

26 February 2021

## **STA AWARD NEGOTIATION UPDATE**

Dear Member

We are in a difficult situation to say the least due to the COVID-19 pandemic, increased joblessness, looming privatization, the economic downturn, and a State Government that wanted to give government sector workers no pay increase at all (a wage freeze) but was forced by the Industrial Relations Commission to give a 0.3% pay increase instead.

To be faced with a punitive wage reduction in the middle of a pandemic is not something anyone is happy with.

The first question, can we fight the 0.3%? With increasing unemployment nationwide, the answer is 'no'.

You told us that keeping your current conditions and entitlements was a priority for you. To do this we needed to stop STA from taking conditions out of the Award and we needed to get some of your entitlements from STA policy/procedure's into the Award to protect them in the future with a private operator.

STA was instructed by Transport for NSW that whatever changes we asked for had to be 'cost neutral'. We also learned that STA alone was not able to decide on changes to the Award. Any changes must be approved by TfNSW, before being sent to the Government. This has made the negotiations a lot more difficult than usual.

However, your negotiating committee was able to get some valuable improvements into the Award by arguing that they were cost neutral as they are your current entitlements, even if they are only in STA policy and not in the Award. The committee was also able to get some other entitlements into the Award that applied to other public sector employees, and which were not in your Award.

**RAIL, TRAM & BUS UNION (NSW BRANCH) ABN 55 090 785 801**

83-89 Renwick Street, Redfern NSW 2016 T (02) 9319 7277 E [nswbus@rtbu-nsw.asn.au](mailto:nswbus@rtbu-nsw.asn.au) W <https://tramandbusexpress.com.au>

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Some of the entitlements the negotiating committee has succeeded in getting into the Award are:

- Definition of a shift worker and inclusion of 5 weeks annual leave tied to the definition
- Inclusion of 5 weeks annual leave per year for a shift worker
- Increasing Paid Maternity and Adoption Leave from 12 weeks to 14 weeks
- 8 weeks' unpaid Concurrent Parental Leave
- Arrangements for stillbirth/miscarriage/death of a child
- Arrangements for subsequent pregnancy/adoption
- Inclusion of Altruistic Surrogacy Leave
- Inclusion of Out of Home Care Leave
- Inclusion of Military Leave
- Inclusion of Emergency Leave
- Inclusion of a consultation clause
- Increase of Domestic Violence Leave provisions from 5 days unpaid to 10 days paid leave per year

The RTBU will also have the opportunity to negotiate some of what we couldn't get from STA, TfNSW and the State government during these negotiations, into a federal Enterprise Agreement when a new employer takes over. Our division (the Tram & Bus division) is also committed to ensuring both the Salaried and Workshop Awards are negotiated at the same time as the Bus Operations Award with the new employer. This means that no group of members will be left to negotiate alone, in a position of weakness.

The government has also said that if the RTBU indicates we have an 'in principle' agreement by March 1st, 2021 (with only some wording still to be discussed), the 0.3% will be back paid to 1 January 2021. The amount of back pay may only be a tiny amount, but your negotiating committee cannot make a decision that rejects this offer without asking you, our members, because it is your money in your pockets if you decide to accept this Award.

Your negotiating committee has therefore written to STA indicating that we believe we have achieved as much as we can (the real fact is that we are simply not going to get anything else from them) and that we are taking the Award to members' meetings for approval. If you approve the Award over the next couple of weeks during member meetings at Depots, we believe you will get the backpay.

A list of meeting dates, times and location are listed below. Please come to the meetings, after all this is your Award and contains your working conditions and entitlements which will transfer over with you to the new operator when transition occurs.

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| <b><u>EA Committee Depot Visits</u></b> |                          |               |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Dates</b>                            | <b>Times</b>             | <b>Depots</b> |
| Mon 01 <sup>st</sup> March              | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | Mona Vale     |
| Mon 01 <sup>st</sup> March              | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | Willoughby    |
| Tues 02 <sup>nd</sup> March             | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | Ryde          |
| Tues 02 <sup>nd</sup> March             | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | Randwick      |
| Wed 03 <sup>rd</sup> March              | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | North Sydney  |
| Wed 03 <sup>rd</sup> March              | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | Port Botany   |
| Thurs 04 <sup>th</sup> March            | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | Waverley      |
| Thurs 04 <sup>th</sup> March            | 9.00am, 11.00am & 1.00pm | Brookvale     |



David Babineau  
Divisional Secretary  
NSW Rail Tram & Bus Union



Daniel Jagers  
Divisional President  
NSW Rail Tram & Bus Union

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