

RTBU EXPRESS



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Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

GEMCO MEMBERS UNANIMOUSLY ENDORSE NEW AGREEMENT

The Gemco Rail Enterprise Agreement (EA) currently covers members at Dynon and Altona workshops and horrifyingly expired back in December 2016.

Historically, members at Gemco Rail had not enjoyed the benefits of an industry standard agreement, experiencing lower redundancy provisions, high levels of casualisation, lagging payrates and no entitlements to bonus days. This was largely due to the fact that Gemco took over the Dynon workshops post privatisation and therefore the agreement didn't benefit from established Public Transport Corporation (PTC) conditions.

Gemco members have long sought industry standard conditions and were not prepared to back down in their fight to achieve them. The lengthy negotiations came to a head when 100% of members endorsed industrial action across the affected sites. After two weeks of bans being implemented and members tightly sticking to their guns, the company reached an agreement with the members.

The conditions fought for and won constitute the foundation of rolling stock agreements across the state and it is great to see Gemco finally come to the party with this agreement.

Members have won five unconditional bonus days per year, an entitlement available to most members across rolling stock and infrastructure, yet also a favourite for employers to target for removal.

Increased redundancy provisions have also been included, which will see a jump in the cap from 12 weeks at 10 years' service to 19 weeks. Status quo provisions will also now be incorporated into the dispute resolution procedure which is a fundamental clause that empowers members to put a stop to any issues, creative interpretations or downright toxic plans that any given company may have.

With the sign off of this EA, some of the other things members have also won are;

- A 15% over four year pay rise to be back paid which takes a great step in closing the gap between Gemco and the rest of the industry.
- A casual conversion clause enabling long term casuals to elect to be made fulltime, protecting against ongoing casualisation.
- Rostering protection for shift workers, giving members a right to refuse unfair hours.

- A progression structure ensuring members are given the appropriate opportunities to pick up additional skills and competencies.

Long serving members can be heard speaking fondly of the days the entire industry was united working under the one banner of the PTC. The reality is that the industry is still united, but it is not our employer that unites us, it is our union.

There is no room for disparity of conditions in rolling stock, this fight was about achieving one set of conditions across the state, and by taking industrial action and sticking together, members at Gemco have demonstrated what can be achieved by being members of their industry union, the RTBU.

The wins in this EA were achieved by members sticking together. United we stand – Divided we fall!

Luba Grigorovitch
- State Secretary

RTBU DELEGATES CONFERENCE – SAVE THE DATE

ATTENTION ALL DELEGATES AND WOMEN'S ADVOCATES,

The RTBU Annual Delegates Conference is fast approaching and will occur on Wednesday 5 September 2018.

Further details and an invitation will be communicated shortly.



RTBU
The power of Union

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Darren Galea

Organiser

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR CONDUCTORS ON TRAINS

For some time now, the RTBU has been campaigning for better safety for railway workers. We know that front line rail workers receive abuse whether it be physical or verbal, on a daily basis. This is not okay which is why the RTBU has begun a campaign to introduce tougher legislation for assaulting a public transport worker, increased Authorised Officers and two-up for all front line workers.

Through pressure from the RTBU safety campaign, we have managed to get V/Line to agree to a Risk Assessment for conductors travelling on trains.

We recently established a working party with Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) and Delegates from each region of V/Line around Conductors de-training passengers from trains to road coaches and for travelling on road coaches during line closures.

We are proud to say that the RTBU through working closely with representatives have come up with a new work instruction to help support all conductors when they need to travel on rail

replacement coaches.

Off the back of that, we have put further pressure on the company in relation to the escalated assaults that continue to occur on the V/Line network. Thus far in 2018, there have been more than 1,000 incidents reported that V/Line staff have experienced. This is absolutely disgraceful and staff do not deserve to go to work and be abused.

Because of this, we have got V/Line to agree to establishing another working party to get a risk assessment organised for conductors de-training passengers from trains and road coaches. The process of Conductors de-training passengers and escorting them to and/from road coaches is one that leave Conductors vulnerable and at risk of abuse which is why the RTBU wants to work towards mitigating these risks of abuse.

The first risk assessment meeting occurred on Friday 6 July 2018 where the relevant people from V/Line and the RTBU all got around the table to discuss the parameters around this.

Since then, another meeting has occurred and further discussion will occur at the third meeting on 6 September. While this is still at its early stages, it is a long process to ensure that all bases are covered.

I would like to thank Delegate Jeff Ford along with other Delegates and HSRs who have been involved for their assistance in getting this organised.

The RTBU will continue to put pressure on the Ministers office and the various operators to provide better protection and safety for employees.

The RTBU also wants to encourage members to continue to report these incidents when they occur to both the RTBU at safety@rtbuvic.com.au and V/Line. Remember that no incident is too small or large to be reported. If incidents aren't reported, then it makes our argument much harder as we have no statistics to rely on.



Cathy Birch

Organiser

ABUSIVE CALLS AND GERMY PHONES – A NORMAL DAY FOR PTV CALL CENTRE MEMBERS

For our members working at V/Line and Metro, you may not be aware that we have members at many other organisations – Probe, Transclean, Public Transport Victoria (PTV), VicTrack, Wilson Security and Bombardier to name a few.

The RTBU has been running a safety campaign which raises the profile of staff being assaulted at work. We have met with Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan to insist that a public awareness campaign be run, and penalties for those who assault public transport workers be increased in line with those for emergency workers.

Staff in the PTV call centre are frequently on the receiving end of calls from angry, desperate, lost, tired and overwhelmed passengers. Too often our members are abused by callers, who yell, swear and intimidate them. The abuse they cop every single day affects their mental health, in some cases staff go off sick during their shift as a result of the stress.

Often these members take calls from Metro and V/Line staff and unfortunately sometimes these staff are abusive to our comrades. Unfortunately, staff in the PTV call centre only have access to the limited amount of information that

the companies provide them with, they do not have access to all the information necessary to succeed in their role. So please, next time you begin to get frustrated with the staff at the PTV call centre, please stop and remember that they too are a part of the RTBU family and they don't deserve to be yelled at or spoken to wrongly.

For our members working at Probe's Call Centre for PTV, LXRA and MTM enquiries, staff 'hot desk' which means that they don't have their own desk. They move into a desk someone has just vacated, sharing headsets, keyboards, phones...and...surprise...germs. Probe was also not supplying anti-

bacterial wipes for their workers who are consistently hot desking. I am pleased to report that on learning this, the RTBU started a petition to be signed by members. Because of the petition, Probe has since committed to alcohol wipes always being available to all agents and have communicated where they will be found and how to get them replenished.

Nobody goes to work to be abused and the PTV call centre workers are no exception. It is not acceptable. The RTBU salutes staff working in difficult circumstances and is working with Delegates to address these ongoing issues and basic human rights.

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