

RTBU EXPRESS



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Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

SAFETY FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT WORKERS

For too long, public transport workers have been facing physical and verbal abuse from the travelling public. With assaults continuing to worsen over the last few years, it is time that the Victorian Government stand up and make a change to protect public transport workers.

No worker deserves to be abused at work. When trains are cancelled or delayed, or simply people are disgruntled by the transport operator, often this anger is taken out on the human face that might sell tickets or provide customer service.

Public Transport workers are proud of the work we do and want to feel safe in serving the community. Therefore, the RTBU is running a safety campaign to pressure the Victorian Government to introduce legislation and minimum sentencing for assaulting a public transport worker.

While this only affects a minority of the population, this legislation will make a big difference to our members safety on the job.

With over 150 assaults on front line public transport workers in the past two years, it is time action was taken to protect you, the workers who keep the system moving. Unfortunately, the RTBUs calls for increased safety measures such as two-up Conductors and Barrier Staff have been ignored and rejected by both Government and the companies.

While safety should be the number one priority, it seems that profits are once again coming first, and the safety of RTBU members, public transport workers is being put at risk every day.

In Victoria, Emergency service workers who engage with the public are protected by strict legislation and heavy penalties.

It's time this is applied to essential services too!

Unfortunately, in the last week we have seen this legislation blatantly ignored by a Judge who came to the decision that two women who severely assaulted an ambulance officer would not be jailed for their crimes. This is an absolute disgrace.

A roadshow of meetings is currently occurring across the network in both V/Line and Metro to inform members and brief them on the campaign. At these meetings, workplace motions have been passed and petitions signed by staff at those locations. Along with this, the RTBU will also be putting up the below motion at this weekend's ALP State Conference.

If you are wanting to get involved or hear more about the campaign, please contact the Union Office on 8630 9100

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PREAMBLE:

Customer service workers across our public transport network do an important job ensuring passengers can easily use the system, offer any support necessary and help manage disruptions to keep the network moving.

While these customer facing roles offer many benefits to our community such as enhance the amenity of the network to all passengers, improve the interface between the public and the transport operator, and ultimately stand as the human face of our sustainable public transport system, it is front line service staff that are too often on the receiving end of abuse from a dangerous minority of the travelling public.

Recent years have seen a spike in abuse towards front line public transport workers. In the past two years alone over 150 incidents have been reported leaving customer service staff feeling more vulnerable than ever. Whether it be verbal,

physical or psychological abuse, no worker deserves to be subjected to such pressure in the workplace.

Following failures of employers to address these matters within their organisations Victoria must take action to protect these vulnerable employees in their public workplace in order to not only support the safety and amenity of our public transport network, but also ensure that public workplaces are safe workplaces.

MOTION:

Noting the growing impact and danger imposed by assaults on front line staff across our public transport network, this Conference calls on the Victorian government to legislate tougher protections and fund a public awareness campaign to support front line public transport workers. Safety at work must be the number one priority, and this matter is of urgent importance.



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Darren Galea
Organiser

GUARANTEED FORTNIGHT

For some time now, there have been issues in V/Line relating to the guaranteed fortnight which is in the V/Line Rail Operations Enterprise Agreement 2015 – 2019. Issues were around a staff member arriving to work late and the company docking their guaranteed fortnight from the staff member.

Under clause 59 of the V/Line Agreement, this should not have occurred. The V/Line Agreement guarantees a 76 hour fortnight for staff, and under no circumstances should a staff member have this taken away from them.

The issue was raised with the RTBU and since then, the guaranteed fortnight issue has now been resolved. However, we have since become aware that our members have received letters from V/Line which highlight instances where they have been late to work on numerous occasions. Some instances raised by V/Line go back some three or even five years.

V/Line states that the letters are not a formal warning, however, they go on to say that the letter will remain on the individual employees file and that further instances of lateness may

result in disciplinary action.

This is unacceptable and the RTBU has written to V/Line demanding that the letters be retracted asap. Since then, we have met to discuss the issue and the RTBU has been attempting to work through this issue with V/Line management.

If this is not eventually resolved in coming weeks, the RTBU will be formally disputing this and this issue could end up in the Fair Work Commission to be resolved.



ANNUAL E-GATE BBQS

Branch Secretary Luba Grigorovitch and Organiser Bryan Evans at the annual E-Gate BBQs for Metro Infrastructure workers.

Thanks to all members who attended one of the three BBQs throughout the day and night

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