



NSW Trains Guards – NIF Update

As you are aware, NSW Trains, without any prior consultation, presented their proposed remuneration and classification booklet (“Your Guide to the New Intercity Fleet”) to the RTBU on 28 November 2019. This outrageous move was immediately placed into dispute. During the conciliation attempt before Unions NSW, it became obvious that NSW Trains' intention is to introduce their proposal without any changes.

The RTBU filed the dispute with the Fair Work Commission. On 17 February 2020, the RTBU argued before the Commission that NSW Trains could not simply change classifications and pay rates as it saw fit. Deputy President Sams asked the RTBU and NSW Trains to discuss the pay proposal and give reasons for their positions.

In response to this, NSW Trains presented a wage offer to the Locomotive Division on 2 March 2020 for Drivers and on 13 March 2020, produced a “Proposed Base Rate Rationale” for the new Customer Service Guard classification.

The position taken by NSW Trains is that the Guard role is no longer required on the NIF and is to be replaced entirely by the CSG role. NSW Trains' proposal allows a significant number of duties to be removed, principally from safe working functions. NSW Trains wants to remove the Guards from their train preparation and stabling role in their proposed operating model. Drivers will be expected to manage the Platform Train Interface without a right of way from either the Guard or Station Staff. NSW Trains have determined that the CSG rate of pay will be equivalent to a CSAQ.

Significantly, NSW Trains also intends to remove the CSG role from the Train Crew section of the Agreement. This would effectively mean a loss of Guards Rostering and Working Arrangements, Cab and Security Allowances, kilometreage payments, and other entitlements that apply to Train Crew.

It is important to note that NSW Trains is currently undertaking a review of the Operator Instruction Manuals (OIM) to be introduced in conjunction with the arrival of the NIF. As yet proposed changes to OSPs, TWPs, etc. have not been agreed to or accepted by the RTBU. Until the OIM meetings have been completed and the exact role, tasks and safe working duties have been agreed, the RTBU is not in any position to contemplate what the appropriate pay rate is for the proposed CSG classification.

Fundamentally, the RTBU does not agree with the proposed changes to the Guard role and remains vehemently opposed to the operating model proposed by NSW Trains for the NIF. It is unsafe and will endanger lives.

Authorised by:
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