

# RTBU EXPRESS

The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch  
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**Vik Sharma**

State Secretary

## 2023 VICTORIAN BUDGET UPDATE

We attended a special briefing on the Victorian budget for 2023-24 and have since done a deep dive on the detail of the official budget papers to understand how and where money is being spent.

This information helps us plan and prepare for changes across the industry such as new technologies, new services and locations across the state to keep your union strong to deliver the best outcomes for members.

This budget provided an update on projects underway and already announced within the public transport industry, along with a raft of new initiatives that the RTBU has continued to advocate for.

### Major highlights of the budget are:

- » Metro tunnel has been announced to open a year ahead of schedule in 2025 with additional money allocated for train testing and recruitment of staff
- » A further new 23 VLocity trains to meet growing demand
- » Additional 25 level crossing removals, making it now 110 to be completed by 2030. 70 have now been successfully removed
- » A \$111 million in addition to the baseline V/Line budget to support improved regional operations, reliability, punctuality & maintenance
- » Funding to expand the Kananook train maintenance facility, supporting the return of Frankston trains to the city loop in line with the opening of the Metro Tunnel. This announcement supports maintenance skills and capacity following the closure of the Westall depot, something the RTBU has advocated for in recent years
- » Funding to build a new station at Tarneit West and upgrade Boronia Station

- » The ongoing Next Generation Trams program works have been funded to facilitate the new trams along routes 57, 59, 82:
- Essendon depot stabling upgrades
- Critical safety upgrades at key stops
- Showgrounds & Moonee Ponds termini upgrades and additional siding capacity to meet future needs
- » 200 extra services to be introduced:
- additional weekend return services for the Shepparton, Warrnambool, Ararat and Echuca lines
- more frequent weekend services on the Geelong, Ballarat, Seymour and Gippsland (to Traralgon) lines
- an additional Sunday service between Sale and Bairnsdale
- additional Saturday and Sunday night services for Bendigo
- an additional morning peak service between Castlemaine and Bendigo
- service uplifts on the Hurstbridge and Mernda lines including additional peak service
- » Funding to upgrade and increase capacity of the South Dynon maintenance facility to meet the needs of the growing VLocity fleet
- » \$650 million Melton upgrade that will remove 4 level crossings, provide extra stabling, build a new Melton Station and upgrade other stations to support 9 car VLocity fleets.

Works across the state remain in full swing with a clear pipeline of work in place for the years to come. The RTBU is working firmly on the operational readiness of new infrastructure and the circumstances under which it will be

staffed.

Continued expansion of services will continue to show strong growth in patronage and demand for trained staff to support passengers and provide services safely as RTBU members continue to work hard to accommodate and support improvements across the network.

Should members have any questions or wish to get more details on budget items or other transport projects, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

**Vik Sharma**

Victorian Branch Secretary

### FLEXIBLE WORK ONLINE INFO SESSION

RTBU Industrial Officers will present on the new laws for Flexible Work Arrangements and how members should approach the request process.

This session will be hosted for all available and interested members at **11am, Thursday 15 June**, for one hour online via Zoom.

Use the QR code below or the following link to join the info session: <https://tinyurl.com/RTBUFWASession>

Email [rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au](mailto:rtbu@rtbuvic.com.au) for more information.



**RTBU**  
The power of Union

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## Bryan Evans

Organiser

# BARGAINING IN FULL SWING



Major enterprise bargaining is now under way across Metro with V/Line imminently commencing.

Operations, Infrastructure and Rolling Stock agreements are all in the mix for both companies at a critical moment where we have the opportunity to determine how we approach the future of rail on our terms.

With cost of living pressures at economic centre stage, we must also not miss the opportunity to empower members with the industrial power and EA clauses to best combat an unpredictable future that serve to ensure rail can remain a job for life.

Over the life of the new EAs we will see the opening of the Metro Tunnel, new rolling stock,

additional services, new technologies, changes to franchising, new depots, fleet retirements, new ticketing systems and the impacts of automation.

We've heard from members across the industry and as such, our bargaining teams and delegates remain focused on claims that give members job security, access to fair processes, better work life balance and genuine career opportunities. Classification structures, career progression, training qualifications, job security and consistency for part timers are all critical in this respect.

Now is our chance to set the agenda across the industry and we must get it right. The RTBU will not take a backwards step - this is not a matter of what we are going to give up to achieve these

claims, it's a matter of what we must fight for to achieve these gains.

Building and cementing the power, wages will follow. It is the claims that empower members to control change, have a seat at the table and raise relevant dispute that will be the ones worth fighting for.

And if the companies don't recognise the importance of the RTBU's core claims, they will be front and centre of industrial action taken we will make no hesitation to take.

We are one industry, one network and one union. We are RTBU.



## David Paton

Organiser

# HELP FOR FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

For individuals experiencing family and domestic violence, reaching out for help can be daunting and filled with uncertainty. To address this issue and provide a lifeline to those in need, the RTBU have established a code word system to allow members to communicate without the need to explain their situation over the phone or email.

Including a reference to "Gallipoli Station" in any communication with the union will help us identify and appropriately support members facing family and domestic violence situations.

This code word serves as a way for members to confidentially notify the union that they are experiencing family or domestic violence. By using this code word, individuals can communicate their distress without explicitly stating their situation, thereby preserving their safety and anonymity in the workplace.

The RTBU treats all communications with utmost confidentiality. Once the RTBU is aware of your situation, we will provide you with essential resources and assistance. These may include connecting you with local support services, offering legal advice, providing information on counselling options,

and helping you navigate the complex process of seeking protection orders or accessing safe accommodation.

Additionally, the RTBU can advocate for workplace measures that can help ensure your safety. This could involve adjusting work schedules, providing additional security measures, or offering temporary work reassignments to minimise contact with the abuser.

Remember, help is available, and you are not alone.

### Contact us

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