



BUS EXPRESS

News and views from life in the bus lane

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RTBU NSW Tram and Bus Division



Union pressure breaks Baird's back

In the Hunter, Mike Baird left the comfort of his lunch at Newcastle City Hall to address the gathering of more than 600 unionists and concerned locals.

Bowing to the pressure, Baird was forced to admit that his government had bungled the announcement of the privatisation, with many drivers first hearing about the sell off from passengers that morning.

Baird apologised and said that the next step would be "significantly improved communication" – a commitment that the Union will hold the Premier to.



In one to watch, Mike Baird even made the claim that if services were couldn't be improved, or wouldn't bring additional services, that the privatisation wouldn't go ahead.

These could be dangerous words for Mike Baird that could come back to bite him next year.

Timetable issues should be blamed for late buses, not drivers

Every driver knows there are many factors out of your control that can affect the reliable performance of bus services including traffic accidents, special events, wet weather conditions and road works – but usually, just traffic.

Add into that the closure of George Street, the issues with the Opal card continuing, and right there is a cocktail of reasons why buses could be late.



There have been a number of timetable and route changes caused by the closure of George Street, but without looking at where the routes start, and the time it now takes to get in and around the city, of course issues are going to build up.

There is just not enough time between stops on certain routes during peak times. Drivers and passengers deserve more realistic timetabling. If that issue was worked through properly, there would be fewer complaints.



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The organised chaos of peak-hour Wynyard



The Wynyard bus interchange is like a city in a city, with its own rules, and a transient population bigger than some regional towns.

As big as a city block, buses are stacked three

deep along Carrington Street, with the footpath just as clogged with commuters wanting nothing more than to be home.

But, amongst it all and holding back the chaos is Nick "The Noise" Karam.

Nick and his team work tirelessly in a high pressure environment few passengers would even comprehend.

Dealing with more than 7,000 commuters in an hour, well in excess of 60 buses, and any number of factors completely out of his control, Nick holds it all together with a voice that carries down the stands, and precision hand movements that guide and direct drivers down the interchange.

The casual ease with which Nick deals with every question from passing passengers and welcoming long time passengers back to the bus shows that this job is not just managing a flow of buses, but also a flow of people and recognising that a big smile and a warm welcome can make all the difference to someone's day as they head home.



Divisional Secretary Chris Preston



Vice President Brett Peters
Know your Rights

Wage Related Matters

15. Wages and Wage Increases

15.1 Subject to this clause, wage rates at Part B – Table 1 Weekly Wage Rates (Table 1) – for classifications listed in Table 1, incorporate the following wage increases:

(i) 2.38% from the first full pay period commencing on or after 1 January 2015; (ii) 2.5% from the first full pay period commencing on or after 1 January 2016; and (iii) 2.5% from the first full pay period commencing on or after 1 January 2017

15.2 The wage increases contained in this Award are in substitution of any State Wages decisions. Any arbitrated safety net adjustments may be offset against any equivalent amount in the rates of pay received by employees covered under this Award.

15.3 Wages shall be paid fortnightly.

Ryan Park shows his solidarity



On a visit to the Hunter, NSW Shadow Minister for Transport Ryan Park restated Labor's opposition to the privatisation of Newcastle Buses, its ferries, and proposed light rail network.

Mr Park is on board with the concerns of drivers, and gave his commitment to the Union and the members that he will take this issue to the Minister.

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