



RTBU EXPRESS

March Newsletter



Secretary's message

Dear members,

While many of us are disappointed with the re-election of the State Government, we must channel our frustration into strength and unity as we prepare to fight for another four years against the government's privatisation attacks and their pursuit to erode our transport workforce.

The Minister for Transport, Andrew Constance, has previously made it clear that his vision is to achieve an entirely privatised, workerless, transport network in NSW. We have no doubt that the next four years will involve more attacks on our transport workforce, more attempts to stunt wage growth and further attempts to silence us and erode our industrial rights.

It's not going to be easy. But that's why being united matters now more than ever. That's why we have to gear up and get ready to take up the fight.

As you know, soon there will also be a federal election where we will have the chance to elect a Federal Government that supports wage growth, workers rights, and investment in public transport - not the erosion of it. Under the current Federal Government workers across Australia have experienced the lowest wage growth since the 1930s, while industrial rights have been watered down and penalty rates have been cut for over 200,000 workers. The rules have been stacked against the average working Australian for far too long. Our message this election is clear: it's time to Change The Rules.

If you want to get involved in you can check out the Change the Rules website for events in your area. There will be a rally coming up in May so stay tuned for more details about that.

It was also great this month to get out to regional NSW and speak to residents in

Armidale about the lack of investment in transport their communities have received under the current state government. For years regional transport has been neglected by the State Liberal /National Government and now we're going to have to continue to speak up and fight even harder for better investment in our city and our regions over the next four years.

In solidarity,
Alex Claassens
RTBU NSW Secretary





John Holland CRN NSW EA 2019 Log of Claims Survey

We would like to thank all members who attended RTBU meetings at their depots throughout March for the purpose to discuss the upcoming enterprise agreement. Many discussions were held around the state about the importance of being union and to also collate issues that the workforce are seeking resolved and addressed in the agreement this year.

We will now start to prepare for the upcoming negotiations by formalising the Log of Claims to present to John Holland for the purpose of beginning negotiations. So if you haven't already done so please fill out the Log of Claims survey this request to all infrastructure employees at John Holland CRN union or not, at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2S68GJ2>

Now more than ever is an important time to be union.

**JOHN
HOLLAND**



RTBU Update: Metro Trains Sydney (MTS) Operational Agreement

On 6 March 2019 the RTBU wrote to Metro Trains Sydney (MTS) requesting the commencement of bargaining for an Enterprise Agreement covering Operational classifications. MTS responded that they were unclear as to what the RTBU was asking. We responded to MTS clearly outlining our position - namely, that the existing Greenfields Agreement applies only to professional/clerical classifications and we therefore wish to bargain for an Operational Agreement. We are still waiting for a response.

We know that many MTS employees and RTBU members have had to sign the revised contracts of employment stipulating that pay increases will be paid to employees on

the condition that they are no longer employees of MTM but MTS and therefore are covered by the Greenfields Agreement. The RTBU's advice is that the mere signing of new letters of offer does not mean that the Greenfields Agreement applies to the employment. Coverage of an enterprise agreement is a legal concept that cannot be signed for. The purpose of seeking to negotiate a new Agreement with MTS is to ensure that we have a specific Agreement which provides for conditions that relates to the work that is done by our members (such as rostering guidelines).

Head to RTBU Express to read more.



Locomotive Division Workplace Organiser Elections - NSW Trains Regional Depots

NSW Trains Region members are advised that nominations have been called for the position of Locomotive Division Workplace Organiser in Dubbo, Werris Creek, Junee, Grafton, Taree and Goulburn depots.

This is now required following the recent AEC election processes. Nominations opened at 09.00 on 25 March 2019 and will close at 17.00 on Friday 5th April 2019 and Members can nominate by emailing: NSWHO@rtbu-nsw.asn.au or by fax on 9261 1342 by leaving their name, address and title of position they would like to nominate for, noting for the attention of Returning Officer, Nick Lewocki. Head to Loco Express for more information about the elections.

MTS Sacks RTBU Delegate for MSD Petition

On March 26, Metro Trains Sydney (MTS) terminated the employment of the RTBU delegate at MTS without reason. As the RTBU delegate was on probation, MTS would be well aware that there would be no avenue for recourse to the Fair Work Commission (FWC), as unfair dismissal applications are not available to employees with less than 6 months service.

MTS have relied on spurious reasons (at best) to support their actions to terminate the delegate's employment. It is the view of the RTBU that MTS terminated the employment of the delegate due to his involvement with the RTBU and his activity as a union delegate.

The RTBU is in the process of petitioning for a Majority Support Determination (MSD) to fight for a fair agreement for all operational employees. We believe that that MTS' actions are an attempt by the company to intimidate the RTBU and its members.



Stand up
fight back!



We have written to MTS demanding that our delegate be reinstated. We did not receive a response by the deadline so we will be seeking an injunction in the Federal Court so that MTS are held accountable for their actions.

Being a part of a union means that an action of a company towards one individual is an attack on every worker and we will not tolerate anti-union attacks by MTS on any member. The RTBU will take up the fight against MTS for what they have done, and will do so for any other member employed by MTS who is targeted due to their union involvement - because members have a right under the *Fair Work Act* to be involved in their union without being targeted by the boss for doing so.

International Day of Mourning Service - April 28th



International Day of Mourning, held on April 28th each year, is a time for the community to come together and reflect on and remember the thousands of workers who are killed in their workplace each year.

This year it is anticipated that there will be several services

being held so please check your local area. We can confirm that the Sydney service will be held at **12 noon on Sunday 28 April, 2019** in Reflection Park, Little Pier Street (off Harbour St), Darling Harbour. (Next to Novotel Rockford, Darling Harbour)



International Women's Day events

On Friday the 8th of March, the RTBU and First State Super BBQ-ed our way around Central Station, Clyde Hub and Ryde Bus Depot for International Women's Day.

The success of the events shows just how much our members care about addressing the inequalities faced by women in male dominated industries such as ours.

Funded by First State Super, and supported by the respective employers - it was a great day all round!



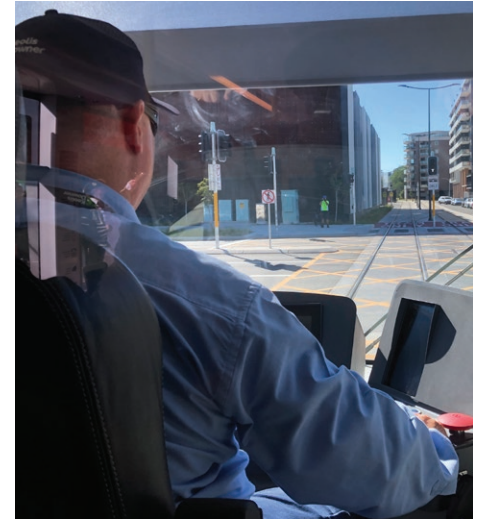
Newcastle Herald: Opinion piece from RTBU Tram & Bus Secretary – David Babineau

In March David submitted an opinion piece to the Newcastle Herald about the litany of transport failures that workers and commuters in Newcastle have had to suffer.

Read an excerpt below or go to Bus Express to find the full piece.

A timetable for failure

“While the Premier and Transport Minister have been in Newcastle recently, cutting ribbons and talking up the positive difference they’ve made to transport in the region; commuters are telling a very different story. The reality is, the current NSW Government has made a complete mess of transport in Newcastle – particularly the bus network. In late 2016, the NSW Government ‘franchised’ the Newcastle bus depots of Belmont and Hamilton. That’s a polite way of saying they created political distance between themselves and the public service so they can’t be blamed when things go wrong. To assist the new operator, Newcastle Transport went to town in January 2018, ripping out 140 bus stops and cutting routes and timetabled



services. This happened for a very simple reason; it is no longer a public service but a service for profit. People looking at screens decided what should happen in the real world. As anyone but a politician could have predicted, the community backlash was immediate, intense, and completely deserved.

Commuters were not alone in sharing the pain of the new for-profit system. Bus drivers had to deal with an irate public on a daily basis, uncertainty about services and their futures, and due to a widespread payroll issue were being underpaid for the privilege. If a politician was being paid less than \$10 a fortnight because of a clerical error, you can be sure they wouldn't have to wait over six months for it to be fixed.” Continue reading on Bus Express or on the Newcastle Herald website.



Unions Release Plan to Tackle Rising Inequality

Are you feeling the pinch of rising cost of living that just doesn't keep up with wages & pensions?

Do you feel the gap between the very rich and working people is growing?

You're not alone.

Australian Unions have released a report showing Australians are experiencing the largest fall in living standards in 30 years.

Meanwhile, the number of Australian billionaires has quadrupled over the past decade and Australian CEOs were paid more in the first five days of 2018 than an average worker earned the entire year. The evidence of rising inequality

is undeniable, yet the Morrison Government continue to deny it is even a problem.

If we don't change course, Australia will go further down the road of entrenching Americanised working conditions: where dead-end jobs, long working hours, no holidays, zero job security and poverty pay levels become the norm.

But it doesn't have to be this way. This is our plan to tackle inequality and raise the living standards of all Australians:

- Restore balance to workplace negotiations.
- Invest in schools & hospitals
- Raise Newstart
- Create secure jobs that people can count on



- Curb excessive corporate power
- Ensure big business & the very rich pay their fair share of tax

Working people in Australia are ready to take action to tackle inequality.

Join us to change the rules, change the government and restore our living standards. Check out the full report on RTBU Express or on the ACTU website.

Council steps up as state government axes local bus service in Newcastle

As the government prepares to axe Newcastle's park and ride service, Newcastle Council has stepped up and announced they will fund the service for a further month, in hope that it buys more time to convince the state government to keep the important and valued local service.

The Tram and Bus Division believe the axing of the park and ride service is just another case of this NSW Government showing absolute contempt for commuters and workers in Newcastle. They continue to erode public transport and cancel services with zero consultation

with the community. The Government is paid for by the tax payer to represent the tax payer, they continue to disregard local workers at every turn.

This Government boasts about creating a world class transport network, but here they are scrapping a service that the public love and use. If this Government wanted to improve public transport, they could start at a bare minimum by retaining the current services that are valued instead of cutting them off.

Tram and Bus Division President, Daniel Jagers said "The NSW

Government seem to only care about making deals with the big end of town, instead of supporting our community and investing in the local services they need. Whether it's Sydney's Inner West, Newcastle, or regional NSW - this Government continues to make decisions that leave commuters worse off and out of pocket.

"The axing of the park and ride service is just another show of disrespect for the commuters and workers of Newcastle. Enough is enough." Mr Jagers said.

You can read more about this story on Bus Express.



New England Rail Transport Symposium



In March Alex Claassens, RTBU NSW Secretary, presented to a crowd of Armidale residents about the lack of effective transport in regional NSW. The symposium was a step towards reinvigorating Armidale's northern railway line. Alex Claassens told the crowd:

"The Nationals are meant to be the party for the bush. But they certainly haven't done anything for transport in the regional areas of our state. In fact, the current State Liberal-National Government hasn't been great for transport generally. We've seen:

- **privatisation** of our essential transport services
- **huge budget blow outs** on projects such as the new Sydney light rail
- **poor timetabling** leading commuters stranded and workers stretched beyond capacity
- **job cuts** leaving thousands of workers out of a job
- a **disregard** for regional parts of the state
- a **disregard** for the workforce

The current government is entirely focused on vanity projects, like the new metro service in Sydney that will be driverless - a safety risk for commuters, but a risk the Transport Minister and Premier don't seem concerned about.

What we need - what we all deserve - is a government that focuses on delivering the best possible services to the people of NSW, regardless of which electorate or postcode you live in. Transport is one of our essential services - it should be treated as such."