

BUS EXPRESS

News and views from life in the bus lane



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RTBU NSW Tram and Bus Division



Union rejects Award variation

The RTBU would like to assure members it has no intention of consenting to any Award variations following STA CEO Mr Peter Rowley's article on bus driver reforms in the last edition of *We're Moving Sydney* (formerly Transit Times).

It is disappointing that less than a year after negotiating their working conditions in good faith with State Transit, bus drivers are now being threatened with privatisation unless they accept proposed "efficiencies".

When the last negotiations took place it was with an understanding there would be no changes to the Award, from anyone, for three years. Now STA says it wants to go back on that agreement.

The union will stand firm and continue to argue that, in line with the three-year length of the Agreement, conditions will not change until it expires.

Members will shortly receive correspondence from the RTBU that will clearly outline the union's assessment of the reform proposals laid out by Mr Rowley in his article.

As soon as this correspondence has been sent to members, it will also be available for drivers to read at www.busexpress.com.au

DISPUTE: Certified sick leave

Your union is currently in dispute with State Transit over their continued practice of placing members who are in genuine need of sick leave and who have supplied doctors certificate on STA's absent management program.

Your union believes this practice contravenes the 2012 bus operator award and we are currently pursuing this matter through the dispute settlement process.

We will keep you informed with further developments as they arise.

Light Rail BBQ braves the elements



On a cold October day, in the pouring rain, Light Rail union members were the next stop on the RTBU BBQ tour.

Gary Way and David Woollams put on quite a spectacle braving the elements, taking it in turns to hold an umbrella over the BBQ chef.

In the end everyone enjoyed a hot meal and a good chat.

Gary and David would like to thank all the members who took the time to come along and get involved in their union.

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Rock throwing resolution

Drivers at the Hamilton and Belmont depot are relieved that management has put in place a protocol for managing rock or missile throwing incidents.

Newcastle delegates have been pushing for a concrete protocol in writing for some time.

Under the new protocol, when an incident occurs, the driver contacts the radio room which then must alert the police. An alert is also sent out to drivers advising them to avoid the route until the police have declared the area safe.

Drivers have been at their wit's end – feeling completely unsupported and vulnerable when in a dangerous situation because, without the protocol, the radio room was often not contacting police leaving drivers to fend for themselves.

The recent spate of attacks on drivers, which were highlighted by the media in Sydney and Melbourne, has brought this long-term problem into focus again and drivers are hoping that the new system will reduce the risk of danger on the job.

Well done to our Newcastle delegates for making this important step forward for driver safety.



**Divisional Secretary Chris Preston
and Divisional President Gary Way**



**Vice President Brett Peters
Know your Rights**

BBQ tour goes Novocastrian

The RTBU took the BBQ tour to Hamilton last week, where Chris, Gary and David took over the BBQ, cooking up a storm in the depot and having a chat with local members about the problems they are facing behind and away from the wheel.

The RTBU is very concerned about violence experienced by drivers on the job and has made it clear to the government that more need to be done to protect them from angry and violent passengers.



The union also made it's position on any variation to the current Award clear – we will not consent to it, and will continue to work to protect members from any attempt to water down conditions.

18. Income protection

18.1 There will be no roster changes made solely for the purpose of reducing the take home pay of employees covered by this Award.

18.2 No shift changes will result in a loss of take home pay of more than two percent over a twelve month period (based on a financial year), below the average pay of each shift type, e.g.: AM, Day, Midday, Broken and PM shifts, except for part time rosters. For the avoidance of doubt, shift changes shall include both major and minor shift changes.

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