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I was asked at a Union meeting recently what to expect in the next round of bargaining for the new Enterprise Agreements. In this case it was a Metro member enquiry, but VLine is in the exact same circumstance. It is difficult to give an answer that would comfort members.

Given VLine’s recent conduct and Metro’s continued push to introduce second tier train operator positions, there is no doubt that member’s work conditions will be under attack. Unfortunately a consistent and worrying trend is emerging in Industrial Relations and numerous employers are exploiting the Fair Work Act (the Act) Section 226 which permits the termination of an Industrial Agreement after its nominal expiry date upon application to the Fair Work Commission (FWC).

The FWC must terminate the agreement if:
- It is satisfied that it is not contrary to the public interest to do so, and
- the FWC considers that it is appropriate to terminate the agreement taking into account all the circumstances including:
  - (i) the views of the employees, each employer, and each employee organisation (if any), covered by the agreement; and
  - (ii) the circumstances of those employees, employers and organisations including the likely effect that the termination will have on each of them.

This section of the Act is a legacy of the Howard Liberal Government. There was an attempt in 2017 to change the Law by the Independent MP Andrew Wilke with Labours’ support which failed because of the Liberals and Nationals opposition to it. The above failed amendment to the Act was an attempt to ensure that workers were not worse off after a termination of an Enterprise Agreement. Although, we are now left with this legal anomaly until we have a change of government. Labour has committed to amending the Act when in Government.

The effect of the FWC’s full bench decision in the Aurizon case, which was previously known as Queensland Rail before privatisation, the full bench terminated 12 Aurizon Enterprise Agreements in April 2015 that had passed their nominal expiry date. The tragic effect on the rail workers was for those who had accrued leave, Long Service Leave and a range of other benefits and conditions were reduced to the minimum prescribed in the 2010 Rail Award rates, including a reduction to the hourly pay rate. This cost rail employees thousands of dollars with no legal recourse to recoup their losses.

As part of the Howard Liberal Government attack on workers, Awards were stripped to the bare minimum in many industries. Since 2015 there have been 850 Enterprise Agreements...
terminated by the FWC, impacting many thousands of workers, usually in smaller enterprises, but some are large employers like A.G.L in Loy Yang (Gippsland Victoria) and Murdoch University in Western Australia 2017 which had 3000 employees and is a public institution funded by tax payers. The owners of Streets Ice-Cream, Unilever, had used this section of the Act to drive down wages, or as a means of coercion or black-mailing workers into accepting wage reductions of between 20-45%.

The FWC has given management a massive advantage in negotiations for a new Enterprise Agreement with its interpretation of Section 226. Since 2015 the FWC also interceded in the NSW rail dispute and prevented the RTBU from taking protected industrial action in support of a new agreement as prescribed in the Fair Work Act.

It seems employers can cry foul and claim unfairness to their various enterprises and the Fair Work Commission is very sympathetic and receptive, even though in this case RTBU NSW acted precisely in accordance with the Law. In contrast, the FWC’s demeanour when the law is used by employers to drastically cut wages and entitlements of workers, no such consideration or sympathy is demonstrated.

The system is flawed because when the bosses propose an Agreement that they know the employees will reject, they then drag out negotiations until the nominal expiry date then apply to the commission for a termination of the Agreement.

The A.C.T.U describes it as industrial blackmail where workers are faced with the choice of pay reductions or worse. Streets Ice Cream and AGL for example used it precisely that way. The choice for workers was to either accept the proposed Agreement with cuts to wages and conditions or take even more severe pay cuts and reductions to the value of their accrued benefits as per the 2010 Award when the Enterprise Agreement is terminated.

We will see this tactic employed in the next negotiation for Enterprise Agreements by the Chinese owned Metro Trains and their acolytes at VLine.

The Loco Division is preparing a strategy to counter them later this year.

MM
Metro continues to try and get drivers to be spectators to the implementation of the High Capacity Metro Trains—H.C.M.T—so they can claim consultation to try and introduce the second tier driver on the HCMT Territory.

Metro has claimed that close to 100 drivers have attended the Burrarung Marr facility where the HCMT is on display. They don’t tell you that the bulk of those attendees were Metro Managers that were Ex Drivers; and if they attended more than once that is also counted and of course Metro gets the sycophant feedback. We even have a report of trainees being taken to observe the new train which also counts as consultation.

Metro acknowledges there are ‘unresolved issues in relation to the project’ but does not address them. They prefer to Black Ban the participation of the Locomotive Division office bearers because they ask difficult questions. Metro’s strategy is to persevere with the implementation of the second tier drivers with the ultimate aim of driving down your wages and conditions. There is no doubt about their goal. That’s why they refuse to drop the implementation of the cut rate train operator position.

Metro says its “absolutely committed to progressing discussions” to implement HCMT which really is nothing more than legitimising the introduction of HCMT and then Metro taking advantage (Shaft) train drivers in two and a half years’ time. I have attached some copies on the next page of correspondence and exchanges with Metro for the information of the wider Locomotive Division membership as there is interest from other areas.

One message “DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANYTHING REGARDING HCMT”
Do what you are paid to do - not more, not less.

This issue will become a hot political issue within the next 6-8 months. This can be averted if the Locomotive Division is able to secure your future wages and conditions if Metro abandons the introduction of the second tier train positions.—MM

The Locomotive Division has become aware of the two individuals that have taken upon themselves to assist Metro with the implementation of smart phones. They have been flattered by Metro into participation but have no expertise in securing privacy conditions for members or have any understanding of what real time surveillance is and the recording of sign off and sign on times via the smart phone. They are potentially condemning the whole Metro train driver population to whatever the outcome Metro wants with their collaboration, all this for a few days of special duties they should reconsider what they are doing.

Metro have been advised if they compel drivers to take a smart phone whilst on duty, Metro cannot force drivers to take the phone in their off duty time and to prepare a procedure for the phone to be deposited at the end of a shift and picked up at the beginning of a shift. That is the only way that you can ensure that you privacy is not breached whilst you’re off-duty. - MM
The Locomotive Division has been informed by WM that all new workers in the area are being scheduled to work with the new MTR system. All new workers must be trained on the new MTR system before they can work with it.

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For those that are unaware, VL ine’s management embarked on a novel industrial strategy to try and remove Locomotive Drivers conditions in training and recruitment in the current Enterprise Agreement. These former Metro managers tried to exploit a provision in the Fair Work Act 2009 that provides for variations to the Enterprise Agreement. In the past a variation could be negotiated between the affected division, and if agreement was reached and supported by the affected workers, it would be implemented. This process was endorsed in Jan 2017 as part of the Union rules.

This group of VL ine leaders decided to exploit the Fair Work Act that stipulates that only a vote must be taken of those that work under the Enterprise Agreement. to achieve a variation. Even though the current agreement has sections for common clauses then divides into various groups such as Loco Drivers, conductors and shunters etc. VL ine sent out a notice while the Union office was closed between Christmas 2017 and New Year 2018, inviting the Union office bearers to attend presentations, which did not occur.

V/Line then placed the proposed deletions and changes that it wanted to the Enterprise Agreement, which only affected Locomotive Drivers, into the workplace, followed by presentations to the Non-Driving grades of employees.

Interestingly Mr Pinder did not hold or speak at any meetings at Locomotive Driver Depots.

It was reported by those that attended the Pinder show that it was short on details or facts, one member describing the performance as a ‘tawdry carnival huckster, just hot air, no substance’. That may be accurate but to me it is much more sinister and one can only speculate as to the outcome they are aiming to achieve. What’s troubling if you reflect on other industries, including Rail, there has been a concerted push to deskil and depreciate the established training roles and outcomes; how would that be achieved? Initially by eliminating in house training and outsourcing training so there is no direct oversight of the competency attained by candidates.

One model is to have an outside registered training organisation to deliver training, in this example, which is actually occurring now in one section of the rail industry. I refer to a third party entity offering an ‘introduction to the rail industry’ and they provide training at the applicants cost; that is when you hear phrases like ‘21st Century Desktop E-Learning’ and ‘Virtual reality’. I already know that V/Line is seeking to get any future applicants to pay the costs of entry medicals and police checks. This Division’s experience is that the RTO is far removed from the process and the third party entity undertakes all the training and the disposable training experts or subject matter expert position take the responsibility of ticking all the boxes to verify that candidates are trained in all aspects of theory for Train Running. The candidates are then placed on locomotives for a period of 250 hours at no pay which they have agreed to in writing (because they are acquiring 21st Century skills), at the end of this period they are alleged fit to operate.

The reality is these unfortunate candidates are turned out and it’s no reflection on them but a significant number have no idea what’s required to do the job. Our long suffering members are left to make it work. Some do and some don’t. These candidates are not employed by the primary rail operator, they’re not permanent employees. They are offered to be on the books by the third party as casuals and receive 2/3 the standard rate of pay in the applicable Enterprise Agreement.

The experience to date has been significant breaches to the EA and health and safety conditions have occurred. The individuals courageous enough to raise issues are not offered work in the future and when matters are raised by the Union about lack of training and practical experience, training is begrudgingly given to those people usually after a Fair Work Commission appearance.

Welcome to the world of the expendable work force and it is my belief that this extraordinary push from the current V/Line management is to create this type of work environment in one form or another.

The unforeseen problem is that the EAs have the same flaw, it exists in the V/line EA and the Metro EA which is there is no prohibition for the use of third part labour hire companies. This is one possible outcome, but not the only one that the current V/Line management could be
angling for. In a sense V/line has done the Locomotive Division a service; they have put us on notice for a range of matters that must be addressed at the next round of bargaining for the new EA.

Mr Pinder has achieved a rare first, which brings to mind a famous quote from Abraham Lincoln “you can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time”. Mr Pinder has fooled no people at any time.

There are some concerning aspects to the means that was used for Voting.

Immediately prior to the vote taking place, V/Line published the number of eligible voters for the variation in the EA was 1216 in which he offered each employee a gift of taxpayer money of $1500. When the voting results were published there were 207 additional people voting. Some questions arise as to the authorisation for a public servant, Mr Pinder, offering financial inducements to vote yes! These funds could be in excess of $2.1 million of taxpayer’s money if V/Line was successful. Who has authorised the alleged tax free gift of public money? Pinder claims the minister is supporting him; we have not been able to get an answer so far. The Locomotive Division believes that V/Line has not been completely honest with the Ministers office.

The senior V/Line management cabal so-far has proved to be a paragon of integrity, honesty and fairness only matched by their ethical conduct over the Dec 2017-Jan 2018 period. There is an old saying ‘the fish rots from the head first’ meaning bad leadership will damage an organisation. We can expect more rotten behaviour from this mob in the future.

- MM

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**RTBU Locomotive Division**

**SCHOLARSHIPS**

The RTBU Locomotive Division, through the Department of Education offer the children of financial members scholarships EVERY YEAR.

Applications open every November and close in February the following year.

Scholarships are available for children of financial members of the RTBU Locomotive Division

Applications can only be made online at: https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/scholarships/
Public Transport Victoria has commissioned the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board (RISSB) to conduct a review of the Victorian rule book which is to be implemented by mid 2019. The rule book committee, which comprises of representatives from Metro, V/Line, ARTC, and the Rail Tram and Bus Union have had 22 meetings to date.

The PTV funded changes to the rule book and the cost from development to implementation, including training, is estimated to be approximately $19 million dollars.

Work places will be updated as the rule book develops.

**Standard Gauge**
The Victorian Government will be funding Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS) on the Melbourne to Albury standard gauge. This system will be installed at crossing loops, Benalla, Wangaratta, Wodonga and Albury. The passing lanes will be not be included in this project.

Changes will be made to TA20 (Victorian Rule Book) to ‘on track rules’ and also to the Condition Affecting Network (CAN). Training has commenced with the new rules to be implemented by July 1, 2018.

The Union have raised concerns over a period of time about HSR's not being trained in the Comcare System. ARTC employees are covered by Comcare, with /Line crews being covered by Worksafe. The problem with this is that V/Line are operating on a network covered by Comcare (from Melbourne to Albury) and the HSR's have no authority to use the Comcare system.

**Over Population Issues**
Train services have increased over time resulting in the employment of additional trainees and drivers. There are currently 213 drivers in country locations and 264 drivers, including trainees at Southern Cross. This has resulted in a shortage of car parks, lockers, toilets and space in general with no planning in place to cater for the expanding workforce.

**The ‘NO’ Campaign**
A campaign run by the RTBU as a collective to STOP V/line stripping the conditions of our Enterprise Agreement was successfully fought and won with a ‘NO’ vote and many thanks goes to the members who voted.

Vline’s Train wreck ‘YES’ campaign
Management have indicated that Vline’s classic fleet will finished by 2025.

The National Locomotive Divisional council met recently with drivers represented from every state in Australia. There is a commonality with issues across the states.
Hypocrisy - The Silent Company Value

“Hypocrite: The man who murdered both his parents, and then pleaded on the grounds that he was an orphan.”

– Abraham Lincoln

What is a hypocrite?

1. A person who pretends to have virtues, moral or religious beliefs, principles, etc., that he or she does not actually possess, especially a person whose actions belie stated beliefs.

2. A person who feigns some desirable or publicly approved attitude, especially one whose private life, opinions, or statements belie his or her public statements.

It would not be considered unreasonable to believe that the expectations imposed on employees’ should be the same standard for the employer and management alike. Unfortunately the double standard that exists by the ‘do as we say and not as we do’ approach by rail operators is astounding.

The following are real examples involving two (2) different companies from the rail industry;

Company 1

Employee Standard:

An employee of approximately three decades of service without incident and no record was involved in alleged misconduct using inappropriate language over the phone.

Action Taken:

Job Loss

Employer Standard:

A married manager involved in a workplace affair with a subordinate colleague which subsequently led to the promotion of the said colleague to a newly created better paying position.

Action Taken:

Manager promoted to a more lucrative Senior Management role.

Company 2

Employee Standard:

An employee suspended from work for alleged bullying, harassment and intimidation of a manager that took place on a day that could not be determined and with evidence that has not been provided.

Action Taken:

Suspended with outcome pending

Employer Standard:

A manager who has a history of bullying, harassing and intimidating multiple employees to the point that one of the employee’s had a
mental breakdown and has not been able to return to work. This is also the same manager that alleges serious misconduct of the employee in company 2.

**Action Taken:**
Manager promoted to a more lucrative Management role.

It appears that managerial discretion also applies to whom and how the company policies and procedures are applied which is usually to the detriment of coal face employees and not management and their entourage. This is where the problem begins.

When there is no consistency in outcomes achieved and people are treated differently because of the positions they hold, there is a procedural imbalance that is not fair or impartial.

Over the years working in the rail industry I have known many members who believed that the employer would afford them a fair and reasonable process in the event they made an error or came under notice for something in the workplace. Unfortunately the same members no longer work in the industry because they either represented themselves, took a family member to the interview as a support person, received advice from the Meal Room Barrister or the Concourse QC.

**How do you fix the judge, jury and executioner employer model?**
A step in the right direction would be to work towards an appeals model that is independent from the company in order to remove any unfairness, bias or predetermined outcomes.

**What can you do to be better prepared?**
Consult and seek assistance from your Union on any company matters that may require investigation or information to be provided.

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**No means No!**

**Hands up who Voted No.**

Firstly, I would like to commend the solidarity and support shown by all members and officials within the RTBU. The campaign and vote return sent a clear message to V/Line management about the unprincipled attack on working conditions and that message was that we are not for sale.

During the Christmas period V/Line CEO James Pinder (Also Former GM Rollingstock Metro Trains Melbourne) set out on a premeditated attempt to snatch hard fought conditions through a variation process that is normally applied by consent or to remove ambiguity within an agreement and not to pursue further claims.

There has been much speculation about who was involved but what I can advise members of is the following:

1. Management at V/Line behind the attack on conditions were also former Metro Managers behind a failed attempt to introduce a second tier Train Driver on the suburban network.
2. The revised training programs at V/Line had a striking resemblance to the Metro Scheme.
3. Tax payer money was allocated to the variation as bait for members to vote yes.
4. There exists a fairly lengthy process within Government to approve tax payer funding.

There will be further attacks on permanent employment and job security at V/Line and the rail industry. With these challenges that we will face you can either live your working career on your knees or you can fight on your feet; given the results of the vote the question is answered. - JC
V/Line’s pursuit of happiness through Whistleblowers

The former Metro Trains Manager and now CEO of V/Line Mr James Pinder advised the membership that the company has engaged the paid services of an “Independent” and “Confidential” whistleblowing service called ‘STOPLine’.

Previously, Metro Trains Melbourne had engaged the same company StopLine and paid for their services, offered as an “Independent Whistleblower” contact point. The reality was it investigated Union Officials and Drivers and wrote a report that was subsequently used in an attempt to besmirch the reputation of the Driving Grade and their Union Officials. This report was never released.

Companies like Metro Trains tend to contract the services of external organisations like STOPLine to give the appearance of being independent and based on facts. The reality is more akin to smoke and mirrors which is accomplished through a formula called the balance of probabilities i.e., the probability that some event happens is portrayed as a trend and they draw conclusions through this hypothetical trend which at the very least is subject to their bias.

V/Line management controls what is published and anything that portrays the workforce or the Union in a poor light will be published, anything that is negative about management won’t be published because of privilege or commercial in confidence. After all they bought and paid for the report.

I believe that all members should treat this honourable approach by the CEO in the quest for truth and justice as long as the pursuit is not of management with contempt.

We have seen examples of the CEO’s with the tax free bribe to Vote ‘YES’ for changes to and Enterprise Agreement that was attempted to be driven through a process that could be viewed as dishonest, unethical, not transparent and without integrity. - JC
Firstly, I would like to welcome all the new starts who have commenced at V/Line in the last couple of months.

Both trainees and conversation drivers; you all have clearly made the right decision and hopefully you will be through the training process without too many delays. We are here for all members, so if you have any issues please do not hesitate to contact us, we are here to help you.

Fatality procedures

Recently one of our regional drivers was unfortunate to be involved in a fatality; as if this was not bad enough the delays in getting this driver off duty were excessive and unreasonable and something we hope never happens again.

We have since asked for the system to be reviewed and where possible a suitably qualified RDS would be able to conduct both alcohol and drug testing, take an informal statement and ensure the affected driver is driven home.

Let’s face it, it’s 2018 and we have changed everywhere in the industry except in driver welfare. The last thing any driver needs after any traumatic experience is to be requested to make a full detailed statement while in a state of shock. The main priority needs to be, get this driver home!

SAFETY – PPE

We would also like to report a lack in the supply of PPE being on hand at manpower since John McFarlane has been off sick. PPE is issued for your safety and protection against injury. This is not being managed correctly and we should never be running out of essential PPE supplies. If PPE is unavailable, you should contact your RDS and they need to chase it up.

New Phone Policy

A reminder to all crews of the recent introduction of a new phone policy; in Active cabs the issued phone must be turned off and placed in your bag or out of sight. Don’t be distracted by the TTB radio either, answer it only when you feel it safe to do so!, unless in an emergency where you can safely bring your train to a stand.

With regards to the accompanying cover letter asking for your signature and the possible disciplinary action for failure to comply, we have explained to management that we have never had any agreement where crews sign for company procedures.

One would guess that this pettiness is all part of the micromanagement regime we are going through. The CEO stated one manager per 31 employees is his goal; it’s going to get rather crowded around here.

Remember Safety doesn’t take a holiday.

- HH

| MAR 2018 | LOCO LINES | 15 |
Metro Go

Metro are continuing to push ahead with the implementation of smart phones for the driving grade, I am yet to be convinced how this can be utilised safely in the train cab.

There have been a number of safety bulletins issued by numerous regulators in Australia and internationally regarding the dangers around distraction with the use of mobile devices in the cabs of active trains. Metro’s current policy does not allow the use of such devices in the train cab as it is proven to be a distraction.

I am not aware of any other operators in Australia that allow the use of smart phones in cabs, whilst Metro portray themselves as pioneers in the industry I am extremely concerned that this will lead to a major incident on the network.

Queensland currently do not allow for phones to be used in stabling sidings let alone in an active cab.

Back to the Future

Some would remember a couple of years back when a humpy was installed at North Melbourne and Drivers rostered to change over with the intent to free up Flinders street, well its back! Metro is currently trialling standby Drivers at North so they can transpose trains and keep Drivers in position.

I am not sure who resurrected this idea as none of the managers will take this as their own, I can only assume it has come from the powers that be.

Sky Rail

Training has commenced for a portion of the Sky rail that has currently opened with the minimum training determined as an instructed view and an instructed drive. The outcomes of the route risk assessments are a minimum; if you are not confident or do not believe you are competent you are entitled to more training. If there is any pressure or coercion placed on you to sign to say you are competent please contact the Loco office.

Sky Rail Emergency Evacuation Paths

Metro has refused to allow Health and Safety Representatives the ability to inspect the sky rail emergency evacuation paths. The paths are constructed from polished xlerplate (checker plate), this product comes with a safety sheet from BlueScope with one particular section “warning this material is not suitable for wet surface conditions”.

You may have also noticed that there is only a post and rail fence preventing anyone from falling from the Sky rail on the emergency evacuation path. The opposite side has hoarding on one side and a post and rail fence on the track side to ensure protection for maintenance personnel.

The current procedure for an uncontrolled evacuation requires the Driver to conduct a dynamic hazard assessment to determine if it is safe to evacuate the train.

I find it hard to see how the evacuation path would be safer than using the maintenance path when evacuating a train load of passengers including children and elderly.

Metro is going to conduct a mock evacuation of the Sky rail and have requested for unpaid volunteers. The HSRs have requested to be involved as they would like to observe the process to ensure it can be conducted safely. As a HSR you are entitled to be compensated for any duties that are within your powers contained within the OHS Act. Metro is refusing to allow the HSRs to attend unless they agree to participate in their own time.

August roster change

The roster committee are continuing to meet with management regarding the rosters and the next roster change. Management informed us that the next change would be end of April with another change in August. The April change was then cancelled with the next change to take place in August. This was then cancelled with the April change and August change reinstated. I have now
Ballarat line upgrade

Work has commenced on the first stage of the Ballarat line upgrade from Caroline Springs to Melton. Earth works have started for the double line and upgrade to Rockbank Station as part of the first stage. A new station is planned for Ferris Road in the future, but is not part of this project.

A fence has been erected from Caroline Springs to Melton with heavy earthwork machinery operating while train operations continued. Slew restrictors have been fitted to all excavators working beside the line, this stops the machines being able to foul the line when operating. The machines will have a blue flashing light to indicate to the crews that it is in operation.

The double line should be done by the end of this year to Melton with a lot of weekend shutdowns and a 20 days shutdown planned for December.

stabling yards at Kerrs Road (Maddingley Yard)

Work has also commenced on the stabling yards at Kerrs Road (Maddingley Yard). A six (6) road stabling yard with crew and cleaning facilities completed by the end of this year so Bacchus Marsh yard can be decommissioned for a second platform to be built.

Second platforms

A second platform at Ballan will be constructed in 2019 with a 5km crossing loop as well. A short crossing loop will also be constructed on the South line at Bungaree with the old North line to be decommissioned which eliminates 5 level crossings on the Ballarat corridor. There are no plans to have double line from Warrenheip to Wendouree. A second platform will be constructed at Wendouree with a small loop for the passing of trains.

The signal design hasn’t been finalised, so it will be interesting to see what we finish up with. The plan is for 2 extra peak services morning and night and a 40 minute off peak service during to day.

To all the crews operating on the corridor, if you see something that is unsafe please report it immediately to central and to the OH&S reps at Southern Cross or Ballarat.

- DJ

Union Representation

We have had a number of Drivers recently that have attempted to represent themselves in disciplinary meetings. The Drivers have only requested representation when Metro have given them a show cause letter as to why Metro should not terminate their employment.

In order for the best outcome to be achieved it is crucial that you ensure your Union representative is involved from the start. As soon as you get a letter requesting a meeting make the Loco office aware of the meeting, this ensures we have time to confirm that a representative is available to attend.

Please make sure you call the office and forward any correspondence immediately.

Management jostling for positions

I had a number of months off last year on carers leave and to my surprise when I returned management had a restructure. It consisted of a number of new managers and a shuffle of positions.

With this shuffle comes increased scrutiny over the Driving grade, the lower level managers are there to gain your trust but ultimately they have a job to do.

Be aware, whilst some are better than others, they are required to do what they are told.

- PJ

V/LINE OH & S BALLARAT

By Dave Jennings
V/Line

Ballarat line upgrade

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- DJ
Down at the station in 1938, the good old Victorian Railways is catering for crowds during a special occasion. But "Where Is It...?"
THE previous Where Is It? [below] was at Traralgon. The winner who correctly guessed was William Jackson from Metropolitan at Ringwood. Congratulations go to him.

Meanwhile if you think you know the location of the photograph on the OPPOSITE page, call the Union Office on 9682 1122 or toll free on 1800 134 095. If you answer correctly (only one guess per competition) your name will go into a hat and the winners, one Sparks and one Loco, will be drawn two weeks from distribution of the current Loco Lines. Prizes can include a Union mug, or a cap. Good luck!

TRARALGON
by Trevor Penn

VIEWED from the Melbourne end of the original Traralgon platform [above], a 153 hp Walker railmotor waits for custom in the Maffra Dock. This little dead end platform was provided in 1962 for ease of transshipping parcels and mail traffic from the brakevan of a Down mainline train to the connecting branchline service.

The 1974 Public Timetable shows two passenger services each way per day on the Traralgon to Maffra line, Monday to Saturday. At 11 am the distinctive whine of an L class dynamic brake would herald the arrival of “The Gippslander” to Sale and Bairnsdale. During the 8 minute stop the big electric loco would be detached while van goods and mail bags were transferred across from the blue CE van to the waiting motor.

Then the “Gippy” would roar east out of town behind a high horsepower 400 series T class, while the RM, with customers aboard, would reverse out of the dock into the Maffra Departure Road, and from there into the main platform. The driver would be handed a large electric staff, and off they’d go to Glengarry thence all stations to Maffra.

The Walker returned to Traralgon at 3.57 pm, just ahead of the Up Gippslander, which waited from 4.03 to 4.11 while the locos were changed once more, then both motor and driver could partake of a well earned siesta before the 6.03 pm Down arrived at 8.36, when the process would be repeated. Premier Rupert Hamer’s infamous 1973 Bland Report heralded the end of a number of branch lines and passenger trains, and the Maffra motor became one of its victims in July 1977; replaced by a “Co-ordinated Road Bus Service”.

After that it was downhill all the way. The overhead was decommissioned beyond Warragul on 2nd July 1987, while the rails in the Maffra Dock gently rusted until it was abolished, along with the 68 lever signal box and the 15 lever auxiliary frame, in June of 1990. The original platform on the straight road remained in service until it was superseded by the current shopping centre with a station attached on 16th June 1995.
There are challenges of occupational health & safety in our workplace, with management (head office) constantly reviewing safety policies. Do they consult first? Well often not.

Example; The risk assessment matrix changes– No heads up, No consultation.

This new matrix surfaced at a risk assessment in the workplace. The facilitator of the day lights it up on the whiteboard and the HSR’s present questioned this new risk matrix (used to assess and rate risks in the workplace) only to find out that it was commissioned and placed on V/line’s IMS system months beforehand.

Subsequently a PIN was issued on the grounds of failure to consult. The PIN was challenged and an inspector was brought in to make a determination.

Outcome; An employer (Management) can choose how they evaluate or assess risk in the workplace; their only obligation is that they must consult when they undertake the above activity and train the HSR’s in the process they choose to do this.

Of course the scope of the new matrix has been pulled back to concentrate only on the V/Line enterprise, no longer are other comparable rail industries put into the equation.

This makes your feedback on health & safety issues even more valuable with the narrowed field of data, records and history used with this changed risk matrix. However it does come with a colour booklet and a fancy flowchart.

The Car Sidings Fuel Point upgrade project

One can understand the lengthy timeframe to roll out this project with limited infrastructure manpower resources, but one does struggle to understand why the five foot (track centers) can’t be sealed up with bitumen when we now have all concrete sleepers, heavy duty welded rail, no increased axle loads or track speeds and the bedding in period now complete? The answer we were given.... ‘to allow easier periodic track inspections’. Interestingly the bitumen pads have recently been extended in front of the CMD.

On the water pressure issue, or lack of water pressure, a worker can only perform to the limits of the equipment provided and the maintenance of that equipment in completing their tasks here.

Corridor Safety Fencing RRL

Development has outpaced the infrastructure protecting the rail reserve along this corridor.

The HSR’s have run with and achieved, with the support of the members, diligent reporting, more secure track access gates and protection for the Hi rail pads to prevent obstructions being placed on the tracks. No longer are the old farmer’s fences adequate here with new communities moving in and public access opened up. Vline do have a fencing standard and it reads well, the problem being this standard becomes quite difficult to enforce once development has commenced and contracts signed off.

There needs to be a proactive approach prior to this to achieve safe secure fencing as mitigation against trespassers and other unlawful activity. We had the same scenario at Deer Park after the RFR was completed but lacking secure fencing at the time which resulted in numerous trespasser reporting’s and near misses.

It appears that Vline doesn’t get a lot of joy from other parties who have signed a Safety Interface Agreement (SIFA) with them. One would expect this to be a binding agreement but not so when a party recently refused to come to the table to resolve a safety issue even when the proposal was a no cost resolution to them or Vline.

New build V/Locity

In anticipation of tabling of draft plans for the new build V/Locity trains those OH&S ergonomic survey’s filled in in 2015 by the members will provide us with a platform to pursue improved ergonomic conditions in the driver’s cabins.

Hopefully by the next Loco Lines the HSR’s will be able to report further progress on these items and other health & safety concerns. - RH
Behaviour or comments, sexual or otherwise that are inappropriate, require considered action to be taken to address the situation, but is termination always necessary?

I find myself asking if there is any justice in a man losing his 29 year career over a first-time, single complaint about a one-off incident? I understand that the complaint could be considered sexual harassment, although not every case is the same.

In this case the driver has never been in any sort of trouble in his 29 years on the job; never came under notice before and never had a complaint levelled against him. While there is no excuse for inappropriate behaviour, for recidivist offenders and there is no sympathy, but if someone misinterprets the level of familiarity in a work friendship within an environment which is still rife with "boys" jokes and innuendo, from both men and women from drivers and DAOs alike, should they be sacked? **Should they lose their livelihood? Is this Political Correctness gone mad?**

The driver in question has been going through an extremely stressful period in his personal life. Does that excuse the behaviour? NO, but it should go some way to explaining why this person has behaved so vastly out of character.

**Does the existence of extenuating circumstances or personal stress warrant any consideration?** This would demonstrate their care (or lack of) for one of the parties in this equation.

On the topic of personal stress, I wonder if the company is exercising its duty of care uniformly? **If a driver had acted out of character and Metro were aware of the personal stress and extenuating circumstances which had most likely contributed to an incident, what is their duty of care?** Is merely a reminder of the Employee Assistance Program in their allegation letter sufficient employee support?

Last year saw a different driver dismissed for a similar reason. In that case, the complainant asked that the driver be simply spoken to and given the opportunity to understand and remedy their behaviour. Were her wishes respected or was the outcome she sought honoured? Unfortunately not!

This situation will do nothing to improve the animosity that still exists toward female drivers. I ask you all—Are we females any better off now? Are we safer because this person has left the company? Are we closer to gender parity now?

Further, if the Company is threatening to dismiss a person for comments, believing they are serious enough, this could result in an employee losing payment of all entitlements!

The company has shown its might; that it won’t tolerate this sort of behaviour, but at what cost? Am I more inclined to report inappropriate behaviour to my manager when I know this is the outcome? Has anyone actually learned what appropriate behaviour is? Isn't our EBA prescriptive in that issues among staff need to be dealt with at an individual level first? Shouldn't all of us, male and female, be entitled to a second chance? More importantly—**where is the Education and Counselling?**

There are so many things wrong with this outcome. There are no winners and the ramifications will be felt for a long time to come.

**COMMENT:** It is unfortunate that this travesty of justice occurred on the International day of the Woman. Angela is correct, the punishment is harsher than any penal code; Murderers don’t get life and this is a life sentence! - MM
VL75, the last of the current order for Vlocitys, has been delivered. The next order, for four trains, VL76-79, will have some differences. The most significant of these is:

- DM car toilet won’t be fitted. Instead, they will gain two seats in its place.
- Other items: CCTV to saloon and forward facing out the cab windscrean.
- Altered sanding arrangement to include the TM car, similar in set up to VL38, although it will sand either side of the TM power bogie.
- Equipment locker to house CCTV and space for High capacity signalling (HCS) equipment.
- Emissions to Euro II standard (particulate filter added to muffler).
- Lowering of traction engine output to 650 hp. (For fuel economy)
- Widening of the saloon doors at the DMD and TM ends, to comply with disabled access.
- Train crew steps reinstalled at the TM car doors.
- Altered seating layout and new style seats.

Delivery of these four trains will begin around September/October this year.

VL 80-88 is again a separate order and again more differences, more significant than previously:

- Modified cab frame structure to increase crash-worthiness
- HCS equipment installed and set up for trial.
- Cab layout believed to change to incorporate ergonomic requirements and changes to cab structure and equipment.
- Altered seating layout to accommodate more standing passengers.
- Toilet reinstated in the DM car.

Details about the HCS have been sketchy, the only information provided to date is that a cabinet will installed on 76-79. To see the equipment installed on the follow on batch will require an agreement on how and where the equipment is placed in the cab.

With the current cab equipment and the amount of proposals in the air, a way of combining this equipment into a single interface will be necessary to avoid distractions whilst driving.

Delivery of these trains will begin to take place in Apr 19, but we expect there to be at least another follow on order. Current projections will see the N class fleet replaced in 2025. Pre election media hype are making it popular to blame the classic fleet on most of V/lines woes and if more government funds become available it will see the development of a long haul train in a four car formation earlier than this.

Although Cab committee welcomes the upgrade to the cab crash structure, it doesn't fully address driver protection. We have been pushing for increased crew protection since the Trawalla accident over ten years ago. The change has come about as a requirement to comply with (or come as close to), the current standards and not those for when the VL was first built.

This calls for the VL cab to withstand an impact of 15 tonnes, above the cab floor at 110 km/h. Not unlike a semi trailer at a level crossing.

Driver survivability in the current Vlocity cab is limited to the ability of the driver to escape out the cab door to the refuge in the saloon. As we all know, with overcrowding on the increase, our refuge is often compromised.

The VL design incorporated 'crash energy management' technology (CEM), I don't believe it was ever adequate for the our operational environment in Australia or the speeds operated at. It was based on a British standard, now made obsolete by being incorporated into the latest Euro standard. Australia is developing a driving cab standard one can only hope, it considers protection of the driver and not by mitigating risk, but by a redesign of our cab to be more robust, removing the driver from the crumple zone. This will be required to allow use of these vehicles in long haul (currently loco hauled) service.

It is uncertain if the current VL cab can be retrofitted to comply with the standard.
Am/fm radio.

Recently alternative am/fm radio antennas were trialled on VL 74 during pre delivery acceptance tests. Two glass mounted types were tried and both gave good results. This was mainly because they were mounted in the left hand quarter window higher than the current one that is under the desk and away from any other voltage in the cab. It also had a 12v booster.

Melbourne FM radio stations were still available as far as Bunyip on the Traralgon line.

Am is still poor and suffers from all kinds of interference and weak signal strength.

We hope to extend these trials onto a couple of in service trains. If successful, once we fix the extended radio muting issue, would be a fairly simple, low cost solution to our radio woes.

North Melbourne wash

The North Melbourne wash was tested with a six car Vlocity on Tuesday 13/3/18.

The trial was to check clearances and test the wash cycle using a Vlocity. The intention is to wash trains as they return to the arrivals in the morning. The following was noted:

- Six car Vlocity was too long for the lead track from 5 road. Stopping short of the buffer, the trailing cab was over the weighted points that lead to the wash and were unable to be clearly seen to be set for the move.
- 'Wash' light was unreadable at the entrance.
- Six car Vlocity was too long for the trailing cab to be washed at the exit to the plant. Leading cab was over the stop point and trailing cab still inside the plant.
- Shunting from the wash back to the arrival yard required a mainline shunt between signals 534 and 541. The six car VL only just fit and created a signal sighting issue.
- A radio was obtained from the plant operator to conduct the moves. An ICE radio channel on the wash plant frequency is required.
- Emergency shower facilities may be unsuitable in the current location inside the pump shed behind a mesh gate.
- Recommend wash be only for single Vlocity moves.
- Consider a dedicated wash plant driver shift.

- KC
By Ernie Nelson

Nelson’s Column

By Ernie Nelson
V/Line Passenger Spencer Street.

This column contains poisonous libels and vitriolic slanders, colourful language, nudity, violence, and smut of a general nature and anything else that helps sell Magazines, if you don’t like it hit the road Mate! Email me at smut.up@myplace.come.ok or call toll free 1800 SOD ORF.

Any similarities between depicted and real events and people in some sections of this column is purely coincidental, so suck it up Princess, get over it, use this as therapy and get on with your life, Sport.

Right Wingers and Working Class Tories.

I am constantly amazed at people who consider themselves working class but support the LNP Coalition at polling time, these same people will utter things like “You can vote Liberal National Party Coalition and still be a good Unionist”, an Ulster Unionist maybe but not a Trade Unionist.

LNP or Tory Conservative Policy is about the annihilation of the Trade Union Movement, along with the right to strike and the introduction of US style minimum wage where people rely on tips and second jobs to barely survive from pay to pay.

So if you are a working class blue collar slob like me, bear in mind the LNP will take a huge dump on you first chance they get.

‘REMEMBER WORKCHOICES’

The Vote to Change our EA.

Well that didn’t go so well even offering $1,500 supposedly Tax Free (possibly not kosher with the Taxman as he will make you cough up at tax time) in what can only be described as a punt on people at VLP being naive enough to accept change with a sweetener when there was no real consultation with their duly elected representatives.

Well the Fat Lady has sung her lungs out with a massive 82% no vote and a 92% turnout with 8% not voting for reasons ranging from being absent from Godzone Oz to just plain forgot.

To place the result into perspective and to use the vernacular of polsters of which I have some limited experience, if an incoming Government polled a uniform 82% of the available vote, then on average it would take 123 seats in a 150 seat House of Representatives, like Canberra, and if the swing was what is called raged it could add even more seats to the treasury benches and relegate the opposition to the cross benches and even not be recognised as the official opposition. In other words a landslide victory and it would virtually guarantee incumbency for at least a decade.

Our Fearless Leader thought that by getting our workmates to turn on Drivers it would be a case of as Boris Badanov would say to Natasha.

“First we kill Moose, then we kill Squirrel”

The thrust of my argument is this, the CEO used a democratic process that was run fairly by the company contracted and the No vote got 82% of the available vote which is by far a massive landslide defeat which should be accepted as such and the matter considered closed, but wait there’s more, our Fearless Leader has said he will explore ways outside of the EA framework to get this training system in.

I would dearly love to know just how much Old Jacinta knew about this, probably a lot more than she lets on, well the “No” vote is in, it should be over, and if “Yes” had of got up, it’d be well and truly over.

VLP and Its Blue Collar Staff.

While I won’t comment on any particular instance of what is in my opinion systemic harrying from the hierarchy against the blue collar workforce, in that a person in a managerial position can point the bone at someone in a lower paygrade, with immunity from consequence, and that employee can even be stood down as a humiliation.

This process seems to have backfired somewhat with people becoming deeply distrustful of the VLP management team and a general unwillingness to go the extra mile for the service.

If management were serious about improving morale in this place, they would hold out an olive branch and engage in meaningful dialogue before resentment becomes entrenched and qualified people start to look for different opportunities elsewhere.

I personally would like to see things improve for the betterment of all people of all grades at VLP, and for the Corporation. It’s no use going down the National Express pathway of,

“The Floggings Will Continue Until Morale Improves”

Didn’t work for them, where ever they are now? And it won’t work for VLP. A happy workforce is a productive workforce.

Mathew Guy and his 16 x 6 car VLocity Trains.

The LNP opposition leader has promised 16 x 6 car VLocity trains to replace the Classic Fleet (N Class Locos, N Sets and Z Cars) on InterCity runs if he becomes Premier in November this year, it is a commitment from a Party that is so anti rail it took $690M from the RRL project with disastrous result, (VLocity wheel debacle to name one), to fund the duplication of the highway from Traralgon to Sale.

Mathew Guy was Minister for Planning in the Baileau/Napthine Government that did sweet FA for 4 years, what an astounding success that was with the East/West Link business case written on the back of an old shopping list to the Letter of Intent designed to ambush the incoming Andrews Government.
Matty, however has not said what he will do to improve the infrastructure from:

- Bendigo to Swan Hill and Echuca.
- Geelong to Warrnambool.
- Seymour to Shepparton.
- Traralgon to Bairnsdale.
- Ballarat to Ararat and Maryborough.
- Spencer Street to Albury Standard Gauge.

Because quite frankly these tracks are completely and utterly stuffed, and it’s no good to continue buying new trains if our tracks are hardly getting the care and attention they require to keep them safe and make the ride comfortable.

Which begs another challenge, straight away 4 of these sets would have to make their way onto the North East Standard Gauge in order to run that benighted service, then the way the poor quality of the ARTC infrastructure beats up the Ns and N sets, the poor old Atrocities won’t stand a chance.

While I personally am not opposed to the concept of 16 x 6 car VLocity trains to replace Classic Fleet stock as the N Class Locomotives entered service from 1985 and the N Sets from 1983 with the 2 cars going back to the 50s, 40s and beyond for riveted stock, it can’t just be shiny new trains, it will have to be the whole package of signalling, permanent way and infrastructure to make it work efficiently and in the best interests of the People and State of Victoria.

Reasonable Overtime.

There is a fair amount of conjecture when it comes to an understanding of the concept of “reasonable overtime”.

- First we have voluntary reasonable overtime at V/Line and Metro, and how it applies, well in a nutshell your rostered days off belong to you and you cannot be compelled to work them other than by request which you may refuse if you have not received 48 hours’ notice. You may also notify your roster section 48 hours in advance by way of Off Roster Note, this applies equally at V/Line and Metro, Freight Operators have different arrangements so best check with your local Representative.

- Second is involuntary overtime this applies when you are required to work overtime for one or more of the following reasons.

  1. An agreed shift that has a duration of up to 8’29” for a Driver Only Shift at V/Line or Metro and that shift has a prep and dock at the beginning or a shunt and stable at the end.
  2. 9 hours Driver and Fireman on a locomotive hauled passenger train.
  3. 11 hours with 2 Drivers as in No.2.
  4. Exceptional circumstances such as breakdown or accident to perform Safeworking duties and assist with passenger evacuation, plus you can’t go anywhere until relieved.

It is fairly straightforward and it’s relatively easy to notify the roster people of your availability and of course you can swap out of shifts you don’t like, you’d be surprised how quickly some jobs will get picked up.

Safeworking Booboo.

Sometimes back I was running a 6 car VLocity to South Geelong, Geelong itself was in meltdown so another day at the coalface.

I arrived at the Down Home Signal about 100 metres from the platform at North Geelong and came to a complete stand, so far so good. After about a minute or so I contacted Geelong Control and asked if I could have a Low Speed Signal so I could enter the platform as the track was clear in the platform all the way to the next Home stick at Geelong Loco and allow some of the people that pay our wages a chance to go home, guess what the train Controller said? He reckoned it was “Against the Rules and Regulations”, I enquired if he was indeed qualified in Safeworking, at which point he lost what little was left of his mind.

**THEY WALK AMONG US AND THEY BREED. BE AFRAID.**

Didn’t get the punters home but it was highly entertaining, it’s the little things that cheer you up, talk about ARTC Light.

*Photo Graph Jam. Public Domain, Fair Use.*

I wish I was a glow worm,
A glow worm’s never glum,
’Cos you can be grumpy
When the sun shines out your bum!

*It’s Every Drivers Mago. Remember it’s your Mago too so write in on any relevant subject you like. Seeya later, Drive!*
Noble Park.
The first elevated sections of railway have been commissioned on the Dandenong corridor, with a new platform at Noble park and three level crossings removed at Corrigan, Heatherton and Chandler Roads. The signalling through the location will be uncontrolled, worked by the passage of trains and be dressed as home signals. This is to limit the amount of times drivers carry out rule 1 section 3 ‘working passed signals at stop’ on the elevated sections.

Because there is a chance of rear end collision and the ability to recover from such an incident would be extremely difficult, knowing the risks that exist and the history of incidents that have already occurred on the network, restricting drivers ability to carry out the rule is considered the safest outcome. All the signalling is consistent on the corridor, with single aspect light units and large backgrounds. Platform signals placed just off the end, for viewing from the stopped position.

The only poor location is Yarraman station on the up, where no long view was provided. The old signal just prior to the platform was well placed, with its removal and the installation of a new signal at the up end, the station now obscures the longer view. Whilst we raised this deficiency with Metro engineering, we were advised that it meets the minimum sighting requirement of 10sec and no further action will be considered.

Centre Road
The retaining wall for Centre Road level crossing removal had been built in a way that caused the down home signal for Westall to be obscured.

We had received some complaints about the restricted viewing, having the opportunity to travel on a train measuring the sighting distance, it was down to 120m, even inadequate by Metro's own standard. That night the signal heads were raised on the mast and mounted closer to track. Also the fencing on top of the retaining wall was removed.

We checked the sighting the following day, whilst the long view was still difficult, the short view was much improved.

The projects are continually changing our work environment and we need to be vigilant and report any issue that may affect the safe operation of our trains.

North Melbourne
At North Melbourne up automatic signals NME508 & NME550 will be converted to home signals and a local control will be installed at the signal. The signals protect North Melbourne platforms for the up Main and up East suburban line movements.

During times of track work in the Melbourne underground, the signals can be restored to stop and the occupation issued from the signals.

The plant and equipment can be moved in from the access road behind the platforms, enter the platform tracks and then access the Underground loop.

Currently the occupation is back to Moonee ponds creek, restricting access of train movements through North Melbourne.

- CH
How the West can be won.
Comrades.

In April 2017, the regional local city councils in the west of our state presented a report that they had commissioned, to the Minister for Transport in Victoria, outlining the potential for rail passenger services to return to the west. It was the sworn enemy of rail, Jeff Kennet, who took away this passenger service and replaced it with the road coaches supplied by his mates in the road transport industry. The people of the west of our state hated the idea but they were stuck with it. Jeff started by eliminating the service from Dimboola to Ararat. What did the locals do? They simply drove their cars down to Ararat and caught the train from there. They didn’t want the buses and avoided them in droves. That really pissed Jeff off so he then eliminated the rail service from Ararat to Ballarat. The result? People still didn’t want the bus and just drove their cars all the way to Melbourne. It took the Labor government that succeeded Jeff to reinstate the rail service back to Ararat, where it still ends today. A successful and well patronised service. The rail service could not be reinstated once again beyond Ararat because it is a broad gauge track that reaches Ararat by Velocity service and beyond that it is standard gauge.

Scrutiny of the rail plan put forward by the regional shire councils from out west of our state (Grampians and Barwon South West Region Passenger Services cost and feasibility study, 2017) highlights a great deal to acknowledge. They got one basic necessity almost correct. Converting the track from Ballarat to Ararat to standard gauge. More appropriately, it should be suggested that the track should be gauge converted from Wendouree to Ararat. The short distance of track remaining from Ballarat to Wendouree should have a third rail to provide for duel gauge. This third rail should ideally become a link in to the “Murray Basin” rail project and lead straight into the Ballarat East workshops. The Murray Basin project is currently underway and will see the conversion of the broad gauge tracks from Maryborough to Mildura, Sea Lake and Manangatang to standard gauge. The scope of the project provides for duel gauge to be implemented from Maryborough to Gheringhap, where the duel gauge has existed for many years.

The key to success for the reintroduction of rail passenger services to the west of our state is access to maintenance facilities for both minor and major repair and servicing. The third rail into the Ballarat East shops does the trick. It would indeed be short sighted to simply standardize the track from Ballarat to Wendouree and link into a third rail at Ballarat, because this would preclude access of broad gauge rolling stock to Wendouree which would constitute a completely unnecessary constraint upon the flexibility and management of the fleet. The Murray Basin project “third rail” from Ballarat to Gheringhap would provide the opportunity (at the will of Fleet Management) to repatriate standard gauge rolling stock to Melbourne for other maintenance and servicing requirements.

Let us not sell the potential for this project short. Obviously a return of a rail service to Hamilton is and should be within the scope of the project, but we should put the case for not just a return of passenger services to Horsham. Not just to Dimboola, but indeed onto Nhill or Kaniva. We should restore the platforms at these locations. There is a quote from a movie. “Build it and they will come.” The people of the west will patronize their trains with enthusiasm. Just ask em’.

All the news that’s fit to see
At the “V” place - Pass, quite curiously, little TV screens have begun appearing at the sign on and meal room points around the state. At the Manpower window at Spencer St. Depot, the TV screen entertains us around the clock with ABC news headlines. No one seems to know just exactly why we need to be kept abreast of the latest breaking news when we sign on, but I am sure that management knows best and it is in our best interests.

Perhaps we need to be forearmed with this knowledge of news and current affairs in case one or more of our customers decides to quiz us on the national and international goings on of the day. As a direct result of the installation of these TV screens and their output, I feel more confident now to answer general enquiries from the traveling public about who Trump might have sacked or what our politicians are up to. Perhaps I could field questions about where the stock market is trending. I can even give our customers the weather forecast, thanks to the TV screen at the sign on window. Isn’t technology marvellous? I am sure that this project will appear on someone’s CV and will enhance that persons prospects of future employment by demonstrating how they were able to keep the staff informed about the Dow Jones index and the traffic report on the Tulla freeway.

Whom talks to whom talks to who? And When?
As an Instructor, I was recently asked a question by a trainee on the topic I will herein outline and I was at a loss as how to answer. Whether you are a Driver at the “V” place or at the Sparks, there is one common problem that Doctors on passenger services across the board face and that is, the radio or telephone interaction with emergency services. What do they want to know about a situation and what must you be prepared to tell them? At Pass, unlike the Sparks, we have a second player in the game, the Conductor.
Scenario: Conductor calls the Driver on the radio and informs him/her that there is an unruly passenger on board and that Police assistance is required. There is a genuine logic and need for the Conductor to seek assistance through the Driver because only the Driver can coordinate with Control as to where the train will stop to allow the Police to board. In my experience, the Police will then ask the Controller a series of questions such as – “Are drugs and/or alcohol involved? - Is the person armed? – What is the age and general description? – What carriage is the person in?” The Driver needs to be able to answer all these questions to assist the Police and yet there is not and has never been any training to equip the Driver and Conductor to deal with this situation.

Scenario: Conductor calls Driver on the radio and informs him/her that a passenger has fallen ill and needs an ambulance. The Driver calls Control and asks the controller to arrange an ambulance and negotiates a place where the train will stop to meet the ambulance. Questions from the Emergency Services officer – “What is the patient’s age? What is the patient’s condition? Is the patient awake? Comatose? Heavy breathing? Short of breathe? Unresponsive? Etc. To garner this information the Driver must ask the Conductor who is dealing with the situation and then forward said information on to the Controller who must convey that to the Emergency Services person.

This whole time, the Driver is actually doing what he/she is paid to do and driving a train. How are we supposed to concentrate on the matter at hand whilst dealing with this crisis? This involves fair dinkum multi-tasking. What is/would be, the ramifications if the Driver were to commit a SPAD during this exchange? Is it reasonable to say that the Driver was under duress and was his/her responsibility subsequently diminished because of the pressure placed upon him/her? What if there was an accident? What if the train struck something or someone? What if the patient suffers as a result of the inability of the stakeholders on the train to deal with the situation as a direct result of the lack of training in our system? Who/whom is liable? Who/whom is to blame? The fact remains that a significant vulnerability exists which exposes Drivers and Conductors to potential accusations of culpability in such circumstances. Circumstances where the Driver and Conductor are an innocent victim of their own limited resources to assist in or to rectify a situation, not of their making but thrust upon them. A situation that they are forced to deal with and one which with they are not trained to enact upon. We are not trained to deal with this very real and ever possible situation.

Why is it, that there is no instruction on our books that pertains or relates to these scenarios? Why is it that there is no training which prepares us for these situations? What is the personal legal liability of the Driver and Conductor under these circumstances? Management, you have some policy to develop and you have some training to do.

Pretty in Pink
It has been my lament in this publication in the past that the “V” place got the rawest deal when it comes to the livery apportioned to each arm of the so called PTV. We got pink. Degrading, deplorable pink. On its own, it is demoralising for us and a demeaning colour to put on the flesh of a proud locomotive. So I have an idea. Why doesn’t someone in authority in the PTV or “V” place chuck the McGrath Foundation a wad of cash and stencil on the side of our locos, proudly supporting the McGrath Foundation?! “Now dat wud be a different kerttle of fesh, Partrick, Oi’d be tellins’ ya.” That would be good for morale and make us actually feel good about the colour. It wouldn’t hurt our image either.

See eeh oh (dear) – foot in mouth.
In February this year, one of our senior comrades had to endure a fatal accident at Melton. It happened smack in the middle of the afternoon peak and caused, as you would imagine for that time of day, great disarray in the system. Our comrade, I can report, is doing ok and back at work. The next day on the wireless, on the John Faine ABC morning show, the CEO of Public Transport Victoria (PTV) appeared on his regular monthly interview slot. On this show, the CEO of the PTV takes talkback callers and provides lots of entertaining spin for the audience. One caller asked him about the disruption to the Ballarat service on the previous day and complained mostly that there was no information and further complained about the lack of attention from the staff. In response to this caller, the CEO of the PTV committed a cardinal sin. He uttered some words that no one in the media is ever allowed to enunciate and did so with apparent impunity. He said “Oh yes, we had a particularly nasty ..... SUICIDE at Melton......”

Dear Mr CEO of the PTV. In your native England, you may be allowed to flaunt such notions in the media but here in Oz, we are not allowed. Be aware that you have undermined the outcome of all of the official investigations in this matter. The findings of any investigation may now be the subject of legal uncertainty, after all, the CEO of the PTV said so. Providence help us if someone suffering mental distress heard your words and has decided to mount a copycat style self-demise. Mr CEO of the PTV, it is ok to say that there was an incident or a fatality. But not a SUICIDE! Thank you very much for absolutely nothing, if and when one of our own has to endure the trauma and hardship of a the outcome of some poor mentally troubled and suicidal individual taking solace from your careless words and doing exactly the same thing as the person you spoke of, allegedly did. I just wonder how the family of the person whose life was lost feels about the public announcement by none less than the transport chief official, that their relative, officially committed suicide. Can you all imagine the potential grief? Your mother, father, brother, sister, labelled by the transport officer of the most senior station. As someone whom has personally endured the experience of a those who have chosen to take their own poor life by means of unwilling rail assistance, I condemn your ill-chosen words. It is a shameful thing that you done, Mr. CEO of the PTV.
Please be advised that as from 11.11.2017 I will be retiring from V/Line and thus will be retiring from the RTBU.

Thank you for your assistance and good luck in the future.

Stuart Lodington.
# WESTERN REGION - RETIRED LOCOMOTIVE DRIVERS

Names of active & retired Victorian Locomotive Drivers who passed away between the October 2016 & October 2017 Annual Dinners.

## RIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BUTLER, Ken</td>
<td>30 Jan. 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOND, Len</td>
<td>24 July, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAY, Bob</td>
<td>16 Nov. 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COWAN, Wally</td>
<td>6 Dec, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WESTON, Ernie</td>
<td>12 Dec, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOLONEY, Gus</td>
<td>17 Dec, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KRUGER, Trevor</td>
<td>18 Dec, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KINGDON, Bernie (90)</td>
<td>19 Dec, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FULLERTON, Bill (90)</td>
<td>21 Dec, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>PETERSEN, Glenne</td>
<td>29 Dec, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELMSLIE, Bill</td>
<td>31 Dec, 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAYNES, Ken</td>
<td>18 Jan, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOWNSEND, Peter</td>
<td>21 Jan, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHEEDY, George</td>
<td>2 Feb, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CREELY, Vin</td>
<td>6 Feb, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASON, R.T (Peter)</td>
<td>8 Feb, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROGERS, Lloyd</td>
<td>Feb, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEANHAM, Stan</td>
<td>22 Feb, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>MASON, Robert</td>
<td>26 Feb, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>MACKAY, Noel (92)</td>
<td>28 Feb, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIMMO, Kevin</td>
<td>1 Mar, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>COCKS, Bob</td>
<td>3 Mar, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>McCANN, Bill</td>
<td>10 Mar, 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBILLIARD, Noel (91)</td>
<td>20 Mar, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIANTA, Barry</td>
<td>7 Apr, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRILL, Owen</td>
<td>11 Apr, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>McCarthy, Frank</td>
<td>17 Apr, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>McKINNIS, Vernon “Mick”</td>
<td>20 Apr, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>KENLEY, Alan</td>
<td>28 Apr, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>POWELL, Merv</td>
<td>31 May 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHWASTIAK, Steve</td>
<td>14 June 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'KEEFFE, Rav (90)</td>
<td>22 June 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# WESTERN REGION - RETIRED LOCOMOTIVE DRIVERS

Names of active & retired Victorian Locomotive Drivers who passed away between the October 2016 & October 2017 Annual Dinners.

**RIP**

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BUTTERS, Murray</td>
<td>10 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D'ARCY, Ted</td>
<td>12 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERDI, Hughie</td>
<td>20 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEYMOUR, Bill</td>
<td>22 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOND, Len</td>
<td>24 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CADMAN, Albert</td>
<td>28 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURNANE, Pat</td>
<td>29 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVENSEN, Walter</td>
<td>30 July 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROWN, Eddie</td>
<td>2 Aug 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYNMORE, Harry</td>
<td>3 Aug 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAKE, Ken</td>
<td>24 Aug 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMITH, Cliff</td>
<td>15 Sept 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAVILL, Wally</td>
<td>17 Sept 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAULKNER, Jim</td>
<td>21 Sept 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAGSTAFF, Jack</td>
<td>3 Oct. 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVANS, Geoff</td>
<td>3 Oct. 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPENCER, Robin</strong></td>
<td><strong>2017</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bob Faulkner</strong></td>
<td><strong>2017</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List compiled by W.R.R.L.D. from information supplied courtesy of the R.R.E.A. and accepted in good faith from former workmates of the deceased.
Three Years In The Dustbin.
By Terry Sheedy
Retired Driver and President of the RTBU

At the 2015 Branch Christmas Function the current Branch President Darren Lamont introduced me as a RTBU Branch Life Member which was the first I knew that such an honour had been bestowed on me. Two years on I am still wondering if it was a slip of the tongue by Darren as I hadn't heard anymore in regards to the subject.

In December 2014 I was privileged to have Life Membership of the Victorian Locomotive Division bestowed apon me for 41 years of Union service to members to which I am extremely proud of.

On Sunday 22nd October this year I attended the Annual Presentation To Retiring Members at the V.R.I. Hall at Geelong courtesy of the Geelong Loco Presentation Fund who send me an annual invitation as I commenced my railway career there in February 1965. As the day rolled on I thought I would ask the Branch President Darren Lamont one more time if I am a Branch Life Member or not, Darren replied to my question that I WAS NOT a life member as the last one was Trevor Dobbyn the previous Branch Secretary.

The Metropolitan Sub Divisional Secretary Paris Jolly had informed me that he had put a motion at the Branch Executive Meeting to bestow life membership on myself after I had retired and the motion was Carried.

On Tuesday 24th October I contacted both Paris and Suzi Ignatidis ( Loco Office ) to ask if they could check the Branch Executive Meeting minutes to support Paris's. Within 30 minutes I received an email of the Branch Executive Meeting Minutes dated 10th December 2014 and in the General Business sector of the meeting it was moved Paris Jolly seconded Mark Teasdale ( President Tramways Division ) that Life Membership be on myself, the motion was Carried.

Guess who was chairing the meeting - Darren Lamont.

So after nearly THREE YEARS in the dustbin I requested the Branch Executive to ask the Branch Secretary Luba Gregorovich why she didn't action the minutes of the meeting and why have I been ignored for nearly 3 years after 41 years of Union service.

TERRY SHEEDY

Retired Branch & Divisional President, now an old bastard.

For Loco Lines.
Once again, the Anonymous Loco Poet.

Yesterday’s beautiful locomotives asleep on rails and on death row
South Dynon, a depot lost
These Locos, stripped of pride and stripped of parts
Just a memory now on show, on death row
It breaks my heart, to see them there
No longer shall they haul
Rakes of freight, goods and passenger trains
On grades that rise and fall.

Their silence shouts the shame they feel
For having been cast aside
Their bogies still
Pinions jammed and hand brakes firmly applied.

Since a government once privatized their railway, which was once ours
These locos passed through many hands
And these beautiful locos show the scars.
The many different companies with so many different colours
And rail mercenary intent
These colours show through the original paint
And it shows through the skin of these beautiful locomotives
It shows a tragic past
Of neglect and disdain.

History was meted out in the company of others
It was not us that treated them so
And left them there to rust and at their bestow
It was the Bastard Change
Privatization that caused it so
In this day now, we have seen the worst.
What private industry has done
These beautiful locos
Left in decay….just like my memories
Not lost to me
Merely a melancholy thought, Gone
Written on the back of a “Crew Relief Zollie”
Locomotive Division
Direct Debit Request Form 2018

Dear RTBU Locomotive Division

I/We: ____________________________________________________________

Address: ________________________________________________________

State: ________________________ Post Code: _________________________

[Please tick if this is also a change of address request.]

I/We authorise you, until further notice in writing, to debit the account described below through the Debit System for memberships into the RTBU Locomotive Shared Account, the amount the Rail, Tram and Bus Union - Locomotive Division prescribes.

I/We understand and acknowledge that:

1. The Bank/Financial institution may in its absolute discretion determine the order of priority of payment by it of any monies pursuant to this Request or any authority or mandate.
2. The Bank/Financial institution may in its absolute discretion at any time by notice in writing to me/us terminate this Request as to future debits.
3. The prescribed rate may be changed by the Locomotive Division by notice in writing to me/us.

Bank Name: ______________________________________________________

Bank Location: __________________________________________________

Title of Account (e.g. Mr and Mrs Smith): ________________________________

Bank/State Branch No. (BSB)
or Financial Institution No: _________________________________________

Account No: ______________________________________________________

Direct Debit Frequency: Fortnightly Amount if different to prescribed rate: $

Rates: Please tick

Trainee $25.30   Part Time, Casual or Job Share $34.30

Trainee 2 $32.90 Fulltime Qualified $51.20

Signature*: ___________________________ DATE: / / 2018

*Typing of your name in an electronic format is deemed approval for Direct Debits to be processed

Please Return to RTBU Locomotive Division via fax, email or mail.

Level 6, 1-5 Elizabeth St, Melbourne, 3000  Phone: 9682 1122  Fax: 9682 3344  Email: reception@rtbuvicloco.com.au
RTBUVVICLOCO.COM.AU/SHOP

SHOP NOW!
ONLINE

New items in stock

GET YOURS QUICK
RTBUVICLOCO.COM.AU/SHOP

GET WINTER READY!

WARM GEAR

Below: Polar Fleece Jumper with 1/2 ZIP - Warm and easy to wash

Breathable and water resistant jacket.

Warm, slimfit with pockets externally and internally to protect mobile phones etc.
Rule 14:
- A member may resign from membership of the Union by written notice addressed and delivered to the Secretary of his/her branch.
- A notice of resignation from membership of the Union takes effect:
  - On the day on which the notice is received by the Union; or
  - On the day specified in the notice, which is a day not earlier than the day when the member ceases to be eligible to become a member, whichever is later; or
  - In other cases;
    - At the end of three months; or
    - On the day which is specified in the notice: Whichever is later.
- Any subscription, fees, fines and levies owing but not paid by a former member of the Union in relation to a period before the member’s resignation took effect, may be sued for and recovered in the name of the Union in a Court of competent jurisdiction, as a debt to the Union.
- A notice delivered to the Branch Secretary shall be deemed to have been received by the Union when it was delivered.
- A notice of resignation that has been received by the Union is not invalid because it was not addressed and delivered to the Branch Secretary.
- A resignation from membership of the Union is valid even if it is not effected in accordance with this Rule if the member is informed in writing by or on behalf of the Union that the resignation has been accepted.