

## Rail strike: Silence from transport management forces rail workers to strike again

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Date : 18 October, 2021

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NSW rail workers have been forced to take industrial action again this month, following senior management at NSW Trains and Sydney Trains' continued refusal to meet with workers to negotiate fair wages and conditions, the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW says.

Neither senior management nor the Transport Minister have attended any negotiation meetings, despite the enterprise agreement expiring more than five months ago.

Sticking issues in the new enterprise agreement include a refusal to rule out further privatisation of transport services and jobs and a refusal to commit to a continued high standard of cleaning on our

trains.

The union is alerting the public to serious service disruptions on **Wednesday 20 October** when train crew will refuse to operate privately built trains.

A two-week ban on workers' working overtime will also commence next week from **Monday 25 October**, during which trains will likely be forced to run at a reduced timetable.

"We don't want to have to take any action, but rail workers have absolutely no choice but to try to make management listen to them, and industrial action is the only tool they have," says Alex Claassens, Secretary of RTBU NSW.

"Last month rail workers were forced to take the step of stopping our train network for the first time in decades, out of sheer desperation at the complete silence and disrespect from the NSW Government.

"Unbelievably, the silence and disrespect has continued. Senior management at NSW Trains and Sydney Trains have still not met with the combined workforce to negotiate the terms of an agreement that expired in May.

"Rail workers will again take every step to make sure essential workers can still get by while industrial action takes place this month, but we urge commuters to plan their travel carefully and leave extra time while industrial action takes place.

"All rail workers are asking for is safety and security for themselves and the travelling public, and for a halt to the silent sell-off of our rail network.

“This state government has a shocking record of dismantling, privatising and selling off our public transport, a policy they have enthusiastically continued under cover of the Covid pandemic.

“More and more of our state’s public transport jobs are being privatised and axed. It’s the public that loses out with an inferior service that is increasingly unsafe.

“The people of NSW have said time and again they want to keep public transport in public hands, and it’s high time they were listened to.”