

# RTBU EXPRESS



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

## V/LINE OFFER REJECTED, INDUSTRIAL ACTION TO ESCALATE

Following the actions of RTBU members, on Friday 23 February V/Line officially tabled an offer with the RTBU bargaining team. Unfortunately, they missed the mark.

The offer included a 15% wage increase, made up of a 3% increases per annum, a "Modernised Operations Allowance" of 1% per annum, and 0.5% cash payment paid on 1 July each year for the life of the agreement.

While the offer starts to make incremental steps towards addressing our claims, it falls short and contains significant attacks on Members' rights and conditions. For example, the offer:

- Demands that Members drive up to 80km or 1hr a day to sign on at various locations, as part of the master roster.
- Demands the right to roster up to 10 hours at single time per day without any financial benefit.
- Removes additional shift counting, which will see a reduction in take home pay for members.

V/Line claims that their changes are worth a 3% increase, that takes the wage figure up to 15% from 12%. This is an insult to members potentially needing to travel an additional 2 hours a day in addition to a 10hour shift just for measly 3% increase. The bargaining team is resolute, that although we are open to new practices which generate efficiencies, we will not be selling our conditions.

Furthermore, V/Line's offer also:

- Fails to adequately fulfill our job security claims.
- Fails to fulfill our work life balance demands, and attacks members existing work life balance.
- Fails to address numerous other union claims.

After consultation with the bargaining team, the RTBU formally rejected V/Line's offer and strategised next steps in the campaign.

In response to V/Line's approach to bargaining and their attack on Members' conditions, we

have resolved to escalate the industrial action by notifying V/Line of a 13 hour stoppage on Friday 8 March.

Congratulations to all members participating in action across the state. With your steadfast commitment to the campaign we continue to make progress and will continue to keep members updated throughout the process.

**Support each other. Our strength as an industry union comes from our ability to act as one. Where you are off shift, stand in solidarity with V/Line members taking action to push for a speedy resolution. Remember, an injury to one is an injury to all – so from across the industry let's organise, organise, organise!**

**Vik Sharma**  
Victorian Branch Secretary



**Bright & early, RTBU members in Geelong stand together for a fair deal!**





## Darren Galea

Secretary Rail Operations Division

# READY FOR 2024

It's been a long 12 months of EA negotiations.

The Metro Trains EAs has been a giant step forward Members rights and conditions thanks to the unity and focus of RTBU members.

V/Line continues to hold out while RTBU members ratchet up the pressure for a fair deal. Both of these campaigns have shown the strength and power of union members when they stand together as one – an unstoppable force that can only be created when workers join and drive their union.

While EA campaigns show the power of unity every four years, it is what happens in the period between bargaining that demonstrates the ongoing value of union membership.

I've commenced scheduling monthly delegate meetings across the state for the coming year. These meetings which are held for each work

area and major location, are your primary forum to raise concerns, notify issues and maintain pressure on employers to live up to the values they espouse.

These meetings are the key portal to create change locally and, most importantly, ensure that the conditions and entitlements that we win in EA negotiations are enforced.

Your Delegates play a vital role in these meetings. They are the eyes and ears of the union in your workplace. They listen, consult, investigate and engage.

In a single year, we notify hundreds of issues across the state and work to resolve those issues with management. This outlet to get things fixed is a privilege that only RTBU members enjoy.

From simply raising a concern through to high quality representation in the Fair Work Commission, RTBU membership is the only ticket that will give you the access you need.

It's already a big year and it's only February! Make sure you keep in touch with your Delegates and be sure to say g'day when I'm in next in your neck of the woods.

Your support through the EA campaigns is what will ultimately deliver the conditions members deserve. Enforcing them is the ongoing challenge that we are always ready for.

If you are interested in becoming more active or involved, contact your Delegate or Organiser today!



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### Admin & Salaried Division

President: Victor Moore  
Secretary: John Nicolopolous

### Rail Operations Division

Secretary: Darren Galea

### Workshops Division

Secretary: Paul Jumpertz

### Infrastructure, Workshops & Labour Hire

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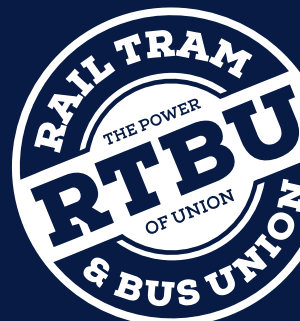
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### Industrial Officer

Amanda Swayn  
Callen Parsons

### Operations & Admin Organiser

Sally van Bragt  
David Paton







**Victor Moore**  
National President

## ARDEN STATION

Recently, an RTBU Stations contingent visited and inspected the new Arden Metro Tunnel station.

Works have significantly progressed since our last visit, and screen doors have been installed along the length of the two new platforms. Each platform is close to 200 meters long.

The new station will pose challenges due to its size and multiple exit points, along with the traditional headaches of escalators and lifts, especially in cases of failure.

Testing has also commenced for the new Control Room, although ticket sales equipment has yet to be installed in the booking office, and barriers are still under wraps.

Regular monthly meetings have been set up between the RTBU, Metro Stations, and Tunnel

project management to identify a number of crucial issues that new developments such as this always pose.

These include issues such as rostering, training, staffing levels, emergency management, evacuations, and opening and closing procedures, including the operation of the control room, platforms, and procedures around the new screen doors.

Staff movements are of critical importance, as any delays to the project will cause a number of issues, especially for those members expecting promotional opportunities, along with subsequent considerations for backfilling options available to staff.

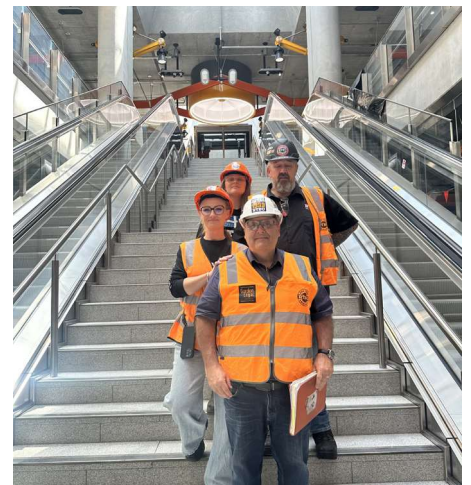
Most of the initial conversations with Metro management revolved around the issue of training and how it is to be progressed.

Some of it will require specific training in additional skills, such as Control desk operations, for staff identified for the Metro Tunnel roles who haven't had prior experience in these functions.

What is currently being exposed is the significant lack of training and training resources available on the job.

The new Metro EA, for the first time, makes reference to Metro providing training for roles, rather than the hand-picked arrangements that have happened in the past.

Career development should be available to all who want it, and the RTBU is determined to ensure that this occurs!



## 6 YEARS ON...

# THE FIGHT TO PROTECT CONTROL DESK JOBS!

In February 2018, RTBU members and delegates rallied outside Clifton Hill station in response to attempts by Metro and the Department of Transport to secretly close down crucial control desk operations.

This attack on Members' jobs, and the associated serious public safety issues, galvanized Members across the Metro network.

Rallies and protest actions, including public leafleting and petitions, were conducted outside key stations targeted in the Clifton Hill area, continuing until the Minister of Transport

guaranteed the maintenance of Control Desks at both city and suburban stations.

The potential disastrous consequences if the RTBU had not successfully campaigned to retain Station Control Desks is evident.

As a direct outcome of these efforts by members and delegates, successive Metro EAs (2019 and 2023) have included clauses safeguarding this vital work, now expanded to include control desks at all new Metro Tunnel stations.

This significant campaign victory from 2018 has also served as the foundation for expanding job protection for Station Booking offices during the rollout of the new ticketing system, alongside assurances by the Minister of Transport of "no reduction or replacement of frontline staff, including customer service staff, station staff, authorized officers, and conductors."



Clifton Hill Station – Control Desk campaign February 2018



Control Desk at Clifton Hill, February 2024

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