

# RTBU EXPRESS

The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch  
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## WHY IS THE RTBU RUNNING THE PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PUBLIC HANDS CAMPAIGN?



**Luba  
Grigorovitch**  
State Secretary

While members working for Metro & Yarra Trams have overwhelmingly called on the RTBU to run this campaign, the Union believes that it is the right campaign to run

in the interest of not only RTBU members, but also the Victorian community. You know as well as I do that Victoria's public transport system is being pushed to the limit and RTBU members are on the front line.

With a rapidly increasing population, pressures on our train and tram services will only get worse.

So you'd think the Victorian Government would be making sure every available cent in the public transport budget goes into more infrastructure and better services. Wrong.

If you follow the money trail, you'll see that the taxpayers and commuters of Victoria aren't just paying for local public transport, they're also paying to subsidise the public transport systems of other countries.

The current operators of the rail and tram franchises are Metro Trains Melbourne and Keolis-Downer Rail Victoria (Operating as Yarra Trams).

Metro Trains Melbourne is 60 per cent owned by Hong Kong-based MTR Corporation, and the remaining 40 per cent is shared equally by UGL Rail Services and John Holland.

In turn, MTR Corporation is 76 per cent owned by the Hong Kong Government.

Victorians have helped swell the coffers of MTR Corporation, with its subsidiary the Melbourne trains operation making a solid \$223.8 million in net profit after tax since taking over the contract at the end of November 2009.

Metro Trains Melbourne hasn't released its 2016 financial year figures yet, so you can probably add another \$50-60 million in profits for 2015-2016 on top of that.

As for the tram operations, KDR Victoria is a joint venture between the French transport operator Keolis, and the Australian-based engineering firm Downer. Keolis is the senior partner in the joint venture, with a 51 per cent stake.

Keolis is a massive global business based in Paris, and it is 70 per cent owned by – you guessed it – the French Government, through the state-owned railways company French National Railways Corporation (SCNF).

The French Government has every reason to say merci beaucoup to Victorians for the money that we send back to Paris, via profits from the Yarra Trams Franchise.

The Yarra Trams contract has so far generated over \$78 million in net profit after tax for its owners.

All up, the two operators have raked in over \$10 billion in revenue, and \$350 million in profits have been drained from the Victorian public transport system over seven years under the franchise agreements.

Which begs the question, why can't our own government run public transport?

The answer is: of course it can. In fact, it already does.

V/Line is successfully run by a Victorian Government-owned corporation, so there is no reason why the metropolitan train and tram services can't be run under the same model.

The argument that the private sector is always better at running public transport doesn't stack up – the experience of commuters around the world, especially in Melbourne, shows otherwise.

And the argument for contracting out to the private sector becomes completely farcical when you follow the money trail and realise that the private companies are actually owned by other governments.

Can you imagine the Hong Kong Government paying the Victorian government to come in and take over the Hong Kong metro? No way! They wouldn't be so stupid.

That's why the Rail, Tram and Bus Union has launched the Public Transport, Public Hands campaign, and already over 4,000 people have signed our online petition.

The time has come for the Victorian Government to stand up and admit that the privatisation of public transport has been an expensive and embarrassing failure.

Everyone makes mistakes, but wise men and women own up to their mistakes and learn from them. Only true fools dig in and continue once the depth of their error becomes apparent.

With the contracts for the metropolitan train and tram franchises about to expire this year, the State Government appears to be digging in – negotiating behind closed doors to roll over the existing contracts. But there is still time to change course.

Premier Daniel Andrews has an opportunity to show genuine leadership, to show the State Government has learned from the mistakes of the past, and to return Melbourne's train and tram services to the people.

**If you are yet to support the campaign please do so by visiting <https://www.publictransportpublichands.com/> and signing the petition. If you would like to get more involved contact the office directly on 8630 9100. ■**

**Luba Grigorovitch**  
- State Secretary



**RTBU**  
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# WELFARE CHECKS



## Jamie Porter

Organiser

It's that time of year again, where management is deciding to call members in for welfare checks around sick leave. It is important

that all members are well aware of their rights.

Members are being called in whether they have exhausted all of their entitlements or even if they have only taken a few days off.

All members have the right to representation; never go into meetings without your Delegate or Union Organiser present.

Meetings can be rescheduled to ensure your representative is able to attend.

Ensure you know the detail as to why you are being called in and never go into a meeting blind.

**Personal leave is an entitlement that your Union has fought for.** You do not have to go into personal detail as to why you have been sick and ensure that you have medical certificates and or statutory declarations.

Most of our EA's have 15 days personal leave per year. If you have any questions about welfare checks or personal leave entitlements specific to your Enterprise Agreement – Call your Union Organiser or the Union office on **8630 9100.** ■



# BLACKBURN SIGNAL BOX



## Joe Maisano

Organiser

Due to the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRA) and the upgrading of the infrastructure, the

Safeworking panel at Blackburn station has now been permanently closed.

The last operational day of the signal box was 16 December 2016.

The Blackburn signal box has been in operational for over 30 years and the closure of this signal box will mark the end of an era.

While ultimately this closure means the loss of two staff members at this location, the RTBU has fought to ensure that no jobs have been lost, with both staff members to be relocated.

Ringwood signal box will now house the new upgraded panel which officially became operational on Sunday 5 February 2017. ■



# RTBU INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CONFERENCE



**Hannah Scott**

Member Support Officer

For the seventh year in a row, the RTBU is proud to announce that our RTBU International Women's Day Conference will once again be held.

Each year, the conference brings together women and men from across the public transport industry to celebrate the impact women have had by organising in our industry.

Members from all Divisions of the RTBU are invited to join the festivities and attend the conference. The conference is on Thursday 9 March and runs from 10:00am – 2:00pm. It provides opportunity for members to discuss industry wide issues and we encourage **all members** (female and male) to attend.

It is a great opportunity for both female and male members to come together and celebrate some great achievements in the movement.

In male dominated industries such as ours, women's voices are often lost. This is why 'RTBU Women' encourages all women to be more active and find your voice.

As a result from last year's conference, the RTBU created Women's Advocate roles to provide a female voice for women in the industry. With the original target of 20 Women's Advocates before the end of 2016, I am proud to say that we now have 29 elected Women's Advocates from across different areas.

The Women's Advocates have now undergone training and we have already seen them do some great things. We hope to further develop this role in the future and look forward to seeing what other great ideas can come out of this year's conference.

Similar to previous years, we have a commitment from Metro and V/Line that all women who are interested in attending will be offered the opportunity to be booked off (paid as per roster) pending operational requirements.

**If you wish to attend, please email me at [women@rtbuvic.com.au](mailto:women@rtbuvic.com.au) ASAP so your release can be requested.**

International Women's Day (IWD) this year falls on Wednesday 8 March 2017. It is celebrated annually and recognises the achievements of women in the union movement and across world. Women over many decades and centuries have fought long and hard for the conditions which we have today, however the fight is never over.

As part of International Women's Day, the RTBU will march in the IWD rally. I would like to encourage all members to join us on Wednesday 8 March.

Any members wishing to walk in the rally, meet at the RTBU Office at 5pm and we will all walk together.

If you would like any more information about the RTBU IWD Conference or the rally, please don't hesitate to get in contact with me on **0448 569 178**. ■



## RTBU Women

### ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CONFERENCE

**Thursday 9 March 2017**

**10:00am – 2:00pm**

**RTBU HQ: Level 2, 365 Queen Street Melbourne**

**RSVP** (for release and catering purposes)

[women@rtbuvic.com.au](mailto:women@rtbuvic.com.au)

8630 9100



## WRAW

Women's Rights At Work

Come together with RTBU women from across the public transport industry.

The days events include a Q&A with CEO's of major Public Transport companies, guest speaker ACTU President Ged Kearney and an industrial update from RTBU Branch Secretary Luba Grigorovitch.

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# Metro Trains

(Controlled by the **Hong Kong** Government)

+

# Yarra Trams

(Controlled by the **French** Government)

...have cost Victorians **\$10 billion in subsidies** while  
Metro and Yarra Trams have made over  
**\$350 million of profit.**

While we're left with run-down trains, cancelled  
services and daily delays,

**OUR TAXES ARE GOING OVERSEAS** AND  
MAINTENANCE STANDARDS ARE FALLING.

Daniel Andrews has the opportunity to **keep**  
**Victorian money in Victoria**, FOR VICTORIA.

Tell Daniel Andrews to

**#makePTpublic**

Find out more:  
[www.publictransportpublichands.com](http://www.publictransportpublichands.com)



## Contact us

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**State Secretary**  
Luba Grigorovitch

**Infrastructure Division**  
Secretary: Jon Saw

**Admin & Salaried Division**  
Secretary: Steven Kozmevski

**Rail Operations Division**  
Organiser: Darren Galea

**Admin & Salaried Division**  
Organiser: Jamie Porter

**Workshops Division**  
Secretary: Paul Jumpertz

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

**Industrial Officer**  
Jessica Mekhael

**Rail Operations /  
Administration**  
Organiser: Joe Maisano

