

RTBU EXPRESS



The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch
VOL 5 | Issue 19 | 19 November 2018



Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

STATE ELECTIONS ARE AROUND THE CORNER

With the state election on our doorstep, all candidates and parties are speaking about Public Transport and investment in rail. While RTBU members have continued to work tirelessly over the past three decades of financial drought, it is refreshing to see public support for an improved rail network.

No matter who is successful at this election or who holds the balance of power, we must continue to fight for progress that delivers on the needs of our industry, and most importantly RTBU members.

To get the message across and keep the ball rolling in a new term of government, the RTBU is compiling a list of demands and issues requiring attention. We want to see continued investment in the network, but also structural change that delivers better governance and provides greater attention to the needs of staff throughout Victoria's rail renaissance.

In developing this document we have held discussions with numerous Delegates and Members to best understand specific issues

and identify best practice solutions. This collaborative effort makes our case stronger and such intel will help to maintain pressure on the government.

To improve the network we are calling on the government to commit to supporting the following demands:

- Staff all stations: A safe, reliable and efficient rail system relied on skilled staff mediating the passenger/ infrastructure interface. All new stations must be fully staffed from first to last train as a matter of urgency.
- 2-up staffing on barriers for the safety of frontline staff who are too often subjected to abuse.
- A new regional train maintenance facility to deal with growing demand and reliability on the V/Line network.
- Infrastructure Evaluation Vehicle (IEV) to be taken off Metro to improve oversight of reporting on track condition.

This core infrastructure safety function must not be run for the sake of profit.

- Full time work for all safety critical maintenance work: Safeworkers who are responsible for managing the safety of all other rail workers working in the rail corridor must have the security of full time work to enable them to speak out on issues of safety.
- Additional Train Controllers: Train Controllers are currently working large amounts of overtime in good faith to keep the network running. These long hours increase risk associated with fatigue and additional numbers are required to ensure the network can run more safely and more reliably.
- Bring PTV call centre back in-house: currently outsourced to Probe who employ a highly casualised workforce. Employees are subjected to enormous levels of verbal abuse and are provided with little support. These workers are required to hold a deep understanding of journey planning, disruptions and timetables and perform a critical and ongoing role. As such it must be brought back into the hands of PTV.

If any members would like to contribute their ideas to the further formation of RTBU demands, please don't hesitate to send an email to rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au.

Luba Grigorovitch
- State Secretary

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Darren Galea

Organiser

AOs AND PSOs WORKING TOGETHER

Members would remember that in September this year negotiations were had that allowed PSOs to travel on trains. The negotiations were long and heavy and this was to ensure that RTBU members were in a strong position going forward.

Thanks to the hard work of Delegates, the RTBU was able to come to an agreement with The Police Association (TPA), Victoria Police, Public Transport Victoria & the Government around the role of PSOs and AOs moving forward.

This agreement that was finally reached has delivered job security for the AOs, making sure that PSOs were not able to perform AO duties, and also confirming that the minimum numbers of AOs will not decrease, in fact we reached agreement to increase the number of AO's over the following year.

This would not have been possible without the hard work of all the Delegates during



negotiations who quickly made them self available when the prospect was put forward.

The RTBU & the TPA have arranged for AO Delegates, PSO Delegates and relevant representatives and Victoria Police to work together collaboratively. Consequently workshops with the relevant parties will be organized to get a better understanding of how we can strengthen this working relationship.

As soon as the dates are decided Delegates will be notified and are encouraged to attend at least one of the sessions.

These meetings will be crucial for better communication and interaction between the AOs and PSOs and I look forward to working with everyone for the betterment of the travelling public.



Bryan Evans

Organiser

2019 EAS

When roaming the worksites of the Victorian railway industry, you make many observations. One observation that some of you may have heard me reference before is that members who have been around since privatisation talk nostalgically about the glory days of the rail. The days where all members regardless of classification worked for a single entity, and were united by that fact. You see evidence of this in station masters who got their start cleaning Ballarat workshops, or the rolling stock maintainer that got their start as a way maintainer, the fitter that is now a depot manager. An attack on one, was an attack on all, and the world was a simpler place.

These type of statements, as accurate as they may be, are often misguided, a condition instilled by employers to isolate members, break groups and ultimately divide and conquer. The reality is quite different. The reality is, if an employer makes a break through and wins a dispute in the outer reaches of the network, other employers sit, watching just waiting to roll

out the same strategy elsewhere, sometimes because management are being opportunistic, and at other times its borne from the necessity to remain competitive.

This is no better demonstrated by the new HCMT depot at Pakenham, whereby the RTBU refused to sign their Greenfields agreement on the basis that it holds significantly inferior conditions to its MTM counterpart. Noting that, if all goes to plan this depot will maintain approximately half of the Metropolitan fleet, you can bet your bottom dollar that MTM are going to want what they are having!

Likewise, the RTBU has long sought to standardise conditions for similar work across all facets of the rail, it is our view, that no matter where you work in the industry you should have the same conditions and if we have a break through on a condition, we will make it our mission to roll that out across the industry. So the fact is we are all still united, the outcomes of battles fought no matter where in rail has the ability to affect our entire membership.

The difference now, it is not our employer that unites us, it is our union.

The industry is changing, there are more trains running, new rolling stock requiring new skills, limited access to track to undertake maintenance in both metropolitan and regional corridors, safety requirements are tightening up across the board and inland rail is coming to renew the freight network. All this needs to be taken into consideration for the major 2019 round of bargaining across where our largest agreements with Metro, V/Line and Bombardier are negotiated, ultimately setting a benchmark for the conditions across our entire industry.

All members regardless of whether they are covered by the agreement in question needs to pay attention and do their bit, as the battles fought in the 2019 round of bargaining will ultimately affect every member across the network. We have a lot of change to deal with and fights to fight next year, however we have never been stronger, our members never more organised and never more hungry for a win.

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