

Rail workers call for common sense on Newcastle rail line

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Date : 31 July, 2014

The RTBU is calling on the NSW Government to immediately reverse the decision to truncate the Newcastle line at Wickham on Boxing Day in the interests of good planning,

Attending the Save Our Rail rally in Maitland today, RTBU State Secretary Alex Claassens said it was ludicrous to destroy a perfectly good piece rail infrastructure which allowed commuters access into the heart of Newcastle CBD.

“Regional communities across Australia are crying out for the kind of rail infrastructure Newcastle is lucky enough to have - a heavy rail line that takes you right into the heart of the city,” Mr Claassens said.

“It makes no sense at all to throw it away and force people onto secondary transport modes at the city outskirts.

“Stranding people outside the city to change onto a different transport mode makes a mockery of any government’s claim for improved transport in NSW.

“It’s the opposite of good customer service that the Transport Minister continually promises NSW commuters.”

Mr Claassens said the decision should be reversed and consultation undertaken in a transparent way – out from under the cloud of the Liberal Party election donations scandal currently before ICAC.

“This decision was already being questioned as being in the interests of the developers, not the community.

“Now we have all sorts of dodgy dealings with developer donations being exposed in front of ICAC.

“Surely the people of the Hunter deserve better. The Government needs to immediately act to keep the rail line open and go back to the drawing board on plans for the revitalization of Newcastle.”

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