

BREAKING: Union members win first battle as Transport folds

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Date : 23 October, 2021

Throughout bargaining so far, one of our front and centre demands has been that Sydney Trains and NSW Trains bargain together, with our combined delegates, for one agreement.

Yesterday, the Combined Rail Union received correspondence from the Secretary of Transport for NSW (**Transport**) saying that Sydney Trains and NSW Trains will **commit to bargaining jointly** on issues that are considered to be common to both agencies. On this basis, Transport sought that the union suspend its industrial action planned for the next fortnight.

However, the offer put by Transport was not good enough for your delegates to consider calling off planned action. Your full EA delegate committee met this morning to discuss a counter-offer which would deliver the first win of this campaign after 6 weeks of intense and effective industrial action.

The counteroffer put to Transport was as follows:

1. The CRU and both Sydney Trains and NSW Trains meet in the same room from now until the end of the bargaining period to discuss all common clauses and claims. This means any common clauses in the existing 2018 Enterprise Agreements and any claims that the CRU considers common to both entities.
- The CRU will continue to push its claim for a single agreement to cover the rail entities and genuine consideration will be given to this proposal by the Employers.

- For the next fortnight, the parties will engage in intensive bargaining face to face. For the purposes of these meetings, all EA delegates will be released for the entire fortnight to ensure the efficiency of these meetings.
- Transport for NSW will have a senior officer at the table, and the Chief Executive of each agency will also attend each meeting.
- It is agreed that the position of 0.3% in the first year of the agreement is off the table.
- Sydney Trains and NSW Trains will provide their log of claims for the proposed agreement in full.

At 4pm this afternoon, Transport folded and agreed in writing to your delegates proposal. There are some significant wins in this back down by Transport, Sydney Trains and NSW Trains. The insulting 0.3% wage proposal is now off the table, and all bargaining parties and decision makers will be at each and every meeting.

Further, since the 2018 agreement expired 5 months ago, this gives us an opportunity to significantly advance negotiations so we can start bargaining about things that effect the lives of members every day.

Should Sydney Trains and NSW Trains continue to stall negotiations or renege from any of these commitments, we will not hesitate to recommence strong industrial action. Your delegates will meet after the first week of the intensive negotiations and determine what action is required.

As such, effective immediately, **the 2 week network-wide ban on overtime and foreign depot working, Monday's 1 hour strikes, and Tuesdays ban on "detailed walks" for infrastructure members will be postponed until at least 7 November 2021.**

The following actions are ongoing and continue:

- Members wearing union gear to work
- Members can engage with the media and the public about the bargaining campaign
- Adding campaign material to outgoing correspondence
- Public announcements by any means
- Attaching union materials to railway assets
- **Indefinite ban on working with the NIF**

The fight continues, and we will have to escalate and intensify our action in order to achieve the claims we've made. We commend all members who have stood firm and taken action so far. It is because of the strength and unity of RTBU members that this progress has been made.

If you have any questions, please contact your local delegate or organiser.