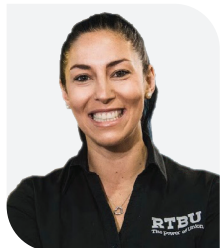


RTBU EXPRESS



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Luba Grigorovitch

State Secretary

COVID-19

As members would be aware, Federal and State Governments have announced significant developments in their response to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic with a major emphasis on non-essential services.

Following previous updates regarding COVID-19, the RTBU has continued to engage with Operators and the State Government regarding your safety and security on the job.

The RTBU has also been in discussions regarding safer rosters and other workplace organisational arrangements to help to minimise risk to you and your family. Regarding special leave provisions and arrangements for self-quarantine the focus has been on not needing to utilise your own personal leave in the event of quarantine and certainty regarding rates of pay.

In the face of a global recession and thousands of Australians being laid off or stood down from their work, our office has been working tirelessly to deliver outcomes that provide clarity for members within the current economic wilderness.

We are working to finalise interim arrangements

with employers and will provide details once an agreement is reached, however, we must remain vigilant of changing circumstances and prepared to adapt as things develop.

To deliver the necessary resilience and continue providing services, the industry will likely need to amend and reduce train service levels during the crisis. This will help ensure that services can be operated for an indefinite period. Alongside this, it should be recognised that the situation is evolving very quickly and therefore the industry may need to introduce other changes, sometimes at short notice, that will require ongoing engagement with the RTBU.

Regarding money handling, operators have been responsive to questions of hygiene and safety raised by the RTBU. Now broadly accepted by the Department of Transport, it is up to your discretion if you wish to handle cash – no disciplinary action will be taken should you wish to avoid contact. Operators should also be providing members with alcohol sanitiser gel. The RTBU has also made a bulk order of sanitiser gel for members which should be arriving in the coming weeks.

Should your manager put undue pressure on you to take annual leave or personal leave to cover initial stages of quarantine, please contact your Organiser. If you have other concerns regarding availability of PPE or any particular procedure, please contact your Delegate, HSR or email safety@rtbuvic.com.au

The circumstances we face are unprecedented and the impacts will be grave. The RTBU office will remain open and operating over the coming weeks and months to ensure that you have the representation you need and deserve. Your RTBU family is here to support you.

Rail, tram and bus workers have an essential role to play, but that is why it is also essential that you protect your own health and safety. Do not underestimate the critical role you are playing to help Australia get through the challenges ahead.

Luba Grigorovitch
- State Secretary

CONGRATULATIONS TO GARY HOUSE ON 50 YEARS!

I had the pleasure of presenting Gary House with a 50 year plaque the other week. Gary House signed up to the union during his first week on the railways and has been a loyal member ever since. He currently works for Metro Trains as an S.O.2 at Essendon Station. He has always worked on stations. In his early years, he sometimes worked pushing hand gates on the Upfield line.

His favourite part about the job has been meeting different people every day and helping them get around the network. His least favourite part about the job these days are the early starts!

A favourite story of Gary's from his time in the rail industry was when he put a mop in the overhead at Flemington bridge. He thought he would get the sack, but he only received an entry in the



conduct book. Another fond memory was when an offsider got fined \$1.00 dollar for not wearing his tie.

In Gary's own words, "My favourite thing about

the union is that they look after your rights. You are stronger in numbers." Lastly, Gary noted that "In my 50 years, it has been a pleasure to work with my fellow workers."

RTBU
The power of Union

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Bryan Evans & Phil Altieri

Organiser

RTBU WIN AT YARRA TRAMS INFRASTRUCTURE

It has been a busy start to the year in Yarra Infrastructure. Several months after an in-principle agreement was reached, the proposed enterprise agreement has been ticked off by the ABCC and is currently being voted on by Members. The agreement delivers the following key provisions for Infrastructure members.

- 9% over 4 years
- Implementation of the 36 hours week incorporating divisor (base increase of 5.5% approx. for affected employees)
- Protections for wages, work life balance consideration and fatigue risks incorporated into rostering parameters
- Inclusion of a thorough disciplinary process
- Commitment to the introduction of an inclement weather policy within 6 months.
- Rigorous protections regarding the use of contractors.

Despite the confusion at the time, several significant provisions were included off the back of concerns raised by the membership, notably incorporating the first disciplinary procedures in the Infrastructure and Rolling Stock agreements, along with the wage and work life balance considerations in relation to roster changes.

There have been several meetings held with RTBU members at E Gate and the proposed agreement was unanimously endorsed. Voting has now closed, and we are awaiting the result.

The next major challenge to present itself around the agreement will be the implementation of the 36 hour week. The unions are currently in the process of establishing roster committees for each affected workgroup.

As many of you may have been aware, Phil Altieri has been engaged to make the rounds and assist the RTBU in supporting Infrastructure and Workshop members as we go through these changes and rebuilding process. He has hit the ground running, already resolving a significant dispute, take it away Phil!

“The RTBU notified a formal dispute against Yarra Trams Infrastructure department on 20 January 2020 in relation to a Yarra Trams decision to appoint two Trackworker level 4 positions without following due process. This resulted in several RTBU members being disadvantaged and disrespected.

The two Trackworker Level 4 positions in question were advertised internally by Yarra Trams last November 2019, with several RTBU members making formal applications for these jobs.

In their wisdom, Yarra Trams decided to appoint

two level 3 Trackworkers without conducting a fair and proper process of internal recruitment, which requires they acknowledge the workers’ applications, followed by interviews and appointment based on merit. This resulted in the RTBU formally notifying a dispute notification against Yarra Trams in line with clause 12 Dispute Resolution Procedure contained in the current Yarra Trams Enterprise Agreement 2015 Rolling Stock, Infrastructure, Administration, Technical & Professional.

This dispute has since been resolved with Yarra Trams meeting the RTBU’s demands. The RTBU members that were disadvantaged through this unfair process have now been appointed to Level 4 Trackworker positions with backpay to 19 December 2019.

This successful dispute result has also delivered the same outcome to members of other unions.”

Many members also have a high level of concern regarding the current state of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The RTBU has held several meetings with government, operators and experts and are in the process of attempting to negotiate a common response across all divisions and operators of light and heavy rail. We will have more details regarding controls to be put in place in infrastructure shortly.

UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE BEG!



Darren Galea

Organiser

ONGOING SAFETY CONCERNS

Members may be aware of the very serious attack that recently occurred at Cranbourne station.

Early on a Wednesday morning, Cranbourne staff were confronted by a person with an axe who proceeded to smash the booking office window and platform doors and threaten passengers and staff. Station staff had the courage to keep passengers safe by moving them away from the threat into a safe area, at their own risk. Following the incident, the perpetrator was arrested.

Our members shouldn’t be exposed to any

violence while at work, whether it’s verbal or physical.

The RTBU have been running a safety campaign lobbying the government for more action and harsher penalties for assaults against transport workers.

We want to ensure that all transport workers are always safe whilst at work. We believe the government has a role to play in legislating a deterrent to help reduce the high level of assaults on transport workers.

We need all Members to be actively involved.

With a number of incidents reported throughout Victoria, in all areas across the industry. We want all Members to be actively reporting any incidents that occur at work, verbally and physically. This will go towards the organisation of further risk assessments to put in better processes and protocols to make all workplaces safer.

Together, we can all make a difference towards creating a safer workplace.

Please send a copy of each incident report to ‘safety@rtbuvic.com.au’.

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