

RTBU EXPRESS

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

State Secretary

NSW DISPUTE & THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

Many members would be aware that over the last few months, NSW Trains and Sydney Trains employees have been fighting for their rights and conditions with proposed protected industrial action planned to have taken place over six weeks in January and February.

However, the State Government has put a stop to this, blatantly disrespecting a workers' right to withdraw their labour and take industrial action.

Spanning over six months, the RTBU NSW has been negotiating with Sydney and NSW Trains for a fair and reasonable Enterprise Agreement for their members. For more than six months, Sydney and NSW Trains have continued to reject claims for basic wages, conditions and job security.

With the NSW population booming, the pressures put on rail staff are increasing, with staff being forced to work large amounts of overtime. Rail staff in Sydney are constantly expected to work on rostered days off to be able to cover the services that need to be run. Without these staff working the overtime, NSW trains were forced to cancel many services and had to resort to running a weekend timetable.

It is disappointing to see that the workers who work tirelessly to keep the network running are being denied claims for basic wages and conditions. Sydney and NSW Trains are refusing to provide commitments for staff to have some certainty around days off. These workers have families, so how are they supposed to manage their family and fatigue levels if they don't even know when they will get a day off?

Since the planned industrial action was ordered to be suspended by Fair Work Commission Senior Deputy President John Hamberger, NSW and Sydney trains employees are once again left with their hands tied, unable to fight for their rights.

The right to strike and withdraw labour is a fundamental basic human right and one that is far too often denied. The rules are broken and the rules need to be changed.

Andrew Constance, I remind you that the decisions you make not only affect the RTBU members in NSW, but the entire union movement. When you touch one, you touch all.

It is however bigger than just in NSW. The right to strike is protected under international law. As recently as 2017, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations have found Australia to be in breach of its obligations in relation to the right to strike under ILO Convention 87 and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights respectively.

The latest decision by Australia's industrial umpire to our members in NSW exacerbates the situation even further.

It is imperative that the RTBU stands firm against this breach in all forums. I will be raising this at our upcoming RTBU National Executive meeting as I believe that the RTBU needs to lead the charge in the campaign against this breach.

The Victorian Branch of the RTBU will stand with our comrades in NSW to the very end of this dispute to protect our right to strike and fight for decent working conditions.

Luba Grigorovitch

- State Secretary

DELEGATES MEETING DATES – MARCH 2018

- 5 March – **V/Line Eastern**
1000 – 1100hrs
- 7 March – **Metro Clifton Hill**
1000 – 1100hrs
- 7 March – **V/Line Control**
1130 – 1230hrs
- 8 March – **V/Line Shunters-Geelong**
1100 – 1200hrs
- 13 March – **Metro NSS / CCTV**
1100 – 1200hrs
- 14 March – **Metro Northern**
1100 – 1200hrs
- 14 March – **North Melbourne AOs – C & D Delegates**
1000 – 1100hrs
- 14 March – **TPH AOs – C & D Delegates**
1200 – 1300hrs
- 15 March – **Metro Burnley**
1230 – 1330hrs
- 15 March – **V/Line Southern Cross**
1100 – 1200hrs
- 16 March – **Hawthorn AOs – C & D Delegates**
1200 – 1300hrs
- 16 March – **Malvern AOs – C & D Delegates**
1000 – 1100hrs
- 21 March – **MMAOs – B & D Delegates**
1100 – 1200hrs
- 21 March – **Metro Caulfield**
1300 – 1400hrs
- 22 March – **V/Line Western**
1100 – 1200hrs
- 28 March – **Metro Central – Flinders Street**
1100 – 1200hrs
- 28 March – **Wilson Security**
1400 – 1500hrs
- 29 March – **Metrol, Timetables, Rosters & Signallers**
1000 – 1200hrs
- 29 March – **Metro Drivers Allocation**
1330 – 1430hrs





Darren Galea

Organiser

V/LINE AROUND THE TRAPS

Conductor body camera trial

Over the last year, V/Line have been moving forward with plans to run a trial of body cameras for conductors.

In 2017, the RTBU got involved in the proposal and had RTBU representatives and HSRs from each region involved in a working party to further discuss the potential of a trial. To date, it has been a long road with many hold ups from Government.

The RTBU has conducted a survey of all Conductors about their opinion on the body camera trial. We will be in touch with all Conductors shortly regarding the results from the survey and the road forward.

With the deadline having closed on Friday 23 February, we are now in the process of collating responses.

There are a number of both benefits and concerns with such a trial taking place which have been raised in the working party meetings involving V/Line Management, RTBU Officials, RTBU Delegates from each region and HSRs from each region.

If the trial were to move forward, the RTBU has raised concern around the following:

- Specifications of what device will be used - Including weight and size.
- Whether the device will record 24/7, or only on command when the Conductor feels unsafe.
- Where liability rests if the camera is lost, stolen or damaged.
- Public reaction.
- Whether footage can be used against Conductors during disciplinary action.

These are all issues that will need to be addressed in a risk assessment that will occur in due course.

Conductors travelling on road coaches

Conductors travelling on road coaches has been a major concern for some time now, with no process in place in relation to looking after the wellbeing of the conductor in the event of them travelling on a replacement road coach.

This concern was originally raised in one of the RTBU Delegates meetings in the V/Line regions many months ago. Since then, the RTBU has managed to get together Delegates, HSRs and representatives from across all regions to consult on this issue.

Through a Risk Assessment with the assistance of the Victorian Trades Hall Council OHS team, we have been able to create a procedure to benefit the wellbeing of every conductor when traveling on road coaches.

Every single conductor should have received a copy of this procedure, and if you are yet to receive it, please contact your manager asap.

This is great win for the conductors and a step towards better protection in these potentially risky situations.



LATROBE STREET BRIDGE UPDATE

Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan has responded in a letter outlining the steps being taken to improve safety around the LaTrobe Street Bridge.

It has been advised by the Minister that V/Line are producing their own design for a temporary solution and will be funding the installation.

V/Line intends to add those works to planned occupations scheduled for March and April 2018 and is confident that the temporary solution will be installed by the end of April 2018.



Cathy Birch

Organiser

DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

As part of my role as an organiser, I attend meetings with members as their support person or representative. Often these meetings are investigations which lead to disciplinaries and the disciplinaries themselves. Quite the hardest part is representing members who have been tested for alcohol or drugs and found to be 'non-zero' for alcohol or 'non-negative' for drugs. All of the operators in our industry have a zero-tolerance approach. The work is safety critical and the law requires the enforcement of this. In certain circumstances you may even be committing a crime.

Staff who are not regular illicit drug users or even occasional illicit drug users have been terminated for a once-only-ever use which coincided with a drug test. There is no

requirement for the employer to prove the level of the substance present caused impairment. There has even been a termination of worker who had a 'friend' spike his drink without his knowledge.

I understand some members are not happy with their employers. I understand staff satisfaction is often very low, but you still need to treat your employment with the respect it deserves. If you have made a bad decision around alcohol or drugs or given in to peer pressure do not present yourself for sign on if you are not fit for duty.

Conditions and wages in the rail industry are better than many other industries (and this is because there has always been a strong union

with high density fighting for those wages and conditions.) and for most of our members they will struggle to find another job with similar wages and conditions if their employment is terminated.

So next time you are in doubt of whether you would test positive to drugs or alcohol, don't roll the dice and take the chance. It just isn't worth it.

If you require help, there are many organisations and hotlines that are available for confidential support and advice such as DirectLine who can be contacted on 1800 888 236.



Bryan Evans

Organiser

ARTC UPDATE

After two years of bargaining and months of industrial action, there has been a significant breakthrough for ARTC members. ARTC have maintained that the Federal Workplace Bargaining Policy is the root cause of its attack on Victorian Members conditions and now that statement will be put to the test. The Policy has now changed to the extent that it no longer applies to ARTC in its entirety, allowing for genuine negotiations to occur without interference from an anti-worker Liberal Federal Government.

This should mean that maintaining an industry standard agreement is well within reach of ARTC, as is offering an industry standard pay increase. The company is currently taking stock of its new position but have indicated that they may be able to improve on previous offers, which have been nothing short of horrendous. With bargaining set to resume in a few weeks, time will tell. In the meantime, it appears there may be a much welcomed light at the end of the tunnel for ARTC members.

Regardless, the RTBU will continue the fight for a fair agreement.



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RTBU WOMEN INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS

You're Invited to join us during the week of International Women's Day to celebrate the achievements of women.

Join us for four great events spanning from **Tuesday 6 March 2018 – Thursday 8 March 2018.**

Feminist Movie Night **Tuesday 6 March 2018**

- Movie screening of Battle of the Sexes
- Drinks & Nibbles: 5:30pm
- Screening: 6:30pm
- Location: ETU Office, 200 Arden Street North Melbourne 3051
- Free event - RSVP essential as there are limited places
- Female RTBU members only
- Dinner and Drinks provided

RTBU Annual International Women's Day Conference **Wednesday 7 March 2018**

- 10am – 2pm
- Morning tea and lunch provided
- CEO Panel including the CEOs from Metro, V/Line, PTV and Yarra Trams
- Guest speakers and workshops
- RSVP ASAP to request your release

IWD Breakfast **Thursday 8 March 2018**

- Time: 7:30am – 9am
- Location: ANMF Building, 535 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
- Men and women encouraged
- All food and drinks included so RSVP is essential

IWD Rally & March **Thursday 8 March 2018**

- Join the RTBU Contingent for the International Women's Day Rally
- Men and women encouraged
- 5:30pm at the State Library
- March as a collective with women from across the Union Movement and wider industries

Attendance for the Movie Night, Breakfast and Rally is on a voluntary basis so we will be unable to release you from shift if you are rostered to work.

We hope to see as many members as possible to help us celebrate International Women's Day 2018.

YOU'RE INVITED

TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL
WOMENS DAY WITH US



FEMINIST MOVIE NIGHT

Battle of the Sexes

Female Union Members only

**TUESDAY
6 MARCH 2018**

Drinks & Nibbles: 5:30pm
Screening: 6:30pm
Location: ETU Office
200 Arden Street, North
Melbourne 3051

IWD BREAKFAST

Men and Women welcome

**THURSDAY
8 MARCH 2018**

Time: 7:30am - 8:30am
Location: ANMF Building
535 Elizabeth St,
Melbourne VIC 3000

To RSVP or for any queries, contact the RTBU on:
03 8630 9100 or women@rtbuvic.com.au



Proudly supported by

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CONFERENCE

COME TOGETHER WITH RTBU WOMEN FROM ACROSS THE TRANSPORT INDUSTRY!

DATE: WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH 2018
TIME: 10AM - 2PM
LOCATION: RTBU HQ LEVEL 2, 365 QUEEN ST, MELBOURNE 3000

THE DAYS EVENTS INCLUDE: A Q&A SESSION WITH THE CEOs OF MAJOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT COMPANIES, SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKERS, AND AN INDUSTRY UPDATE FROM RTBU BRANCH SECRETARY LUBA GRIGOROVITCH

RTBU Women

RSVP (FOR RELEASE AND CATERING PURPOSES) [WOMEN@RTBUVIC.COM.AU](mailto:women@rtbuvic.com.au) ☎ 8630 9100

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