



RTBU EXPRESS

March Newsletter



Secretary's message

It's been an incredibly busy time for many of us here at the RTBU NSW, particularly for the members and delegates at Sydney & NSW Trains.

As you would know, it was an extremely close ballot with a yes vote succeeding a no vote by 52.8% at Sydney Trains, and 50.8% at NSW Trains. You can view the breakdown of the results on [RTBU Express](#). Thank you to all members who made the effort to vote and have their say. I know that for many of you the outcome of the ballot wasn't what you wanted. It's important to remember that it wasn't just RTBU members who participated in this ballot, but the entire Sydney & NSW Trains workforce. This includes members from other unions, and non-union employees.

The RTBU NSW is a union led by the membership. This is why at no stage in the ballot process did we endorse a yes or a no vote. It was always up to you, the membership, to decide the outcome of the vote. The Agreement was achieved with one hand tied behind our back, after the right to strike was taken from us. This is exactly why we have to stand together and fight to change the rules, which I'll talk more about below.

There are suggestions and questions from Sydney & NSW Trains members that are prompting important discussions within our membership and leadership, which I encourage you all to do. Through all the hurdles we've been through over the last 9 months to negotiate

these Agreements, we must remember that unity is strength. It's important that we share our feedback so that we can become stronger and more united. But we need to ensure that these debates do not turn into division.

The goal of any management is to divide the workforce. If we allow the result of this ballot to divide us and weaken us, then we have succumbed to management's tactics. As well as this, the transport workforce will continue to be the target of relentless attacks by this Liberal Government. The privatisation of our essential services is a constant threat and we cannot back down or become divided. The outcome of the ballot shows clearly shows NSW Government that the workforce has entirely lost confidence in this current Minister for Transport. Andrew Constance has spent his tenure pursuing an ideological agenda to weaken, divide, and ultimately destroy our workforce with privatisation and automation. We cannot let this Liberal Government succeed. We must continue to fight against these attacks, but most importantly, **we must fight together.**

Since the ballot results, there has been plenty of misguided and incorrect information being spread by word of mouth and on social media. To get the correct information, it's extremely important that you read the emails we send, which are also on the website. We've included a short Q&A in this newsletter to assist in answering some of the questions we're receiving. If you have questions that you still don't have an answer for, please speak to your local delegate, negotiating team delegate or contact the office on 02 9264 2511.

Since our last newsletter, our Pacific National members have achieved a hard-earned win by



Sydney & NSW Trains: Q & A

There is a detailed Q&A document on RTBU Express, which is an extended version of a bulletin we sent out after the vote. It answers many of the questions and concerns we've been receiving, including:

- Who got a vote on a new Agreement?
- How many votes are needed to determine if the Agreement is accepted?
- Who managed the ballot?
- What happened on the day of the vote?
- Some media are reporting that the RTBU "accepted" the proposed Agreement, is this true?
- What about a driver only EA? Or a front-line staff only EA?
- Why after the 6 week fairwork commission period elapsed did we not start the overtime ban straight away?
- Do we know what unions voted yes and what their percentage was?

What now? To read the document, please go to [RTBU Express](#).

Secretary's message (cont'd)

securing their four-year Agreement. Congratulations to all the members at Pacific National for standing united for a fair deal.

Also over February, the NSW Government announced the private operator for region 6 buses, Transit Systems, who will take over operation from July 1. Meanwhile, Newcastle bus drivers are bearing the brunt of commuter frustration over the privatisation of their buses, which has caused absolute chaos in their community. Bus stops have been axed and services have been reduced. And with no surprise to us, the patronage in February had a staggering drop because Novocastrians simply aren't happy. This is what the Inner West bus drivers and commuters have to look forward to in the second half of this year. This is just another reason why we all need to be a united and strong voice for the transport workforce against the Liberal Government's attacks.

The annual May Day rally is fast approaching and this is the perfect opportunity for us to march together with one voice for workers' rights after an enormous start to the year. We want this year's rally to be the biggest and loudest it's ever been. That's because this was the year our right to strike was taken from us. Now more than ever, it's time to march together to change the rules, and bring power back to the people. There's more information about May Day 2018 below, and I hope to see you there.

In Solidarity,
Alex Claassens
RTBU NSW Secretary

February: Fix NSW Transport rally

In February, thousands of people from community action groups across the state protested in the streets of Sydney to fix NSW Transport. Alex Claassens addressed the crowds, and you can read his speech on

RTBU Express. *"United in their anger, unions and local community groups mobilised to protest against ongoing problems with the rail system, the privatisation of buses and the Government's major projects like the Sydney Metro, WestConnex, the F6 toll road and the Western Harbour Tunnel."* Read the full article on [ABC Online](#). Thank you to all who came and rallied with us.



Newcastle bus privatisation rally

In March the RTBU Bus & Tram Division rallied in Newcastle to say enough is enough, demanding that Minister Constance fix Newcastle buses after he recklessly sold them off. Novocastrians have had their bus network sent into chaos since the private operator has cut routes, removed bus stops and reduced services. We've said this all along, this is what happens when you privatise public transport. Read the news coverage on RTBU Express here and check out the photos here.



Media release: Overseas bus driver recruitment worrying sign for inner-west commuters and workers

In March, it was revealed that Transit Systems were advertising overseas to recruit drivers. Read the Media Release we sent out about the revelation below.

"The Transport Minister needs to confirm that he will not leave the newly privatised inner-west bus service in disarray, like he did with Newcastle buses, and that Australian bus drivers will be given first priority of jobs", the RTBU said today. RTBU Tram and Bus Division Secretary, Chris Preston, said revelations today that bus drivers are being brought in from overseas to work on the recently privatised region six service are incredibly concerning.

"It is incredibly worrying that already the private company

looks to have been left hung out to dry by the Transport Minister, with so few drivers employed that they're having to advertise overseas. When the Transport Minister sold off Newcastle's bus network, he left it in tatters and it still hasn't recovered. We can't afford to let the Transport Minister cut and run from region six like he did in Newcastle.

It's not a huge surprise that the Transport Minister is struggling with bus driver retention at the moment. He's continually attacking our jobs, disrespecting the workforce and introducing timetable changes that anger commuter who inevitably take out their frustrations on drivers." Read the rest of the Media Release on [Bus Express](#).

PN workers vote up new EA Bulletin, Feb 12, 2018

In February, workers at Pacific National voted in favour of accepting a new enterprise agreement, with 66 per cent of eligible workers voting 'yes'. The total response rate was high, with 88 per cent of people voting in the ballot conducted by Corpvote. The new four-year agreement comes after a long and

hard-fought campaign by the membership for an agreement that provides workers with the fair wages and conditions they deserve. The paperwork is now being completed and will be submitted to the Fair Work Commission. Congratulations to all the members at PN for standing united for a fair deal.



May Day 2018

UPDATE: ARTC EA Negotiations and the New Workplace Bargaining

Throughout February 2018 the RTBU conducted a state wide depot tour of ARTC and spoke to all members present at these discussions about the current status of the Enterprise Agreement (EA) negotiations and the changes to the Workplace Bargaining Policy (the Policy).

It was made explicitly clear by RTBU members around the state that the current offer from ARTC management is unacceptable and will not be voted up in its current format, you also made it explicitly clear that you were willing to reignite your industrial action campaign in an attempt to achieve a better deal as this negotiation has been going on for far too long.

The RTBU spoke with ARTC management in early March after the completion of the depot tour in an effort to schedule the next EA negotiation meeting as soon as possible. Read the rest of this update on [RTBU Express](#).

The RTBU NSW will be attending this year's May Day event in full force, and we want as many members to come along and join us on Sunday, May 6th.

What is May Day?

May Day is an annual day of action to celebrate the achievement of our union movement and workers' rights across the world.

100 FREE RTBU MAY DAY SHIRTS

Want a RTBU NSW May Day 2018 t-shirt? Be one of the first 100 to RSVP to the rally and you'll get a shirt. RSVP by emailing nswwho@rtbu-nsw.asn.au so you can get your shirt. Get in quick!

If you don't get involved in union events much – May Day is the ONE day this year you should join in and get involved. Don't miss out on this national day of action. You can check out the Facebook event [here](#).

