

BUS EXPRESS

News and views from life in the bus lane



Edition No. 9 • 26 October 2011

RTBU NSW Tram and Bus Division



Gas bus action vindicated

Last week bus drivers took a strong stand for workplace safety, after video footage came to light showing a dangerous explosion on a gas-powered STA bus in July.

Because of your actions, STA was forced to finally start taking the issue seriously - after months of assuring drivers that everything was fine.

On Monday drivers were publicly vindicated when STA advised the Industrial Relations Commission (IRC) that it would be going to tender for fire suppression systems, which will be added to around 250 Mercedes gas-powered buses.

This is a major step forward, and could be the difference between a minor incident and a major catastrophe next time a problem occurs with the gas-powered buses.

The Industrial Relations Commission also advised your union to detail its other suggestions for improved safety in a formal letter to STA.

STA will have to provide a detailed response to the letter in the IRC on Monday 7 November.

STA now knows that it can no longer sweep safety problems under the carpet

But while drivers were putting public safety first, Premier Barry O'Farrell was carrying on like a pork chop, accusing drivers of "bastardry" and boasting that he would fight us "to the death".

The introduction of the fire suppressant on gas-powered buses will hopefully prevent the unnecessary deaths of drivers and passengers, so the Premier will have to find other ways to kill us off.

Safety was, and remains, our number one priority.

There are still a lot of questions that need to be answered. Other measures, like buzzers to alert drivers to fires in the engine, are also needed. We will keep you informed as we continue to work through this very important issue.



The exploding bus



The aftermath

See the full video of the explosion online at:
busexpress.com.au

www.busexpress.com.au

Sign up now, and get your news as it happens!



Unions show support for drivers standing up for safety

At the last meeting at Unions NSW the Bus Division tabled a letter, explaining the action that drivers took to ensure their safety and the safety of passengers after a bus exploded at Port Botany.

In response to this letter tabled Unions NSW recommended:

"That the correspondence be received and Unions NSW endorse the actions of the RTBU and their members in bringing to a head their concerns with respect to gas buses. Unions NSW notes the setting up of a working party to investigate the union's safety concerns."

Further, we condemn the NSW Government for not having taken action earlier to adequately address the union's concerns that potentially unsafe gas-powered buses could risk the lives of both passengers and workers."

In addition to this the Electrical Trades Union submitted a letter to the meeting, which said that the aggressive statements made by Barry O'Farrell in response to bus drivers actions were "absurd" and "absolutely counter-productive".

As result of this Unions NSW further recommended:

"That the correspondence be received and Unions NSW call upon the Premier to stop his extreme language against trade unions which only serves to demean his position as the Premier of NSW."

Drivers will not be intimidated by the State Government's public vilification of them and the support shown by other unions shows we are not alone.

The full letters and recommendations are online at busexpress.com.au



Divisional Secretary Chris Preston and Divisional President Gary Way

Burwood depot roster dispute resolved

A notice of dispute was posted at the Burwood Depot on October 7 the day after it was discovered that no staff member had been rostered on to replace the usual evening refueller who was away on holiday.

As a result after 7pm there was only one yard supervisor (with some help from the duty manager) to park and fuel nearly 80% of the fleet.

Due to the danger of this process, the following day the matter was put into dispute.

Subsequently the depot manager agreed that in future someone will be rostered on to cover the shift and the dispute was removed.

Know your rights with Brett Peters

Section 28. Hours of Work

28.5 Length of Shift – the ordinary hours of duty on any shift shall be no greater than nine hours and no less than seven.

28.6 Broken Shifts – On any broken shift portion the ordinary hours of duty shall be no greater than five hours.

28.7 The maximum spread of hours on any broken shift shall be 12 hours



www.busexpress.com.au
Sign up now, and get your news as it happens!

