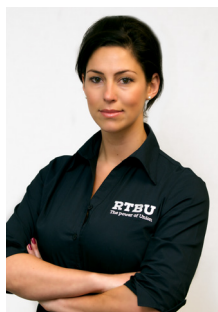


RTBU EXPRESS

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MEXICAN STANDOFF FOR REGIONAL RAIL REVIVAL



**Luba
Grigorovitch**

State Secretary

With growing population, cars, traffic and fuel prices, the need for Australia to find efficient and economical ways to

move passengers and freight has become more pressing. Developed countries are adopting rail for bulk transport and Victoria must keep pace.

Post-war Australia has over fetishised the car. Railways have been starved of funding while motorists have dominated our infrastructure politics and left public transport its poor cousin.

With disintegrating track condition, a lack of rolling stock to meet demand, and constant unreliability, V/Line has long awaited a fresh gust of wind for its sagging sails. Finally the tides are changing and the 2017/18 Victorian budget will inject V/Line with the funds to continue Victoria's long project to bring rail into the 21st century.

Dubbed the Regional Rail Revival, we can expect to see a boost to rail maintenance, upgrades to the Gippsland Line, further level crossing upgrades on the Warrnambool Line and a series of service enhancements.

Upgrades to the Warrnambool Line, Bendigo/Echuca Line, Ballarat and North East Lines are also on the cards pending top-up funding from the federal Government. Also included is a scoping study for Airport Rail, but when it comes to rail investment, politics is everything and getting major projects funded can be similar to drawing blood from a stone.

Unfortunately there is mixed emotions about this project as the federal government has been quick to deflect responsibility towards Victoria but we all know that major infrastructure projects are historically federal and shared contributions. It appears the Victorian State Government is keen to get their fair share of the funding owed by the Turnbull Government.

Here Turnbull has an opportunity to show his commitment to regional economic development and an opportunity to show maturity above the daily politics of pork-barrelling and vested interests, but with a week to the federal budget Victorian commentators are tightening the screws.

But while the federal government continue to withhold funding for the Melbourne Metro Rail Tunnel, and now Regional Rail Revival, the Mexican standoff will continue.

But that's only half the story. The Federal Government in Canberra still needs to come to the party on equitable funding. In recent years Victoria has received only 8.5% of the entire Australian infrastructure budget despite being 25% of the population and fastest growing state.

The Federal Minister for Infrastructure is working hard to hide from the responsibility of funding these critical works for which the Commonwealth has responsibility.

But while this standoff continues, we Victorians are forced to dig deep and look after our own future interests, going it alone to fund long awaited rail projects.

While the best time to build a railway is always 20 years ago, the second best time is now. Without federal funding (taxed from our wages) the burden will be carried by Victoria and the road to recovery longer.

These much needed upgrades are in much need of further support to keep pace with growth and patronage. The federal government needs to fulfil its asset recycling scheme commitment of \$1.5 billion to Victoria for productive infrastructure and ensure Victoria's regions get the attention they deserve. Victoria's regions have been screaming for rail funding since Kennett swung his axe.

Budgets are about choices and Victoria has made clear what is being prioritised. It is time now that the Federal Government and Malcolm Turnbull fund rail for our future.

This budget expands on the positive momentum in the rail industry at the moment and delivers many bread and butter needs to prepare Victoria for worsening traffic, rising cost of living and an economic uplift for regional Victoria. ■

Luba Grigorovitch
- State Secretary



ACTING IN HIGHER AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR MEMBERS



Darren Galea

Organiser

It has come to our attention that a number of members have been paid incorrectly. When

acting in higher duties throughout the year, many were not being paid the correct rate for when they took their annual leave and were not being paid at the higher rate when taking public holiday credits which were accrued while acting in higher.

It was recently discovered in a working group at Metro that in excess of fifty members were not paid correctly for acting in higher. With the hard work and assistance of our Delegate and members, we were able to rectify the problem and ensure the members were paid their correct entitlement.

The Metro Trains Melbourne Rail Operations Enterprise Agreement 2015 - 2019 provides for Acting in Higher at clause 3.12. In regards to payment, the clause provides that not only must you be paid for acting in higher for the work

you do, but that you must also be paid a portion of your Annual Leave at the higher rate if you qualify for it under clause 3.12.6. Further to this, if you accrue Public Holiday Credits when you work on a Public Holiday and take pay at the rate of time and a half, when you take the PH Credit when you return to your usual role, it should be paid at the higher rate at which you accrued it.

This is a great win for our members, and it shows that when we work together we are stronger. ■

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL - A CALL FOR SELF-TESTING



Bryan Evans

Organiser

Every single railway worker is aware that you need to be 0.0 whilst at work, it has been no secret. If

there is a single thing that the RTBU and the company agrees on it is that no one should be at work whilst impaired by drugs or alcohol. It is a risk to yourself, your workmates and your employment.

Like any OHS hazard, it is risk assessed and in part managed by various testing regimes as prescribed by the rail safety act. There are typically 4 methods in which a member may be tested:

- Upon commencement of employment or as prescribed by the category of medical required for your position.

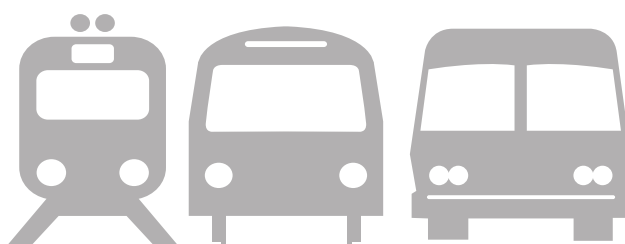
- A site wide random test, where members are often employed to choose who will and will not be tested.
- A member is showing signs of impairment identified by somebody who is trained to do so.
- After an incident in the workplace.

Unfortunately a large number of members who turn up positive tests, haven't nicked off to the pub for lunch, but rather have had drinks the previous night and woke up with no reason to believe they were impaired by alcohol. If we can all agree that we do not want people affected by drugs and alcohol at work, why then do we not add the appropriate levels of control as we would any other safety risk.

If drug and alcohol testing is truly about minimising risk and all about safety, then surely adding another level of control in the form of discreet self-testing facilities at all rail workplaces would give our members the information required to make an educated decision and remove themselves from site before starting work and creating a risk for themselves and others.

Many companies in rail provide them, it's time for others like Metro and V/Line to get on board.

In the meantime, if you are unsure if you are fit for duty, take sick leave, that is what it is there for, do not run the gauntlet. ■



Delegates meeting dates for May 2017

- 2 May – **Metro North Melbourne AOs A & B Delegates** – 1000 – 1100hrs
- 2 May – **Metro TPH AOs A & B Delegates** – 1200 – 1300hrs
- 3 May – **Metro Clifton Hill** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 3 May – **V/Line Central** – 1130 – 1230hrs
- 9 May – **Metro Hawthorn AOs B & C Delegates** – 1200 – 1300hrs
- 9 May – **Metro Malvern AOs B & C Delegates** – 1000 – 1100hrs
- 9 May – **Metro Central (Flinders Street)** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 9 May – **V/Line Northern** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 10 May – **Metro Northern** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 11 May – **Metro NSS / CCTV** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 12 May – **V/Line South West** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 16 May – **V/Line Southern Cross** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 17 May – **MMAOs B & D Delegates** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 17 May – **Metro Caulfield** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 22 May – **V/Line Eastern** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 24 May – **Metro Burnley** – 1100 – 1200hrs
- 25 May – **Drivers Allocation** – 1330 – 1500hrs
- 25 May – **Metrol, Timetables, Rosters & Signallers** – 1000 – 1200hrs
- 31 May – **Metro Clifton Hill** – 1100 – 1200hrs

REGIONAL RAIL LINK (RRL) AUDIT

Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) is conducting an audit into the RRL. The focus is to look at the realisation of expected outcomes and benefits as well as any risks or issues that have impacted its success.

VAGO is interested in getting an understanding from RTBU members on this issue so if you would like make a contribution please send any comments to amedeo.daprano@rtbuvic.com.au (With subject line VAGO RRL Audit).

As RTBU members, we want to hear from you! Your comments might relate to service delivery, passenger movements, parking, crush loads, wheel wear, materials, engineering technical and any info you may have heard around the traps and what it all means for the commute between Melbourne and Geelong.

MAY DAY 2017 - FAMILY DAY AND MARCH

Workers of the World Unite

10am – 2pm, 7 May

Lygon St (Outside Trades Hall)

Activism | Rides | BBQ | Stalls | Music |
Speeches | Workers Rights | Demonstration

**For more information: 0488 305 088 and
search May Day 2017 on Facebook**



VICTORIAN BUDGET SUMMARY: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Fully Funded by Victoria:

- Gippsland Line Upgrade (\$435 million)
- Enhancing Network Safety: reducing platform gaps, expanding Train Detection Warning System, rewrite Book of Rules and Operating Procedures
- Eight more train services to Werribee in the shoulder peak
- 50 additional tram services on NW corridors (57, 58, 59)
- Installing tram priority infrastructure along high patronage routes such as High Street, Kew; Smith St, Fitzroy.
- Tram stop accessibility upgrades
- 10 new E-Class Trams and investment in supporting infrastructure
- Permanent extension of Night Network
- \$85 million towards preparing the rest of the network for High Capacity Metro Trains
- Continuation of Level Crossing Removal Project
- Station upgrades to facilitate better passenger movement around Flinders Street, Southern Cross and Richmond Stations
- Hurstbridge Line Upgrade Stage 2 - planning and development
- More station car parking across metropolitan stations
- \$316.4 million for V/Line infrastructure maintenance upgrades
- Shepparton Line Upgrade and Additional Services - New train stabling and crossing loop to facilitate new services from 2020 - two more weekday bus services from Seymour to Shepparton in the interim
- V/Line Classic Fleet life extension
- Warrnambool Level Crossing Upgrades - 13 more to enable the removal of current speed restrictions
- 39 new VLocity carriages - funding also for package of design works to redesign for longer haul/capacity/accessibility/buffet etc.
- 100 new car parks and new bus interchange at Ballarat Station
- New Stabling at Kananook on Frankston Line
- Increases in Train, Tram and Bus Services

Pending Partial Federal Funding:

- Surf Coast Rail Stage 1 (\$110 million)
- Warrnambool Line Upgrade (\$100 million)
- Bendigo/Echuca Line Upgrade (\$91 million)
- Ballarat Line Stage 2 - Ararat and Maryborough (\$39 million)
- North East Line (\$40 million)
- Gippsland Line Upgrade Stage 2 - Avon River Bridge (\$95 million)
- Airport Rail Link - business case (\$10 million)

Contact us

rtbuvic.com.au
(03) 8630 9100

Level 2, 365 Queen Street,
Melbourne, VIC 3000

E rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au
F 03 8630 9122

State Secretary
Luba Grigorovitch

Infrastructure Division
Secretary: Jon Saw

Admin & Salaried Division
Secretary: Steven Kozmevski

Rail Operations Division
Organiser: Darren Galea

Workshops Division
Secretary: Paul Jumpertz

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

Industrial Officer
Jessica Mekhael

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

