



Rail, Tram and Bus Union

MEDIA RELEASE

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Addressing privatisation disaster essential for improving buses

Addressing the problems created by the privatisation of Sydney's buses – including the significant driver shortage - needs to be a key focus of the NSW Government, the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) NSW says.

The call follows the release of second report from the Bus Taskforce established to deliver better bus services in the state.

“There’s no question that our bus services have been neglected for too long and as a result workers and commuters have suffered, but we also need to acknowledge and address the fact that privatisation has directly caused many of the issues facing our buses today,” Mr Babineau said.

“Despite chronic underfunding and a complete lack of forward planning from the former government in NSW, when buses were state-owned they were able to function at a reasonable, albeit not perfect, standard. That all changed when our buses were sold off to the private sector.

“Addressing the myriad of issues created by privatisation needs to be a priority if we’re going to improve our bus services long-term. That includes fixing the two-tiered workforces, chronic underpayment and other workplace issues which are playing a big part in the recruitment and retention issues we’re facing.

“The taskforce report acknowledges that we don’t just need to fix our current bus issues but grow the system to cater for our growing population. We won’t be able to do that until the issues caused by privatisation are resolved.

“In a city like Sydney, it’s disgraceful that people can’t rely on a bus to get them where they need to go and it’s also disgraceful that the bus drivers desperately we need and rely on are forced to deal with the fact that many of them are employed under different conditions.

“It’s good to see action starting to take place, but unless we deal with the huge issues caused by privatisation we’ll just be band-aiding over the real problems.”

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