

Rail workers: 'let us drive trains tomorrow' - NSW Government urged to put an end to its train stoppage

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Rail workers are urging the NSW Government to put an end to its train stoppage and allow them to resume commuter train services tomorrow.

The call comes as the Fair Work Commission announced another hearing on Wednesday. There was no outcome from Fair Work Commission discussions today.

Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW Secretary, Alex Claassens, said the NSW Government's

train stoppage was an incredible display of arrogance which left commuters high and dry on Monday.

“Today’s rail shut down was a huge dummy spit by the NSW Government, supported by their federal counterparts. We’re hopeful they’ll see sense and allow us to continue to operate train services tomorrow,” Mr Claassens said.

“With another hearing not scheduled till Wednesday, the state is facing another two days of a rail shutdown unless the government comes to its senses.

“The NSW Government’s treatment of Sydney and NSW Trains workers and commuters has been appalling for a long time, but then bringing in expensive lawyers in a bid to silence workers and then shutting down the whole rail network and inconveniencing commuters was a whole new low.

“To deliberately shut down the rail network on such a big day for many people, seemingly so they can run a fear campaign about unions or make a political point, is quite extraordinary.

“Rail workers were planning on taking low level industrial action that would have only impacted management, not commuters. It was the NSW Government who then shut the whole network down.”

Mr Claassens said Sydney and NSW Trains workers will be turning up to work ready to start trains again as soon as the government lets them.

“Rail workers will be there, ready to get our trains moving again whenever the NSW Government comes to its senses and lets us.

“It’s time the NSW Government stopped trying to bully workers into submission and holding the city to ransom and started resolving the laundry list of safety and employment issues workers have raised.”

Among the key sticking points in current enterprise agreement negotiations are:

- Privatisation – workers want a commitment that no train services or lines will be lost in the event of privatisation;
- Safety claims – workers want a guarantee that any changes to our services will leave them as safe or safer;
- Hygiene – workers want a commitment to maintaining the existing level of hygiene using good, full time jobs.