

Rail workers call on govt to rip up New Regional Fleet contract amid safety fears

Categories : [Media releases](#)

Date : 13 December, 2021

MEDIA RELEASE



New trains set to be made by company behind cracked trams

Media release, 13 December: Rail workers are calling on the NSW Government to tear up the contract it has signed with a Spanish company to manufacture a new fleet of trains to run throughout regional NSW.

The Spanish company is the same company responsible for the inner-west trams, which are currently all off the tracks as a result of cracking throughout the fleet. The trams are out of warranty, which could mean taxpayers are forced to foot the bill for the repairs. Similar issues have

been found in the company's trams worldwide.

Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW Secretary, Alex Claassens, said for the NSW Government to push ahead with the contract for the New Regional Fleet in the face of worker concerns and in the wake of the light rail issues would be irresponsible at best.

"The NSW Government needs to put a hold on all overseas manufacturing contracts," Mr Claassens said.

"Workers have had grave safety concerns about these new trains even before we knew about the company's shocking track-record.

"The New Regional Fleet is designed to be built in such a way that the front carriage would be at real risk of derailment if it hits anything like a fallen tree or an animal on the tracks. That's a serious concern given that in Australia, particularly regional Australia, hitting things on our tracks is commonplace.

The RTBU understands that the NSW Government has signed a contract with the Spanish company, but the final design has not been signed off yet.

"This NSW Government's track record when it comes to transport management is getting beyond a joke. They've purchased trains that require massive infrastructure alterations, blown billions on a poorly managed light rail build, they've got a new fleet of trains sitting idle because they're too unsafe to operate and now they're looking at having to fork out huge amounts of money to fix the inner-west light rail.

"Now they want to buy another fleet of trains from overseas from a manufacturer already proven to deliver questionable rolling stock.

“It’s time the NSW Government implemented a quota on Australian built infrastructure and started putting commuter and worker safety first.”