State Secretary

## OUR CONDITIONS ARE NOT FOR SALE!

After rejecting V/Line's sub-par enterprise agreement offer, RTBU Members from V/Line came together with support from the union movement to make their stance clear: **"Our conditions are not for sale!"**

We're getting their attention and you are making your mark. Congratulations and thank you for the Solidarity of all RTBU Members who have participated in the campaign so far.

Our Rally outside V/Line head office was a huge success with support from unions across the state. Speakers included Victorian Trades Hall Secretary Luke Hilikari, Maritime Union Of Australia Victorian Secretary Robert Lumsden, and Transport Workers Union Victorian Secretary, Mem Suleyman.

We thank all of the unions who have continued to support our fight. It is clear we're not alone in the struggle for decent wages and conditions against the state government!

Further industrial action announced at the rally has continued to build pressure on the government.

At the Fair Work Commission last week, V/Line finally provided the RTBU bargaining team with detailed information required regarding the costings and savings measures which V/Line maintain are necessary to comply with Victorian Government's Wages policy.

The RTBU has continued to meet with V/Line to bargain twice a week with a strong message: **all industrial action is avoidable if they take the bargaining seriously.**

If V/Line and the Government got serious and put key decision makers in the room, a genuine and sensible solution should not be far from reach.

With more actions notified leading into major events and public holidays, we are now getting the attention we need, and it is time for V/Line and the government to resolve this dispute.

Your fight is making history for regional workers fighting for a fair go as we continue to get incredible media attention showing public sympathy for the hard work you all do day-to-day.

During this fight, I have continued to work in building the support of other unions across the state who are all backing V/Line RTBU members in for this key clash. We thank all who have passed motions of support, sent letters, and attended rallies for their Solidarity.

Although this fight may feel testing, we know that the strength of our Unity will lead us to a strong outcome for all of our Members.

Stand strong, stand united!

**Vik Sharma**

Victorian Branch Secretary



## STOP PRESS

As a result of the RTBU's strong campaigning, we've successfully secured a State Government representative to join bargaining meetings and a commitment from V/Line to provide all costings and other financial information required to reach a deal. As a result, under the commitment of a 4-week intensive bargaining period, RTBU has withdrawn the notified industrial action.





## VLine EA campaign in full swing



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SOLIDARITY EXTENDS FROM - UNIONS BALLARAT

Comrade Vik - a message from Vik

Comrade Vik: Vik Sharma  
The Ballarat Regional Trades and Labour Council Incorporated - Trading as Ballarat Victoria Regional Ombudsman  
100 Sturt Street, Ballarat VIC 3240  
03 5322 2882 E: info@ballaratunions.com.au

Dear Comrade,

We are proud of our long term support for the Ballarat Regional Trades and Labour Council Incorporated - Trading as Ballarat Victoria Regional Ombudsman.

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Some of the letters of solidarity received from Regional Trades and Labour Councils.

## A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN HER UNION!

RTBU Delegates and Representatives pictured celebrating International Women's day at the rally, and attending the "40 Years of Anna Stewart Memorial Project" Dinner!



### Contact us

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**Admin & Salaried Division**  
President: Victor Moore  
Secretary: John Nicolopolous

**Rail Operations Division**  
Secretary: Darren Galea

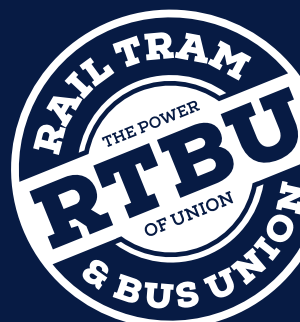
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**Infrastructure, Workshops  
& Labour Hire**  
Organiser: Bryan Evans  
Organiser: Joe Dennis

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**Industrial Officer**  
Amanda Swayn  
Callen Parsons

**Operations & Admin  
Organiser**  
Sally van Bragt  
David Paton







**Bryan Evans**

Organiser

**Matt Purcell**

Organiser

## EA BARGAINING DELIVERS RESULTS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE, ROLLING STOCK & LABOUR HIRE MEMBERS

### 96.5% VOTE YES!

It's a great time to be a Member of the RTBU.

#### Metro Infrastructure Agreement

Members from Metro Trains Infrastructure have sent a loud and clear message, with an impressive 96.5% YES vote for the new Enterprise Agreement.

Members asked for change, and the RTBU made sure Metro delivered!

- **17% & Increase to Allowance:** 17% pay increase, back paid to 1 July 2023 as well as increases to the All-Purpose Allowance
- **Inclement Weather Penalties:** Inclement weather penalties – first time secured in the MTM Infrastructure agreement
- **Overtime Access:** Overtime offered to internals prior to using contractors
- **Much more & no conditions lost!**

Thank you to each Member who took the time to cast your vote. Your voice has played a crucial role in securing this momentous outcome for our industry, both now and in the future.

This achievement marks a significant step forward in securing better pay and conditions for all RTBU Members.

#### Metro Rolling Stock Agreement

The progress doesn't stop there – the Metro Rolling Stock agreement is also making strides, with the final draft of their agreement nearing completion.

With a focus on the **No Forced Redundancies** clause, ensuring job security for all has been the guiding principle of negotiations.

This draft will soon be presented to Rolling Stock Members for the access period.

#### Labour Hire Agreements

In other news from around the traps, the RTBU

has been working hard to clean up third-party contractors across the network. We're proud to report that the majority of these contractors have now signed EAs with the RTBU, benefiting all Members and preserving the industry standard.

While there are still several companies on our radar, they have been put on notice.

Our experience has been that most of these companies want to do the right thing for our Members and worked collaboratively with the RTBU throughout the enterprise agreement process.

The RTBU remains unwavering in our commitment to securing better pay and conditions for all members, because this is our industry, and unity is our strength.

We will continue to keep members in the loops with updates, if you have any questions don't hesitate to reach out to your local Delegate or Organiser.





**David Paton**

Organiser

## AROUND THE TRAPS

With the Metro Operations EA now certified by the Fair Work Commission, back pay will be hitting members accounts in the coming weeks.

This EA shows the results that can be achieved when we all band together to accomplish something great.

Meetings have started with Delegates, Organisers and Management to troubleshoot the implementation of rostering and classifications. No doubt there will be some minor teething issues as the EA rolls out, but the RTBU is ready to work alongside members to ensure all Members benefit from their new EA.

### Safety is Union Business

Assaults continue to remain an issue, with the RTBU working around the clock to ensure issues are addressed.

No member should ever be subjected to physical and verbal assaults on the job. The RTBU will always fight to ensure Managers take Safety seriously.

The RTBU has been working with a variety of organisations to combat the rise in assaults and continues to advocate within the newly formed Safe Public Transport Committee.

We ask all Members to report incidents to your employer and the RTBU via [safety@rtbuvic.com.au](mailto:safety@rtbuvic.com.au).

### Disputes

Metro has recently gone on the attack, cancelling long standing flexible work agreements that have been in place under the guise that they suddenly can no longer afford it.

Attacking employees at their most vulnerable times is against everything we as a union fight for.

We have, and will continue to, fight this at every level. We will take this to the Fair Work Commission, and we will shame and expose the lack of empathy that Metro has for its employees wherever we find it.

Working closely with workplace Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) we have identified a number of incidents of staff working in unacceptable conditions, endangering their health and safety. After being notified, we have taken and strong stance and we are demanding that Metro immediately address this situation and rectify any and all long standing faults.

### Tunnel Project Update

In an announcement that will shock no one, the tunnel project is experiencing delays and unforeseen problems.

To name but a few: unrealistic completion dates, platform doors that blow open as trains pass through, CCTV cameras in lunchrooms, change facilities without locks, public toilets in areas without CCTV or staff presence,

and in one bizarre instance, green platform information and red emergency buttons in a staff meals area!

We have been meeting regularly with Delegates and staff appointed to tunnel positions, along with management to identify and address these issues. Touring the future stations at Parkville, State Library and Arden, we are also ensuring that Metro adequately address training and staffing levels at the new tunnel stations to provide a safe, adequately staffed workplace.

### Stronger than ever

We have more, and more diverse, Delegates across the Network than ever before.

We have also built a record number of enthusiastic, committed activists, and a list of members ready to step up for Delegate or HSR positions.

Every day we're out visiting different stations. If we haven't seen you recently, we'll be in front of you in the near future! Get in touch if you'd like to organise an on the job meeting.

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