

## **BUS DRIVERS REACH AGREEMENT ON MASKS AND GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY ON PRIVATISATION, AVOIDING NEED FOR STRIKE**

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The NSW Rail, Tram and Bus Union’s Bus and Tram Division Secretary David Babineau has announced bus drivers will not take strike action next week after the NSW Government undertook to meet its substantive demands outlined in a letter to the Premier on Monday.

“Bus drivers and their union, the Rail, Tram and Bus Union, thank commuters and the wider community for their incredible support during this difficult week. You recognised that the NSW Government didn’t have our back on safety or privatisation of bus services and you stepped up in support,” Mr Babineau said today.

“Through our combined action, we forced the Government to the negotiating table and made them take our concerns seriously.

“On Sydney radio this morning, Premier Gladys Berejiklian herself admitted there had been an increase in mask wearing in some areas of up to 60% since we announced our action on Monday.

“The issue of mask wearing on public transport has been significantly elevated this week and the NSW Government has undertaken to review health advice and guidelines if community infection levels increase.

“Bus drivers have also gained a commitment from the NSW Government for more accountability in regions facing the threat of privatised bus services, with community consultation being promised in writing.

“I have no doubt these community consultations will show the depth of community anger and frustration at bus privatisation plans. The community know privatisation will inevitably mean cuts to services and short-cuts on the cleaning, fleet maintenance, and safety. It’s up to everyone to stand up for their local services.

“Bus drivers and their union will remain vigilant and we hope for a more constructive response from government to any future concerns so we can avoid reaching this point again,” he said.