

BUS EXPRESS

News and views from life in the bus lane



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RTBU NSW TRAM AND BUS DIVISION



Dear members,

We've wrapped up NSW May Day rallies, with fantastic turnouts from the RTBU in Wollongong, Newcastle and Sydney. Thank you to every member who came along and brought their families. It's fair to say we all walked away from the rally with a renewed sense of empowerment and feeling truly geared up to #ChangeTheRules. Not just that but it was a great day for families, with kids enjoying free rides and BBQ lunch favourites. Thank you to drivers who were working on those days, helping keep the public of NSW moving.

In May we also attended the second debate in parliament about the disastrous Newcastle bus timetable changes. The debate was triggered by the petition that tens of thousands of commuters signed opposing the timetable changes implemented by the Keolis Downer in January. The first debate (held in April) highlighted the myriad of problems the new timetable has caused commuters and workers in the region. Thursday's debate highlighted even more.

Newcastle is the perfect example of why privatisation doesn't work, yet our Transport Minister is continuing to push his privatisation agenda in other areas of the state, like in region six.

Bus privatisation results in fewer stops, less buses and longer journey times. All of a sudden, the needs of the commuter are secondary to the private operator's need to turn a profit. We've seen more evidence of that today, with a local Labor MP raising concerns that Keolis Downer is chopping up the bus network and forcing passengers to swap services in order to get its per-passenger incentive payments from the government.

Thank you to everyone who joined us at parliament to hear first-hand why privatisation is a disaster. The battle against privatisation continues...

In Solidarity,

Chris Preston and Dave Woollams

May Day rallies

Thank you to everyone who came along to the May Day rallies across the state to rally for workers rights, and to #ChangeTheRules

RTBU Bus & Tram Division Secretary, Chris Preston, said "In Sydney and in Newcastle, the RTBU's marching squads were buzzing with energy. In Sydney the whole CBD heard us bellow "Shame on Constance" and it was fantastic to see our passion and energy come together in one march."

"I was proud to see so many of the Bus & Tram division members come along and bring their families as we marched together with workers across the state."



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Gladys Berejiklian sets 18-month deadline to fix congestion woes

The NSW Premier has been in the media this week, talking up her plan to fix Sydney's congestion issues. This story comes from a Government who are already running far behind schedule and soaring over budget on every project that they get their hands on.

Chris Preston, RTBU NSW Bus & Tram Division Secretary said, "This is just an attempt to convince voters that the NSW Liberal Government is doing something about our shocking congestion here in Sydney. But instead of fixing and investing in our public transport, they are selling it off to private companies at every chance they get. Whether it's the privatisation of Sydney's Inner-West buses the privatisation of Newcastle's buses, or the closures of major rail lines along Epping to Chatswood and Sydenham to Bankstown, or even the mismanagement of Sydney's train timetable; Sydney commuters are getting the raw end of the deal at every turn. This Government are only creating more havoc for Sydney commuters, not less." Read the story by Anna Caldwell in the Daily Telegraph

Labor says Keolis Downer contract encourages shorter bus routes in Newcastle

Charlestown MP Jodie Harrison has accused the state government of encouraging Keolis Downer to "chop up" Newcastle's bus network by offering it per-passenger incentive payments.

The company said in March that its passenger numbers were up 4.9 per cent in January. But Hunter Labor MPs have argued that the company has divided some direct routes into two and sometimes three separate services under a new network introduced in January. Read the full story in the Newcastle Herald.

Sydney buses: one-in-10 services regularly late in some suburbs

Sydney's commuters are suffering because of poor timetabling and under resourcing by this NSW Government.

RTBU NSW Bus & Tram Division President, Dave Woollams said, "Minister Constance's greedy privatisation scheme is only going to make Sydney's bus congestion worse. We've already seen the plans to slash Inner-West bus stops when Transit Systems begins on July 1 this year, and there's no doubt that they will cut routes, close bus stops and reduce services in order to make a profit out of our public services.



The answer is investing in our public transport services, not selling it off."

Check out RTBU NSW Bus & Tram Division Secretary Chris Preston speaking to Channel 9 News on Bus Express.

SMH: Second firm takes legal action over light rails

The disaster that is Sydney's light rail project demonstrates Andrew Constance's complete incompetence and recklessness. Not only is the project (a single light rail line down one street) billions over budget it is running years overdue, inconveniencing hundreds of thousands of Sydneysiders every day. Now, another company is suing the NSW Government. Head to Bus Express to read about this story in the Sydney Morning Herald.



DIVISIONAL SECRETARY
CHRIS PRESTON

DIVISIONAL PRESIDENT
DAVID WOOLLAMS

