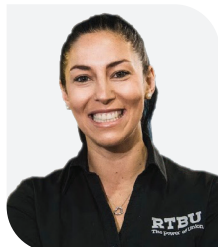


# RTBU EXPRESS



The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch  
**VOL 7 | Issue 4 | Wednesday 08 April 2020**



**Luba Grigorovitch**

State Secretary

## COVID-19 UPDATE

In coming days, Australia is set to tip over 6000 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Stage-3 lockdown measures are in place. Thousands are out of work. Our only job security lies in the fact that we perform essential services, including supporting the front line responders by getting them to and from work.

In the past week I have been contacted by numerous members telling their story or experience of work within our industry through this pandemic. I have heard from members with significant workplace wins for safety, security or clarity of procedures. I have also heard from those who have had hours cut or have been stood down.

Unfortunately, the Fair Work Act allows employers to stand down employees in certain circumstances. The RTBU has been working tirelessly to put members in the best possible position regardless of employer or region. This week we signed a Memorandum of

Understanding with Metro that if any employees are stood down due to the pandemic, they will be entitled to ten days paid Pandemic Leave once they have used their sick leave and all but twenty days of their accrued annual leave.

In recent days, following concerns raised by the Victorian Branch of the RTBU, and the financial consequences of sharp drops in fare revenue for public transport operators, negotiations have been underway with the Victorian Government, Metro Trains, Yarra Trams and V/Line regarding the continued operation of our public transport network.

The RTBU maintains that given the critical nature of our public transport services, the government should seize this opportunity to regain control over outsourced and expensive public transport operations which are being run purely for the benefit of shareholders. However, our immediate priority is to try to ensure members are not financially disadvantaged throughout this

crisis and that everyone has access to a safe workplace.

Finally, both Metro & V/Line have recently agreed to allow members who are over the age of 70 to access sick leave during this time in certain circumstances. This has been done as a preventative measure to provide an opportunity to minimise the risk of exposure to the virus. Any member who is interested in pursuing this should contact the RTBU so we can assist in negotiating something that suits your circumstances.

While much work has been done to address major concerns in recent weeks, any member still experiencing issues at work (big or small) is encouraged to contact the RTBU.

**Luba Grigorovitch**  
- State Secretary



**Joe Dennis**

Organiser

## AROUND THE TRAPS

It was uncovered recently that Morson members working on the Metro tunnel project have been underpaid site allowance. I have contacted Morson who agreed to investigate, but 4 weeks later nothing. This matter is now in formal dispute. Our members continue to come to work and should be paid correctly.

V Line track and signals have expressed concern at the lack of sanitiser and masks available to them. Most crews work in close proximity to each

other and with contractors from outside V Line. I have raised these concerns with V Line safety and will continue to monitor.

COVID-19 virus has changed the way we conduct our day to day duties as union organisers. Various monthly meetings have had to be cancelled and some via phone hook up. Members have been contacting the RTBU asking for advice in these uncertain times. We continue to meet with the providers and the transport minister

in order to get some clarity on what conditions our members are entitled to. To this point all three providers seem to be uncertain as to the concern members have. The shortage of hand sanitisers, face masks and general cleaning all add to members frustration.

The RTBU will continue to fight for fair conditions for all members in the coming months ahead.

**RTBU**  
The power of Union

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**Darren Galea**  
Organiser

# METRO EA: VOTE YES

Voting for the Metro Operations EA will commence on Thursday 9 April. In order to lock in the proposed conditions, members are required to vote and vote yes.

If not enough people vote yes to the proposal, the offer will be rejected and we will be forced back to the bargaining table. Unfortunately, as a result of the current crisis and patronage levels at record lows, it is likely further negotiations will see the RTBU in a weaker position, however, this is your agreement and we will work on the wishes of the majority.

In order to lock in the proposed conditions, pay increases and backpay, we are asking that all members make their voice heard. Your vote is critical.

Members should be aware that while stand down provisions are covered by the Fair Work Legislation, in recognition of the current circumstances, Metro have agreed to the RTBU's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides clarity for members. Members are

protected.

In summary the proposed agreement delivers on the following:

- Backpay to 1 July 2019 (1% from 1 July 2019 + 2.5% from 1 Jan 2020)
- 14% wage increase, 3.5% per annum
- Allowances to increase in-line with wage increase
- Job security clause (rights to access retraining and redeployment)
- Commitment to maintain control desks (for suburban outstation and city locations)
- Part-time overtime payments (for any shift extension or shifts over 8 hours)
- 14 weeks parental leave (up from 12 weeks)
- Classification review (members for the first time can now request a review of their position description and classification)

- Public Holidays retained and expanded (including option for part timers to get extra pay or extra leave)
- Job Share / Right to flexible work provisions
- LSL: Security for approval of planned Long Service Leave
- Salary Maintenance provisions: protects retention of higher classified rate
- Trauma leave: provides for staff impacted by a broader range of trauma
- Safety: A clause focused on compelling Metro to address the risks associated with assaults on front line staff
- Warnings: to be wiped from personal files after 5 years & can't be used to block a promotion after 12 months.

A voting code will be sent to you with instructions on how to vote. Don't delay, vote today.

For assistance with voting or if you didn't receive your code, contact the RTBU on 8630 9100.



**Vik Sharma**  
Industrial Officer /  
Organiser

# PROBE UPDATE

As members are well aware, the past weeks have seen major shifts in our way of life. With that have come numerous changes in the way we perform our work.

Transport has proved itself to be essential in these uncertain times.


PROBE Public Transport Call centre workers have demonstrated the importance of the customer interface of the public transport network and the value provided by workers like you fielding queries on the final frontier.

These recent weeks have seen PROBE Public Transport Call Centre members inundated with

additional queries that have put members under pressure to both understand and implement Myki refund policy on the fly.

We have been saddened to see the lack of communication between the Minister for Public Transport and the RTBU regarding the renewal of the PROBE Public Transport Call Centre, after the RTBU has made repeated calls to bring this integral call centre back within the department. The campaign goes on!

Through this challenging time, the RTBU will continue to support all members no matter the challenges we face. We appreciate the hard work you all continue to do.

**rt health**

**We're your union health fund.**

We're also not-for-profit, so we exist purely to serve our members.

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## Contact us

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Luba Grigorovitch

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**Workshops Division**  
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**Industrial Officer /  
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