

## Train security: guards need back-up not blame

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Passenger security on Sydney's train network will continue to deteriorate unless the NSW Government commits to more high visibility staff on trains and platforms, the Rail Tram and Bus Union said today.

The RTBU supports an investigation into a very concerning incident this week where a young woman was the victim of an armed hold-up in the carriage of an evening suburban train.

However the context of declining staff numbers must be taken into account when considering security on the network, said acting State Secretary Dave Woollams.

"This incident comes just a month after the last of over 600 transit officers was removed from the Sydney Trains network," said Mr Woollams.

"Transit officers had authority to arrest offenders and were a visible reminder to passengers about on-board security.

"The RTBU has been concerned for some time that the transfer of security responsibility to police would reduce visible staff numbers and therefore passenger safety.

"Train guards are not responsible for security and are not equipped to tackle armed offenders on trains. Rather, they are responsible for contacting police as soon as trouble is identified or help is sought as appears to have happened in this case.

"Guards have many responsibilities on the train such as assisting customers with disabilities and making sure people get on and off the train safely.

"Train guards need back up from more staff on our trains and stations – not blame for situations out of their control."

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