

# RTBU EXPRESS

The Official Newsletter of the Rail Divisions of the RTBU Victorian Branch  
**VOL 9 | Issue 5 | Wednesday 11 May 2022**



**Vik Sharma**  
State Secretary

## STATE BUDGET UPDATE - TRANSPORT INVESTMENT CONTINUES TO GROW



Last week's Victorian state budget delivers on several key issues facing transport workers across the state.

Each year the RTBU consults across the network to develop a budget submission advocating for improvements to benefit Transport Workers. This year's budget closes the gap on numerous outstanding items we have continued to campaign for and highlights the areas where there remains work to be done.

Following this process we're glad to see the following new initiatives in budget:

### Passenger Rail

- Another 12 V/Line trains
- V/Line organisational improvements such as improving the rostering system, upgrades to staff facilities, information management, compliance and asset management systems.
- Funding to install suicide prevention fencing in key locations on the Metropolitan network. Research shows that limiting access is a strong deterrent. (Thank you to the RTBU members that were involved in these conversations with the Department of Transport)
- Preparations for the staffing and operation of the Metro Tunnel. This includes support for preparation towards timetable changes as well as recruitment and training of staff for operation and maintenance.
- Further development of Western Rail Plan with scoping of capacity improvements for Melton and Ballarat
- Funding for the evolution and expansion of V/Line rolling stock maintenance capacity

- Train stabling upgrades at Bairnsdale and Flemington Racecourse
- Station accessibility and amenity upgrades at Glen Waverley, Jacana, Lalor, Merri, Thornbury, Victoria Park, Warrnambool and Woodend as well as platform modifications on the Dandenong corridor. Included is also funding for the development and design of future improvements likely to flow on in the next budget.

### Freight Rail

- \$181m funding for the maintenance, restoration and safety of freight corridors to entrench rail as a viable alternative to trucks
- Extension of the Mode Shift Incentive Scheme getting trucks off roads and freight onto our trains.
- Getting on with development of the Western Interstate Freight Terminal (WIFT) and the Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) giving certainty to industry for the continued expansion of freight onto rail.

### Trams

- Funding for new driver toilet facilities, safe infrastructure and facilities for community, maintenance staff and tram drivers that the RTBU has been advocating for for some time.
- Funding for critical tram works including structural repairs and maintenance of CCTV for improved reliability
- 7 new DSAPT compliant tram stops along LaTrobe Street and Park Street South Melbourne that will provide connections to Metro Tunnel

- Track Renewal at Melbourne University Terminus to future proof for Next Generation Trams
- Development of further corridors of
- tram stop upgrades to meet DSAPT requirements. These will be treated as packages rather than isolated stop upgrades

These announcements add to the funding already committed in earlier budgets for major projects such as the 100 Next Generation Trams and new Depot, Line Upgrades, 85 Level Crossing Removals by 2025, further progress on the Suburban Rail Loop and the completion of the Metro Tunnel.

If you have any queries about any of these items or see items that should be considered for future budgets please send us an email.

Naturally many of these items will require further detailing now that they have been announced to industry and the RTBU will be working closely with operators to continue advocating to see implementations align with member's expectations.

The funding committed in this budget is again significant for our industry and we are glad to see it targeted to the operational level that will make a difference in our workplaces while keeping an eye on the new and expanded workplaces of the future.

**Vik Sharma**  
Victorian Branch Secretary





**Darren Galea**  
Organiser

## PACIFIC NATIONAL

It's an exciting time to be a Member of the Rail Tram and Bus Union at Pacific National.

The RTBU Vic Branch have commenced negotiations on the Pacific National Enterprise Agreement, working alongside the RTBU National Office and other RTBU State Branches. A committee has been formed, and an endorsement of claims has been reached.

We're also very excited to introduce Lyle McGrath as our new Pacific National Melbourne Freight Terminal (MFT) Delegate.

Lyle has been working in the rail industry for 6 years, and currently works as a Terminal Operator at Pacific National MFT. Alongside his experience working in the rail industry, his late father worked for Freight Australia, as well as having family in NSW who also work in rail.

Lyle has always been a member of his union across various workplaces. At an early stage he was witness to some very sub-par practices of management at Pacific National, so he was always keen to make his contribution to the work of the RTBU.

Lyle enjoys the new challenges presented every day of working in the rail industry and considers his co-workers a major highlight of the job.

His least favourite part is watching some of the practices from management, which is why one of his focuses as a Delegate is working on bettering the safety and conditions of RTBU members.

Lyle started working from a young age while still at school. Having seen a range of issues throughout his working life, his intention as Delegate is to use his experience and training whenever he can to help Members achieve the safer, fairer and more enjoyable workplaces that everyone deserves.

Lyle says that "meeting and working with the different people, past and present at MFT, has changed me for the better in the brief time I have been there, and I look forward to the future that allows me to pursue further improvements in rail."

Speaking on his favourite thing about the RTBU, Lyle said "I have seen that everyone at the RTBU is there for the members, and any concern no matter how small is addressed professionally and discreetly."



**Joe Dennis**  
Organiser

## OUT AND ABOUT

This month I have been busy with pre-starts at all major projects across the state.

The Southern Program Alliance (SPA) Project has now begun on the Hurstbridge line, involving Coleman Rail, GTE, Category Five Rail and Morson Rail.

We currently have a Shop Steward on the Shepparton Line Upgrade (SLU) who has been a great asset to members, keeping the site safe and recruiting new members onsite. The SLU has one of the highest percentages of RTBU Members of any rail project site in Victoria.

In the coming months I will be visiting Wangaratta, Shepparton, Traralgon, Ararat, Seymour, Ballarat, Bendigo and Warrnambool.

I will also be heading to Central Victoria to see the members on the Murray Basin works around Donald. I look forward to speaking with you all then, but as always Members can reach out to me via phone or email if they require immediate assistance.

V/Line Operations and Infrastructure management have been in discussion with members and the RTBU regarding the ongoing Rapid Antigen Testing. Three models were discussed in the meetings, all relevant in different areas. Discussions will continue in coming weeks on what testing will look like moving forward, and I will keep members up to date.

If you have any issues or want to arrange a prestart or site visit, please call me on 0403 863 869.



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