

# NO WAY METRO!

## Metro to swing axe despite Covid aid

TESS IKONOMOU  
KIERAN ROONEY

A MELBOURNE train operator is considering redundancies despite receiving tens of millions of dollars in taxpayer money to stay afloat during the coronavirus pandemic.

Metro Trains will be scrapping 10 passenger service lead roles, with less than 30 positions expected to be affected in some way.

Changes to the placement and number of station master roles at 28 of Metro's 222 stations are under consideration.

The state government provided Metro Trains with at least \$25m as part of a COVID support package in mid-2020, plus bonuses and additional funding for pandemic cleaning.

It will have to repay part of that sum back through future profits over the remaining years of its contract terms.

The move has sparked outrage with the public transport union, which argued customer-facing staff were needed as the network expanded and the Metro Tunnel moves closer to completion.

Rail, Tram and Bus Union Victorian Secretary Luba Grigorovitch said there were "no grounds" under the enterprise agreement to support Metro's "aggressive approach".

"Metro have lied through their teeth claiming frontline workers won't be affected," she said.

"These redundancies will affect the frontline. Full stop.

"The RTBU has raised the dispute with the company and is currently exploring all legal and industrial options at our disposal, we plan to fight this all the way."

Metro Trains chief Raymond O'Flaherty said station employees in passenger service roles were not affected.

"We're working closely with employees and the union through this process, and impacted employees will be considered for redeployment to alternative roles within Metro," he said.

A government spokesman said it urged the parties to continue talks in "good faith" and to reach a resolution that "supported" staff.

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