

Media Release: Workers must not pay the price for Govt's broken trams

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The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW says the NSW Government must offer alternative employment to Inner West Light Rail workers and make sure they don't pay for the government's shocking decisions, after today's announcement that the overseas-built trams would be decommissioned for 18 months, shutting down the Inner West line.

"The closure of the Inner West Light Rail, which thousands of Sydneysiders rely on every day, is a devastating loss for both the community and transport workers," says Daniel Jagers, President of

the RTBU NSW Tram and Bus Division.

“It’s the government’s folly that has put the Inner West Light Rail out of action for 18 months, and we want them to take full responsibility.

“We’re calling for an iron-clad commitment that the government will find and support alternative employment for the workers on the Inner West Light Rail.

“For decades transport workers in NSW have been calling for our transport infrastructure to be made and maintained on our shores. Workers were ignored, but they shouldn’t now be made to pay for the government’s mistake.

“Ever since the NSW Government turned its back on Australian manufacturing and began ordering public transport infrastructure from overseas, it’s been one disaster after another.

“We’ve had trains that don’t fit through our tunnels and ferries that are too tall for our bridges. Now our trams are falling apart.

“The biggest losers are the people of NSW, who don’t receive the public transport services they need and fork out billions in taxpayer’s money to rectify the government’s mistakes.

“The NSW Government should introduce quotes for local transport manufacturing and maintenance, similar to those in the ACT and Victoria.

“We make quality light rail cars in Australia. When the government was commissioning new trams, the union even toured one of our manufacturing facilities in Victoria.

“We need quality public transport, made right here by Australian workers. It may be too late for the Inner West Light Rail, but how many multi billion-dollar mistakes will it take before the government learns its lesson?”