

NSW Government urged to prioritise rapid COVID testing and vaccination for transport workers as transport delays hit Sydney

Categories : [Media releases](#), [News](#)

Date : 13 August, 2021

Media release, 13 August 2021: The NSW Government needs introduce rapid COVID testing for transport workers and priority access to vaccination, or we risk further significant interruptions to our passenger and freight transport services, the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW has warned.

The call comes as many passenger transport routes across the city are cancelled today due to large numbers of workers being deemed close or casual COVID contacts.

The RTBU NSW has written to NSW Transport Minister Andrew Constance urging the Minister to ensure that all transport workers throughout the state be given access to rapid COVID testing and for priority access to vaccination to be offered to all transport workers wanting it.

Secretary of the RTBU NSW, Alex Claassens said that the service disruptions seen across Sydney today will only spread and get worse unless immediate action is taken.

“Our transport workers can have hundreds of interactions with community members over the course of a shift – it’s vital they have the best protection possible to continue their essential, frontline work,” Mr Claassens said.

“Common sense tells you that in order to protect the public and transport workers and their families across the state, this situation needs to be sorted out as soon as possible.

“Cutting services at a time when we’re trying to ensure that people are able to physically distance as much as possible is dangerous.

“We need transport services to continue to operate in order to get other essential workers like health care workers where they need to go and essential goods moved across and throughout the state.

“There’s no time to waste. We saw delays in the NSW Government rolling out mandatory masks last year, we can’t afford for the same mistakes to be made again.

“Testing needs to be improved, as does supply, access and distribution of vaccines. Too many people who need to be immunised now are being put onto waiting lists. Rail, tram and bus workers, for example, should have been placed in a high-priority bracket from day one.”