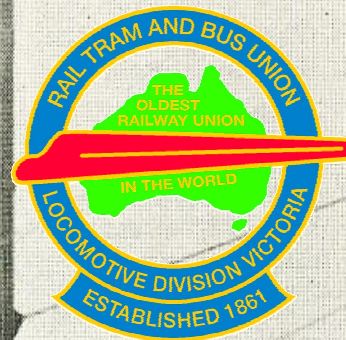


RT&BU LOCOMOTIVE DIVISION

Loco LINES

Newsletter for Locomotive Enginemen of the
Rail, Tram & Bus Union - Victoria

EDITION 53 DECEMBER 2011



SANTA SPECIAL

DIVISIONAL EXECUTIVE

DIVISIONAL SECRETARY:

DIVISIONAL PRESIDENT:

DIVISIONAL ASSIST. SECRETARY:

DIVISIONAL VICE PRESIDENT:

Marc Marotta 0414 897 314

Terry Sheedy 0417 310 400

Jim Chrysostomou 0404 814 141

John Marotta 0404 814 273

DIVISIONAL DELEGATES

Metropolitan Sub-division:

Kevin Duggan 0448 880 249

Paris Jolly 0422 790 624

Peter Laux 0417 526 544

Pacific National Sub-division:

James Styles 0427 018 963

Pacific National (ex Freight) Sub-division:

Wayne Hicks 0407 035 282

Passenger Sub-division:

Loco LINES

EDITION 53
DECEMBER 2011

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Publisher
Marc Marotta

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Marc Marotta Divisional Secretary



I would like to wish all our readers a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

This year has produced some successes and some setbacks in dealing with the various Enterprises in Victoria.

Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM)

The most sustained and concerted attack on workers' rights and conditions has been from the Chinese based company Metro MTM. The latest attack is on the right to have Union representation present when a member is summoned for a discussion with Metro Management. I quote a Metro Manager; "Metro Managers will decide whether representation is required for a meeting". This quote came from one of the latest English Manager imports on the 11th December 2011. Please see the attached letter from Maurice Blackburn in regards to a driver who was given seven minutes notice for a meeting, when Metro knew that no Union officials were available due to Divisional Council being previously scheduled for that day. It is not unreasonable to assume that the Driver in question, Mr. Dunn, was to be terminated leaving him with the unsatisfactory Unfair Dismissal Application as his only recourse; I remind members of what Metro and its Managers resorted to in dealing with Peter Gooding. A meeting was held between Metro Management and Mr. Dunn with me in attendance on 13th December 2011. The result was Mr. Dunn was reinstated to normal duties however the issue which may be subject to further litigation is if Metro carries out its threat not to pay Mr. Dunn whilst he was stood down because he requested Union representation.

Metro has introduced its Train Operating Standards on 4th December 2011. They were able to do this because of a deficiency in drafting the Enterprise Agreement of 2009-2012, a lasting legacy from previous office bearers. The new Metro standards are very poor with no time frames being detailed for repairs to be completed. At the time of writing this article I will be representing a driver who refused to run a train that had blood smeared on the balk head door, on the passenger's seats and on the windows, the train also had excrement on the floor. Metro's Train Standards declares that it is ok for the train to run for 22 hours. The driver would not run this train in revenue service and instead he took it without passengers to a location where it could be cleaned. Metro wants to interview him, he has asked for representation and at the time of writing, this has yet to be scheduled.

The morale at Metro Trains, in my experience, has never been lower and as a result of the work environment created by Metro, there have been record resignations. Members are now taking employment with various other enterprises such as Pacific National Rural and Bulk, Queensland Rail, B.H.P., El Zorro, Rio Tinto, P & O Port Enterprises and V/Line. Is it any wonder Metro have a shortage of drivers? The on-the-job Trainers are the latest group that have reacted to Metro's heavy-handed managing style, with some resigning from OJT's positions and others asking for a break from training duties. The Union has been attempting to assist in getting these OJT's back to training duties after Metro agreed to tone down their abrasive management style with OJT's. The Union's motivation for doing so is to prevent trainees from being delayed in obtaining their qualifications as drivers.

Pacific National Rural and Bulk

A new Enterprise Agreement was negotiated which provides drivers with a 15% pay rise over 3 years paid at 5% per annum. Members will receive 12 months back pay. Meetings were held with members across the state to provide information about the new EA and to allow members with queries to have them addressed. A postal ballot was held with a 98% return. The agreement was endorsed by members. Pacific National has advised that it will seek to recruit additional locomotive Drivers in the New Year because of additional work it expects to have.

V/Line Passenger

Discussions will commence in earnest in the New Year for a new Enterprise Agreement. One of the issues already on the table is the ending of the right of return for drivers that were forcibly transferred to electric running depot when it was a government run rail system. The argument put forward by V/Line Passenger is that those affected locomotive drivers have had sufficient time to exercise their right of return and it is V/Line's intention to cease this practice of Right of Return when the new Enterprise agreement is signed off. So any member who may wish to transfer to V/Line that were compulsorily transferred to the E.R.D. should do so now. After the new agreement is reached all members of the Locomotive Division will be able to apply and be assessed based on their individual merits. The issues of week-end rates and overtime rates are yet to be resolved with V/Line. Lack of time has been the reason that these matters have not been progressed but we will pursue them in the New Year.

Apology to Metro Management

Marc Marotta published an article in Edition 52 of Loco lines which referred to Andrew Lezala, Simon Lane, Nick Dickinson, Michael Brown, Ian Young, Colin Shaw, Wayne Walsh and Perry Ramsey. Mr Marotta withdraws the comments made about those people in that article and apologises for any hurt and distress caused by the publication.

ILG\ 3034853
T: (03) 9605 2847
F: (03) 9258 9613

12 December 2011

Mr Perry Ramsey
Manager Train Service Delivery
Metro Trains Melbourne

perry.ramsey@metrotrains.com.au

Maurice Blackburn Pty Limited
ABN 21 105 657 949

Level 10
456 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

PO Box 523
Melbourne VIC 3001

DX 466 Melbourne

T (03) 9605 2700
F (03) 9258 9600

Dear Mr Ramsey

Re: Mr Marc Marotta

We act for the RTBU and Mr David Dunn.

Mr Dunn is employed by Metro as Locomotive Driver and is also a member of the RTBU.

On Friday 9 December 2011 at about 14:53, Mr Dunn sought to sign on for his normal turn of duty in accordance with his roster. The relevant sign on clerk advised Mr Dunn that his run had been covered and that he was booked for a 15:00 meeting with management. Mr Dunn spoke to Mr Peter Boyle (Manager – Fleet Standards) who informed Mr Dunn that he was required for an interview. Mr Dunn then requested a union representative attend the meeting. Mr Boyle said that it was not necessary to have a union representative and he could have anyone as a witness. Mr Dunn indicated that he wanted a union representative present. Mr Boyle then informed Mr Dunn that he would be waiting for him at 15:00.

Mr Dunn then contacted the RTBU but no representative was immediately available. Mr Dunn then spoke to the sign-on clerk and indicated that he was available for train driving duties. Mr Dunn was assigned a job for a run at 16:20.

At about 15:50, Mr Dunn was contacted by Mr Vincent Fasanella (Metro - Train Driver Manager, Rosters) who advised Mr Dunn that another Metro Manager, Mr Byrne (Train Driver Manager Central) was waiting to talk to him in Mr Fasanella's office. Mr Dunn said that he wanted a union representative present and that a union representative was not immediately available.

Mr Dunn rang Mr Byrne and informed him that he wanted a union representative present in the meeting with management but that none was immediately available. Mr Byrne asked Mr Dunn where he was. Mr Dunn indicated that he was in the standby room. Mr Byrne said words to the effect "I don't want to speak to you in the standby room. I have my instructions. I want to discuss your future with Metro."

Mr Dunn then attempted to arrange for an RTBU representative to be present in his discussions with Metro. Mr Dunn spoke to Mr Paris Jolly. Mr Jolly rang Mr Fasanella. Mr Fasanella informed Mr Jolly that the depot manager, Mr Mark Blackman, was dealing with the matter. Mr Jolly then rang Mr Blackman. Mr Blackman said that if Mr Dunn did not attend the interview, he would be stood down without pay. Mr Jolly then rang Mr Peter Byrne. Mr

3733456

Jolly asked Mr Byrne whether Mr Dunn was being stood down with pay or without pay. Mr Byrne said that he was being stood down without pay. Mr Jolly asked whether the interview could lead to disciplinary action. Mr Byrne confirmed that the interview could lead to disciplinary action. Mr Jolly informed Mr Byrne about the time period for representation in the Metro Disciplinary Counselling Procedure. Mr Byrne said that the interview would take place today.

At about 16:00, Mr Vincent Fasanella approached Mr Dunn in the standby room and informed him that he was stood down without pay.

We consider that any stand down of Mr Dunn without pay is a contravention of the *Connex Melbourne Collective Agreement 2009 – 2012*. We note that Metro has no lawful right to stand down an employee without pay. Mr Dunn has at all times been ready willing and able to perform work. The direction that he attend an interview at 15:00 of which he was given 7 minutes notice, relating to a potential disciplinary matter, was unreasonable. It did not give him sufficient notice to obtain a union representative. In that regard, we refer to Mr Ramsey's memo to Train Drivers of 8 August 2011 which is premised on reasonable notice for employees of meetings so they are able to arrange representation.

We demand that Metro reverse its stated position that Mr Dunn is stood down without pay.

We note that Mr Dunn is attending a meeting tomorrow morning with Mr Marotta from the RTBU. Please consider this correspondence the initiation of the Dispute Settling Procedure under clause 8.2 of the Collective Agreement. Mr Dunn proposes to discuss this dispute with Metro tomorrow morning.

Please direct any further communications regarding this matter to Mr Kamal Farouque of our office.

Yours faithfully



**EMPLOYMENT & INDUSTRIAL LAW SECTION
MAURICE BLACKBURN LAWYERS**

Cc: Peter.Byrne@metrotrains.com.au



Leigh Creek
Train Derailment

Picture courtesy of:
Wayne Hicks

Terry Sheedy Branch/ Divisional President



Let me wish all members and their families in the Tram, Rail and Locomotive Divisions a Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year.

I would also like to thank members from all divisions for their support at the February Union elections and the ongoing support via emails etc during our continuing disputes with Metro. My advice to members is to hang on for the bumpy ride regarding industrial relations in this country. We as a transport Union are not exempt from the stand-over tactics being employed by companies throughout Australia as they engage the anti-working class lawyers Freehills to advise on industrial tactics. This is the same legal firm engaged by John Howard to draw up his work choices legislation, Qantas in their current dispute and Metro in their continuing attack on the RTBU Locomotive Division and its Officers.

Metro Trains Melbourne

Metro has accused drivers of sabotaging the system in November 2010, driving slow in April 2011 and the latest accusation is that Union Officials are coercing trainees into signing up for Union membership, then in their propaganda pamphlets Metro states "We are not attacking the Union" it is just a small group that are giving us trouble.

Metro always inform the media of their allegations and investigations are underway, but you never hear anymore, it's a case of 'if you throw enough mud, some of it will stick'. Metro have no hesitation in sacking employees or putting them on 'final warnings' even over the most frivolous matters, they want to be the judge, jury and executioner, their motive is to have employees fearing for their jobs. Station staff and drivers are being harassed by phone at home or interviewed at work if they take any time off sick even if a certificate is supplied, drivers are rung up at home regarding late running during a previous shift.

The Metropolitan OH&S room was used by thirty four OH&S representatives, radio testing working party, four union representatives on H roster, signal sighting committee representatives and radio testing working party. Metro had the barrel of the lock changed during a Sunday night with two armed guards in attendance. Two weeks later, again on a Sunday night, removalists were engaged to

clean out the room and dumped everything in a spare room on level 2. Metro claim they want the room for the extra managers they keep employing however the room has been vacant for six weeks.

Union Roster

The union roster has existed for about 21 years and we were given only ten days notice to return to fulltime driving instead of the one return trip each weekday and being available for other duties as required, on weekends or public holidays a full running shift was rostered.

Metro then think it is alright to then pull you off your running shift at the drop of a hat to represent members at interviews or statements for accidents or incidents, they cannot have it both ways.

Metro states "We are not attacking the Union" at long last the media have woken up to Metro's deceit about extra trains (which run the wrong way) in the peak and the on time running they claim has improved, it would have to following the speed restrictions being lifted on Siemens trains and three minutes added to the running times in the timetables plus being allowed five minutes late before a train is declared a late train, that is at least eight minutes being given before the train makes the 'late' stats sheet.

The Fault Management Protocol

The Fault Management Protocol (FMP) has now become a farce with Fair Work Australia not being prepared to make any recommendations on the issue, we now have three categories; Critical, Serious and Maintenance which is up to 90 days which can be extended by Metro indefinitely under certain circumstances. E.g. Thursday 22/12 relieved Comeng train and off side windscreen completely covered in graffiti, been booked 5 hours earlier so I asked Metro to upgrade to Serious (has to be cleaned before next day) and was informed that the Principal Driver has to upgrade fault. So I rang P.D and he was not keen to upgrade, so I informed him that it would affect OJT's and trainees as the train couldn't be used for training purposes as the OJT would have to drive and the trainee would have to sit in the OJT seat. I informed the P.D that if he wasn't prepared to upgrade the fault I would have to delay the train and upgrade the fault myself as trainees shouldn't be penalised because Metro want 90 days to clean a windscreen, common sense prevailed as the P.D reluctantly upgraded the fault to Serious. That afternoon Mr. Perry Ramsey questioned Paris Jolly, the Sub-Divisional Secretary, in regards to the upgrading but he didn't have the courtesy or courage to contact me regarding the issue.

I haven't got anything positive to write about Metro as they are a very negative company that prefers confrontation instead of consultation.

**Jim
Chrysostomou
Divisional
Assistant
Secretary**



FWA Hearing MTM v Marc Marotta

As I near my thirteenth hour whilst running on 4 hours sleep, two long black cups of coffee and a bottle of coke, I wait to be cross examined in a hearing instigated by Metro Trains (**MTM**) in an attempt to revoke and or suspend Marc Marotta's *Entry Permit to Enter Premises* issue under s.512 of the *Fair Work Act 2009*. The hearing was scheduled over the 15th and 16th of December with a further day scheduled on 21st December 2011 to allow both parties to complete submissions and before his Honour Deputy President Ives hands down a decision in the new year after taking into consideration all of the evidence presented before him.

I was into my second day waiting to be called up as witness so I had time to reflect on Union business, the 50 plus times we have been before the *Fair Work Australia Commission* (**FWAC**) most of which were to deal with metropolitan issues and life in general.

A short time later I was called up to take the stand partially relieved because I did not have to wait anymore but feeling slightly reserved because of what was ahead of me, to summarise the cross examination, I was called a liar, it was asserted that I enjoy the status of being a Union Official and all that comes with performing the role as Assistant Secretary and because of this I would do anything to protect this, my reply was that there is no glory in being a Union Official and by no means do I consider the position as being a status symbol so you can understand my demeanour during and after questioning.

Another day past in the **FWAC** and I made my way back to my car checking the many messages on my phone along with bumping into Drivers in my endeavour to get home. The topic of conversation with most and the messages left were about "me, me, me, me, me, Oh how are you doing? Me too" which left me thinking maybe the barrister for Freehills was right who would want to give all this up... 'aint life grand.

Transcripts of the hearing will be available online once a decision is handed down and Members will be kept abreast of the progress.

Establishment of Level 6, 1 Elizabeth St Melbourne...

Most will be aware that Metro Trains took steps on October 2nd 2011 to lock out Union Officials and Health and Safety Representatives of an office that had been occupied since the establishment of Flinders Street as the Electric Running Depot for the sparks. Since then the committee of management for Locomotive Division made a decision to seek permanent accommodation initially to house the affected officials and delegates.

After the purchase of the 6th Floor at 1 Elizabeth Street Melbourne a conscious business decision was made not to use members union dues for this purpose. As a result the entire Locomotive Division will move, this will providing greater accessibility to the membership in the expected ongoing confrontation with MTM regarding representation for Loco Drivers.

The South Melbourne premises (Level 14) will be leased out to tenants as is currently taking place with level 1, 222 Kings Way South Melbourne.

The year that was 2011...

On February 22nd 2011 the results for the RTBU elections were finalised with the previous Locomotive Divisional office bearers surprised about being thrown out of office. It became apparent relatively quickly the lack of contribution/ work by the previous Divisional Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Vice President. They specialised in a strategy known as '*Crouching tiger, hidden dragon*' the only problem was that they never came out from hiding under the desk and behind the bushes.

When occupation of the Union office took place the observation were made that no current industrial agreements were on file and that the place looked like it stood still for 4 1/2 years, those observations were closer to the truth than we understood at the time.

As we progress into the New Year the consequences of other people's action or inaction becomes more and more evident with the seemingly insurmountable problems confronting the current Union officials is the equivalent of finding a cure for a cancer that has been allowed to grow because of the environment that prevailed at the time.

Other things to take into consideration are; the introduction of new national safety laws, the establishment of a national rail safety regulator and the introduction in Victoria of the *Public Transport Authority* formally known as the *Public Transport Corporation* (**PTC**).

So what does this all mean? More obstacles, more hoops to jump through, more finger pointing by government bodies.

The evolution of the railway safety regulations has come about for a reason and that is to prevent major incidents usually because of past rail disasters. The regulations are to prevent them from happening again and now it is proposed to scale back those safety nets that protect people both employees and the travelling public with an example of the proposed co-regulation model between the two passenger operators self regulating or what I like to call the blank check approach to safety (business model).

Time and time again the ignorance is bliss approach taken by government bodies is of great concern with comments like “if the operator tells us there doing it why should we doubt them”, “or under the rail safety act it is the operator who is responsible for the safe management of the network”, these comments are fine until something that could have been prevented happens and the first port of call will be the Train Driver.

I recently reported an allegation to Metro and the regulator that an unauthorised person was operating a revenue passenger train on the suburban network. Metro conducted no investigation and I was concerned with the depth of the investigation the regulator conducted. As a result I undertook a preliminary investigation by scheduling a time to view CCTV footage, what happened next should be of great concern to all. The only person that conducted an investigation was the individual the allegations were made against, since then footage that should have been archived has gone missing and none of the witnesses were ever interviewed about the incident. What instead happen was the two witnesses were pursued for other alleged misconduct with one of these Drives facing termination because he did not have a vest on when he crossed the tracks which just happened to be the same time he witnessed the unauthorised person driving a passenger train.

The investigation is ongoing on behalf of Locomotive Division.

Merry Christmas and all the best for the New Year...

Firstly, I would like to thank all the Divisional officers and branch divisional representatives who have contributed beyond the call of duty it really is an honour and a privilege to work with some of the most dedicated, unselfish and honourable people you would ever come across. I would also like to thank one of the Lawyers that has worked closely with Locomotive Division, Mr Kamal Farouque of Maurice Blackburn Lawyers he changed my opinion of Lawyers and he also shares the same passion and dedication that we all do as a Union.

To everyone else I wish you and your families all the best for Christmas with health, prosperity and best wishes for the New Year.



XR555 & B65 South Dynon
GM36 and Y152 at Dynon



The railway industry was ahead of its time recycling is the only way to describe the locos pictured above at the turntable at Sth Dynon.

—Pictures courtesy of Wayne Hicks

John Marotta— Divisional Vice President and Wayne Hicks— RTBU V/Line Passenger



A Provisional Improvement Notice (PIN) was issued in relation to the North East standard gauge rough track. The Work Safe inspector overturned the PIN notice; an appeal was lodged through the internal review process. The internal review affirmed the PIN and now train crews are still stuck with substandard track conditions.

The car sidings fuel point at Southern Cross has an underground leak and as a consequence, the fuel point has been closed and fuelling is taking place in the wash road at the bank siding. This is scheduled for a period of two weeks but is likely to be extended.

With the RRL (Regional Rail Link) track works commencing, the arrival yards will be closed for at least two years. As a result the v/locity's that are currently stabled at South Dynon will be stabled at the store roads. The proposal is to stable two push pull sets at South Dynon in five and six roads. After an inspection this week, a works program has been drafted and standard things such as lighting, pathways etc. have been highlighted.

Ballarat to Maryborough: the speed has been lifted to 100kmph after the removal of trees. The removal of foliage will continue for at least another month. The new Ballarat East workshop is near complete.

Stuart Madden has resigned his Union positions at Southern Cross to take a job at Geelong. Gary Gordon has also resigned as Secretary, from the Spencer Street Sub Division. Both positions will need to go to an election in the New Year.

The Victorian 2011 rule book appears to be on hold, and I believe political and personal agendas come into play.

Some new Trainees are in the midst of completing stage ten thus it will be only a matter of time before some new drivers will appear on the network; this will be the first group of people in over ten years. The second group of Trainees scheduled to do their stage ten exam in February 2012 have been put back over three months due to these Trainees being used as second persons on the North East standard gauge. Six right of return drivers will be heading V/Line's way in January 2012.

In order to gain a retirement pass, drivers who had taken on a position at V/Line after previously having resigned from PTC which was then taken over by Freight Australia and later by Pacific National, should start obtaining a work history, please view the attached documentation relating to retirement passes.

On behalf of the branch I would like to wish you and your families a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.



ARTC mainline train heading in the down direction collided with a train that was arriving into the GWA siding between Mawson Lakes and Greenfields.

—Picture courtesy of Wayne Hicks

Metlink Central Pass Office

Retired Employee Travel Pass application information

The Metlink Central Pass Office has been established under Metlink to provide a range of free public transport travel passes.

In order to meet audit requirements, Metlink requires the Central Pass Office to obtain documentary evidence of all former PTC and associated service to enable it to assess whether the former PTC employee is eligible to receive a free Retired Employee Travel Pass.

As most former PTC employees departed from the PTC years ago, Metlink in conjunction with the Department of Transport has developed a statement of service pro forma (attached pages 3, 4 & 5) for former PTC employees to complete in order to establish the following:

- PTC start date of employment
- PTC end date of employment
- Reason for separation
- Date of birth confirmation

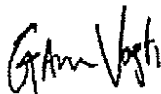
If you have other paperwork that confirms the above please send by mail to:

Metlink Central Pass Office
Southern Cross Station
99 Spencer St
Docklands VIC 3008

Or you can fax it to the Central Pass Office on 9619 1490 for consideration with your contact details.

Employees who transferred to franchisee or non franchisee companies after privatisation (28/08/1999) will require a statement of service from their former employer. This form is often referred to as the G255 form and it should be requested via your former HR Department.

Yours sincerely,



Gavin Vosti
Manager
Metlink Central Pass Office



metlink@

Steps to ensure a successful Retired Employee Travel Pass application

1. Apply for a Statement of Service from the Department of Transport.
 - Or send by mail or fax a copy to the Metlink Central Pass Office on 03 9619 1490, your personal statement of service containing the above information with your contact details.
 - Or request your G255 form from the HR Department of your previous employer.
2. When you receive your Statement of Service form from the Department of Transport telephone the Metlink Central Pass Office on 03 9619 1159 to ascertain if you are eligible to receive the RETP.
 - Or if you fax your own copy of your statement of service or G255 form please await a call from the Metlink Central Pass Office to confirm your eligibility for the RETP.
3. After receiving confirmation of eligibility for the RETP the applicant must produce the following information in person or via mail:
 - Drivers licence or photo identification (photocopy via mail) of former PTC employee
 - Drivers licence or photo identification (photocopy via mail) of spouse/partner
 - Marriage certificate (photocopy via mail)
 - Or complete a statutory declaration for domestic relationship (partner) stating that you and your partner have been living in a domestic relationship together for more than 12 months
 - Birth certificates (or photocopy) for dependants under the age of 18
 - Recent coloured photograph (no more than three months old) of all applicants. Please print your name on the back of the photos supplied.

The Metlink Central Pass Office is located at:
Southern Cross Station (Bourke St end near Bus Interchange)
99 Spencer Street
Docklands VIC 3008

Office hours
Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm

A photograph will be taken at the Central Pass Office at a cost of \$6.60 per person. Or alternatively you may bring in a colour passport-sized photograph of yourself, spouse or dependants that is recent (no more than three months old). The photograph should be approximately 45mm high by 35mm wide.

or

By mail (Please allow at least 10 working days for your new pass to returned)
Enclose all of the above information and mail it to:

Metlink Central Pass Office
Southern Cross Station
99 Spencer St
Docklands VIC 3008



metlink@

Metlink Central Pass Office

Public Transport Statement of Service Application Form

Advice for ex-public transport employees seeking a Statement of Service for Retired Employees Travel Pass purposes

Public Transport Service Statements are prepared and issued by the Public Transport Division of the Department of Transport.

It takes about four weeks to process a request and mail a statement of service.

Enquiries about the status of your submission may be made, during office hours, by contacting Mr Siva Sivanesan on telephone number 9655 1709 **after** the standard four weeks processing period has elapsed.

A Public Transport Service Statement is provided to you as a supporting document for your Retired Employee Travel Pass application.

Please forward all correspondence to:
Manager Transport Insurance Services
Public Transport Division
Department of Transport
GPO Box 2797
MELBOURNE VIC 3001



metlink@

**Please provide me with a statement of services for Retired Employee
Travel Authority purposes.**

My personal details are:

Surname: _____ Given name/s: _____

Home/postal address: _____

Suburb: _____ Post code: _____

Date of birth: _____ / _____ / _____

My public transport service details are:

Surname (when employed): _____

Given name/s (when employed): _____

Mode of transport employed in (railways/tramways/buses): _____

Duty commencement date: _____ / _____ / _____

Grade/position held: _____

Branch/Division/Department deployed in: _____

Employment exit date: _____

Reason for termination *resigned/retired/dismissed/targeted*: _____

If required, I may be contacted during office hours on following telephone number:

Yours sincerely,

Signature _____ Date _____ / _____ / _____

**Please note that I have had more than one period of employment with the
Public Transport Industry.**



metlink@

2nd period of employment

Surname (when employed): _____

Given name/s (when employed): _____

Mode of transport employed in (railways/tramways/buses): _____

Duty commencement date: _____ / _____ / _____

Grade/position held: _____

Branch/Division/Department deployed in: _____

Employment exit date: _____ / _____ / _____

Reason for termination resigned/retired/dismitted/targeted): _____

3rd period of employment

Surname (when employed): _____

Given name/s (when employed): _____

Mode of transport employed in (railways/tramways/buses): _____

Duty commencement date: _____ / _____ / _____

Grade/position held: _____

Branch/Division/Department deployed in: _____

Employment exit date: _____ / _____ / _____

Reason for termination resigned/retired/dismitted/targeted): _____

Signature _____ Date _____ / _____ / _____



metlink®

Geoff Ralph

Vice President Metropolitan Sub Divisional Committee

Metropolitan News

Thankyou to all the members for there continued support and during the elections back in March. I my experience in the private industry and during my fourteen years in the railways I have found that you get the best out of your employees by encouragement and support. So far since MTM have taken over Melbourne's metropolitan network I have not seen encouraging sign's. The rail industry has had a proud 150 years of employer's working with union's to achieve many goals. MTM appear to want to be masters without negotiation. Many requests for Drivers to attend an interview for trivial matters have been forthcoming. Remember it's your right to have union representation. I strongly recommend this. We are only a phone call away.

Since March we have been locked out of our OHS/Union room which we have occupied since the middle 1980's. The contents of which where packed up and stored by Metro Managers. This also lock out radio testers, signal sighting committee, train test working party as well as 64 OHS reps. We have all been affected by this. Terry, Jim Paris and myself have all been subjected to being locked out, refused to be signed on and payed. H roster is part of our roosted code. MTM are not abiding by this, which is why we have had to start Federal court proceedings.

Back some nine months ago MTM hired Halcro an English consulting company to review Metro operations. I have been told that some of there recommendations are: New FMP, Rostering changes and Driver Training changes. We have fought a long battle over the FMP. In the end Fair Work Australia granted its implementation with some concessions. One of our wins is that the Driver still has the ultimate say.

Driver training is now being put under the spotlight. MTM want changes. We await there proposals in writing to respond too.

During Cup week Terry Sheedy, Wayne Hicks (VLP), JJ Stiles (PN), and myself represented Victoria at the National conference held in Canberra. The main item relating to the driving grade was a national certificate level 4 Train Driver qualification agreements. All parties from all states put forward there case for level 4 Australia wide. Currently all have this qualification except 120 drivers in the Perth Metro system. It was ratified that Perth would be brought up to this standard.

Since our lockout of room 112 at Flinders Street we have now purchase level 6, no 1 Elizabeth Street for our new home. Many thanks must go to Paris Jolly for his tireless efforts. We hope to have these facilities up and running in the New Year.

On behalf of all the Metropolitan Sub Divisional Committee union officials I wish all our members a safe and Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

Cab Committee report Southern Cross: Dec 2011

By Karl Costanzo

Cab Committee Coordinator

Firstly, I would like to thank the members for voting for me in the last elections. I would also like to thank the Locomotive Division for giving me the opportunity to represent the Cab Committee at Southern Cross and Ian Cashill for the knowledge he passed on.

Vlocities: There are a number of mods taking place at the moment. Currently, units are cycling through Bombardier Dandenong for the headlight upgrade, which should see all units converted by Christmas. This upgrade also includes the cab air con booster fan mod, non slip handrail coating, lower voltage windscreen demister units and the toilet door mod, on which you should have all seen the info notice by now.

There have been reports of light escaping from the new Hid lights, into the cab at night; investigations have identified a small gap between the light housing and the light shield as the cause of the problem. Heavy duty tape is now being applied over this gap to hopefully eliminate this problem, with units VL12 and 19, I believe, being the first fitted. Others will be retrofitted. Keep booking faults both with the cars office and on the green form.

Members need to be aware of checking the hazard light button on preps as even though we don't use this feature, it is wired through the headlight circuit and we have had reports of the headlight failing due to a defective or sticky hazard light button. You don't get any fault tiles and during daylight you may not be aware the lights aren't operating.

We are hoping to get electric mirrors fitted to the rest of the fleet as the feedback on this has been positive, with just the stiff mirror arms problem to be addressed. If you encounter a stiff mirror arm, report the fault and leave it extended until it has been seen to.

You may have heard recently, after a number of trains running out of fuel that V/line are to fit fuel lights to the vlocities. I can't comment on this, as the Cab Committee are yet to be consulted. Other items in the mix are the whistle operation, windscreen blinds, cab heater upgrade as per the trial on VL40, and V.C daylight light upgrade among others.

Locos: N470 (standard gauge) has been fitted with a new seat for trial. It is a new type from Loco Seats Aust. It was fitted on drivers side only for a quick 2 week trial, and as a result of positive feedback, all three S.G 'N's will have them fitted both ends, both sides due to the rough track and 2 man operation. Drivers need to familiarise themselves with the operation of the seat, to get the best seating position and benefits of the seat. It incorporates both massage and heat functions and there are a lot of buttons to play with. (It has been joked that the V.C. timing cycle will need to be reset to stop drivers from nodding off!) Once these are fitted, we hope to get them for the rest of the 'N' classes on Broad Gauge.

Sprinters: Currently deciding a suitable location for the CD player that will be fitted to all cabs.

There have been a number of braking issues with these units in the last 18 months or so. The main problems have been E.P failures. Bombardier is looking to make the fleet more reliable by having all of the brake rack components overhauled and standardised. A number of improvements have already been made that have increased reliability but also altered the brake test pressures. Refer to Sprinter info notice S4, up on the cab committee notice board, S.C.S. The issue of uncoupling has become a pet hate for all drivers, the result of a modification bombardier made to the air line- to coupler head, without consultation or testing in service, combined with worn out components in the coupler itself. Overhauled components and a new air supply line are being fitted to finally, hopefully eliminate this problem. If you can't split 2 sprinters by yourself and no one is available to help, then you will have to depart with the two units that can't be split.

If this gets to you in time, I wish all members and their families all the best for the festive season. Thank you also to the Cab Committee members for your support and to the drivers at all depots for their input and ideas throughout the year.

Signal Sighting Report

By David Campbell

Metropolitan Sub-Division

This report was omitted from the last issue of Loco Lines, with apologies to Dave.

THIS year has been rather busy, with several new projects starting and others already under way.

Craigieburn (Include X'Trap Trial)

Another six new sidings (roads 13 to 18) were commissioned on 27th March 2011. Signal circuit changes were finally introduced at the same time, designed to remove the restrictive slow approaches. Sadly the designers thought it better not to consult with RTBU-LD, and unsurprisingly the result actually made things worse. Colin Holly and I ran test trains on the Sunday night and found that for one common move the signal system slowed us right down, then encouraged (in fact, positively required) acceleration after speed proving. We disagreed that speed proving was required for the scenario but even if it was, the designers had not provided it in such a way as to protect against any risk; it actually made the risk worse. An entertaining session was held late that night, with various people arguing with each other until it was agreed to impose a temporary speed restriction until the signalling can be redesigned.

The next stage of works will give us the workshop tracks; three tracks each holding six cars. The wash plant is developing as an expensive piece of infrastructure which is not without shortcomings, as it requires trains to be stabled while the machines move around the trains, unlike Epping and North Melbourne where the train moves through a fixed wash facility. That idea is OK with Siemens and X'Trapolis trains, however when a Comeng is stabled for a wash and the brushes and hoses start up, you may guess what happens to the doors ... just as well there is no carpet in the saloons any more! An X'Trapolis train was trialled after the last train on 20th January 2011 on this corridor to test for clearances, signal sighting etc. As a result these trains can now operate to and from Craigieburn as empty cars moves only, effectively for wash and maintenance only. During the trials we noted that signal sighting issues will arise at several platforms should these trains be introduced for revenue services, and as well the SPOT infrastructure will need substantial alterations, with the last saloon doors simply not appearing on the SPOT monitors at all at sev-

eral locations. Whether Metro decides to introduce these trains into revenue service on this line remains uncertain, but clearly extensive works to signals and SPOT infrastructure are required.

Sunbury

Installation of overhead wiring structures is underway. Most of the signals installed a few years back with the Regional Fast Rail project are outside the alignment of the OHWS, and as such the signals are being relocated closer to the track so we can retain viewing of the signals.

We had proposed installation of a new 80km/h turnout approaching Sunbury to allow improved approach speeds and overcome several time delay and speed proving issues, however the wise men have deemed that the current 40km/h turnout is adequate and so we will maintain the classic Victorian tradition of 40km/h turnouts in 160km/h areas, with the resulting need to speed prove and waste even more time. The lack of foresight by some people more concerned to meet inadequate budgets than providing decent infrastructure, never ceases to astonish me.

Westall

This is a project lurching from one mess to another. I understand that several people are producing T-shirts proclaiming "Westall Was Not My Fault", and small wonder, it would not look good on their CVs!

The original signal sighting walk-through occurred on 1st December 2009, the first day of Metro's Brave New World. Since that day, signals have been relocated arbitrarily by the project up to 70m (have to get them behind those overhead wiring structures, you know!), a footbridge was installed lower than planned (thus the gantry signal became invisible, and a co-acting signal had to be installed), and two signal gantries cannot have signals installed on them as other structures were blocking the signals.

The project advised that all overhead wiring structures in this area would be replaced with new to-standard, however for some bizarre reason several were subsequently de-scoped (meaning the project would not do so after all). As a result these structures (generally over 90 years old, and many showing extensive rust) will block new signals, and several of these signals now have to be moved or altered to obtain a view. It will be impossible to obtain an adequate viewing of four signals while the old OHWS remain, and at the time of writing [April 2011] the project has not advised their intentions concerning these signals. Two Automatic signals now have to be converted to Home configuration so that we can see them.

Then there are the sidings. Some moron decided to save money at one spot by installing a curve into the four new tracks, so that the last three cars of stabled trains would be on this curve.

The project was told during their planning stages that this was unacceptable, as the cab steps of Comeng and Hitachi trains disappear under the floors and cannot be used, but they disregarded our advice and built anyway. Their solution to Driver access to cab issues was to provide platforms for us to use. ("So, how do we test the trip?" "Oh, that's easy – just crawl on the ground below the platform and swing the switch stick."). These people are actually serious!

Regional Rail Link

This project has been a refreshing change to many others, with RTBU-LD input actively sought, and as a result we have already seen good changes to the original plans. The project will basically build a new pair of lines from Southern Cross (platforms 15 and 16) to Sunshine. In the first stage the tracks will run along the current Main Goods lines alignment, behind North Melbourne platform 6, up to Spion Kop beside the Broadmeadows Suburban lines, then down to South Kensington. The next two stages will run the tracks behind South Kensington box, beside the Newport line until the Maribyrnong River, then over the top to land between the Newport and Sunshine lines. Footscray platforms 3 and 4 will become platforms 5 and 6; the existing platforms 1 and 2 will become 3 and 4 (as the RRL platforms), and new platforms 1 and 2 will be built for the Sunshine suburban electrified line. The new lines remain on the south side of the current passenger lines to Sunshine, where existing platform 3 and new platform 4 will service the RRL lines. These will then swing around onto the Ballarat line toward Deer Park (and thence through Tarneit and Wyndham Vale, meeting the Geelong line near Manor Loop), or junction off to connect with the Bendigo line near Anderson Road level crossing (which becomes grade separated). Despite the change of state government, all concerned seem confident that most if not all of the project will go ahead, and this will produce a huge improvement to rail's capacity to the north and western parts of Melbourne. Current planning is for these lines to be for regional trains only, however some are pushing for at least parts of this line to be electrified; I don't know how that will go.

John Marotta, Paul Carr, Ron Hall, Frank Szentmiklossy, Colin Holly and I have each attended various sessions related to this project, and much hard work has been put in by each. From a signalling perspective, the project intends to introduce TPWS into the Metro area where new conflicting moves may occur, such as around the south end of platforms 15 and 16. Our position has been to support this work, provided it is introduced consistently at each location. One plan provided for TPWS at one spot at Franklin Street, however we argued that it be all or nothing. Another issue was parallel signals, with us pushing hard for all signals to be parallel as far as possible, and the project is accepting this. This will mean that

all signals between South Kensington and Sunshine will be replaced in new locations.

South Morang

In contrast to others this project is doing well. The duplication between Keon Park and Epping is rapidly progressing and looks likely to be commissioned late in July. The line between Epping and South Morang (actually not the original South Morang location, being over 1km short, at the site of a former Rail Motor Stopping Place) will follow some time later. The Epping station is being relocated to the down side of Cooper Street overline bridge and will comprise two platforms (signalled for bi-directional running within station limits). The new up and down lines to South Morang will end at two platforms arranged so that they can later become island configuration should the track be extended (as would appear logical, although logic does not guarantee it!). There will be no level crossings beyond Epping. Very little of the original formation of the Whittlesea line (closed in 1959) will be re-used.

As the work is progressing on the up side of Epping, all up signals have been "wrong sided" to allow space for the construction works. This seems to have worked out rather well with no issues of undue concern identified.

Newport

The Stabling Sidings project continues, providing more sidings to constipate this busy junction. A forthcoming stage will allow down trains to depart from sidings 13–17 directly toward Altona Junction, avoiding the bottleneck at Newport platforms. The new yard will access the main line from the points that formerly led into "E" siding and the freezer works. This move is subject to discussions about signal aspects and protection of conflicting moves. One of our concerns is to get the "wrong" signal aspect of Normal Speed aspects through diverging points replaced with "B" arm aspects (ideally as Clear Medium Speed + 65 light), also to protect the diverging moves to current standards.

The Newport Yard generally has been introduced with less trouble than some other projects, reflecting the improved Driver training for this location. A substantial difference to previous yard arrangements is the use of a Home signal off the platform that takes the train toward a Dwarf signal, this marking the start of the yard operations. Similar arrangements will apply at Epping.

TPWS In Metro Area

Indications are that TPWS will be extended, to be installed within the metropolitan area at locations identified as having risk of conflicting moves between Regional and Metropolitan trains. It is considered as being "good practice" from an engineering perspective and is widely used within most regional lines, providing both Stop Enforcement as well as Overspeed protection.

Locations at risk have been identified and during consultations those locations were assessed, with some removed from the Risk List and others included. It would appear there is some funding to implement this protection, however the cost is an issue and it appears likely that only a handful of signals will be treated annually. Given that such protection is now considered “good practice” from the authorities, we believe locations that introduce new conflicting moves should receive similar protection. Other locations may be considered as “existing risk” (grandfather rules), however new locations must be considered as new risk and protected accordingly.

Of course other systems are available internationally, and in New South Wales they are starting to introduce European Train Control System (ETCS), a dynamic system that both improves train protection and allows increase in track capacity. Whether in Victoria we ever go that far is open to speculation.

Signal Upgrades

The signals between North Melbourne and Moonee Ponds Creek on the Main, Through and East Suburban lines have been upgraded to LED, as have the signals between Carrum and Frankston, as part of Metro’s processes. The incandescent signals between Narre Warren and Dandenong are to be upgraded this coming year which should fix the existing poor viewing caused by ancient equipment that is well past its use-by date. We also look forward to several upgrades on the Altona Junction to Werribee corridor soon.

SPADS

While the overall performance has been of a high standard, and compares well with other jurisdictions, two “hot spots” have had more than their fair share. Laverton 705 (Westona to platform 3) and Craigieburn 517 (top of holding road) have had too many SPADs. Both of these locations were introduced with “training by circular” and it seems this is an issue.

In contrast, other locations such as Clifton Hill bridge and Newport Stabling Yard have used OJTs to instruct Drivers, and the results tend to demonstrate the benefits of providing proper training.

MMM Magazine extract

Defective Signals and the Appropriate Caution Order

One of the benefits of changing over from older style light type signals to LED signals is that the mean time

between failures has increased dramatically. This has positives and negatives for the system. One of the big negatives for a newbie means that the receiving of a caution order is becoming a rare creature on today’s system.

An aspect of the negative has shown in a couple of events where main line home signals (light type) has failed. After stopping at a light type signal protecting points, carrying out the required procedure and contacting METROL, the reply of “Yeah driver the signal has been out for a couple of days and you are right to go” does not constitute authority to pass the signal.

As a trainee you would have passed a lot of signals in training and a good chance exists that during this time you didn’t experience the need to receive a caution order. Whilst schooled in there use, it is not quite the same as doing something.

The appropriate authority to pass (as you all know) a signal at stop is the Signallers Caution Order, where the signal is protecting points, stations, etc..., (let’s not get caught up with other needs for each operating system, a new draft of the ROP is coming out soon and will simplify this situation) Where it is hand delivered it will be a form similar to the facsimile below

SIGNALLER'S CAUTION ORDER FOR DRIVER TO PASS A HOME SIGNAL AT THE STOP POSITION			
			No. 19901
Signal Box	Date	Time	
To Driver of No.		train from	
to			
You are authorised to pass Signal Post No. and to proceed cautiously as far as the next fixed signal.			
Signed		Signaller	
<small>NOTE: This order must be retained by the Driver and attached to his Running Sheet. Caution Orders received attached to Drivers' Running Sheets to be properly forwarded to the Manager of System Safety.</small>			

Where special instructions allow this caution order may be read over the train radio (obviously where the radio is recorded) and the wording must be as per the facsimile signallers caution order above. Anything less is not a caution order and as such not authority to pass the signal at danger.

Interestingly in the new draft of the ROP the signallers caution order has not changed.

Please ensure you follow the procedures as they are taught to you. At any inquiry into an incident you will have had all recordings of radio communications involved, pulled and used as evidence. You are responsible for the train; so you will carry the can.

So the next logical extension of this discussion is “When is a LED signal light defective?”

Obviously the loss of the whole LED represents a defective signal. But this tends to be a rarity as a failure mode for a LED signal. The way LED lights are designed various parts of it will be powered from a number of power sources. Early LED installations tend to fail in a “pie wedge” fashion. Other styles of a similar age tend to fail as a number of strips running through the light. These larger failures of an area are preceded by a small number of LED failing in a close group.

In this manner during the failure of the LED, the outer circumference of the light is broken.

The current LED lights tend to fail in a random pattern where individual LED within the cluster will fail, not severely breaking the outer circumference of the light. In both cases these are acceptable as aspects.

Wherever you see a cluster of failed LED contact Metrol and advise of them of the situation. Report the light as an LED. They will ask you to estimate the number of failed LED's as a percentage of the whole LED. This will be relayed to the Signal Maintainers via the fault system for them to either replace the LED or place it on a watching brief.

Talkback from Hinch

The goat track mark 2.

G'day comrades, back in the nineties, Mr. Keating decided it would be a good idea to standardize the track between Melbourne and Adelaide. Indeed it was a good idea, however, Mr. Keating let the then National Rail Corporation have access to what he called the “One Nation” package of money to achieve it. History tells us that it was a disaster. Half way through the project they ran out of dough and the condition of the track was abysmal. Comrade Sheedy nick named it “The goat track.” Then along came that well known goat fondler Jeff and sold the entire corridor to the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC). To their credit, the ARTC actually repaired the track and turned it into a good piece of rail. I don't run over this track any more so I am unaware of its current condition.

Fast forward to 2009 through to 2011. The Brumby Government sells the Nth Eastern broad gauge track to the ARTC and the federal government kicks in several hundred million dollars to facilitate the rebuilding and standardization of the corridor. This sets the scene for some skullduggery.

The ARTC selects the *Side Insertion* method of re sleeper-

ing. To explain what this means, understand that the method of re sleepering track that assures the integrity and good quality of such rebuilt infrastructure involves lifting the track and inserting the sleeper under the rail. The side insertion (intrusion) method involves the crude removal of a wooden sleeper which is approximately twelve inches thick and the ramming home of a sleeper which is around eighteen inches thick. What is the problem you ask?

Let us go back a short time and understand that track gangs have for years been injecting lime down into the ground in between each and every sleeper on the corridor. This treatment effectively waterproofed the entire track. So, when they rammed in the new sleeper, not only did they bulldoze the ballast out of the way, they also ruptured the lime sealant. Ooh, no longer a virgin. Remember, the entire track bed on this corridor is only a couple of feet deep. It could not possibly withstand the side intrusion method without substantial damage to the foundation of the entire track. Hence, when the rain falls, water seeps into the cracks and fissures exposed by this sleepering method to form underlying pools which we now refer to as “mud holes.” The ballast disappears and is replaced by layers of mud which prove themselves unsafe for the accommodation of the normal speed of most rail traffic.

Let us now add to this scenario the prospect that the flat bottomed concrete sleepers are now sitting down on the bare earth. If any of you have ever done any concreting, you will know that when you get a float and tamp the surface of wet concrete, the moisture rises to the surface. So let us imagine that a sleeper is kind of like a concrete float and it is bouncing up and down on the bare unballasted earth. The track is permitted to float up and down more than would be determined as normal because the ballast, as a whole, is only half profile. Only good wishes and gravity are holding the track to the ground. As the sleepers bounce up and down, they act just like a concrete float and they suck the moisture up from the earth. Hence, mud holes in summer.

The CEO of the ARTC recently remarkably observed that the problem was that unseasonable rains were responsible. Hmmmmmm, let us take a close look at the track on both the broad gauge and the standard gauge between Somerton and Seymour. There are precious few mud holes on the broad gauge but there are several hundred on the standard gauge. OH, silly old me.... Of course, the rain only fell on the standard gauge. And of course, I am sure that no rain fell on any of the other corridors...because there are no mud holes on them. I am such a cynic.

The fact remains that the track will not spontaneously get better. It is only going to get worse. My prediction is that it will continue to deteriorate to the point where it will so peppered with restrictions that it will be impractical for main line use. As it is, the current speed restrictions are just as thick as fleas on a wooly dog. NOTHING SHORT OF A ROYAL COMMISSION will suffice to eventually point the legal finger of blame at the party responsible for this debacle. The tax payer and every rail man demands it.

Ned's Joint.

On the subject of the North East, around twenty odd years ago, I was astounded that Glen Rowan was decommissioned as a station. Why on earth in this day and age is still out of use. The new North east upgrades include brand new seven car platforms at all the stations such as Avenal, Euroa and Springhurst. But at these stations, only two or three passengers ever get on or off. Glen Rowan is a tourist destination and is surely a station worthy of a passenger train port of call. Come on you state transport government people, have a think about it and re establish Glen Rowan.

.How safe is the Safe working ?

On the North East corridor at both Benalla and Wangaratta, there are signs on the home arrival signals in both directions which read "End CTC." On the Home departures there are signs which read "Start CTC." I asked the question, what is in between and the answer came back, "Station Limits."

Hmmm, ok, so what does that mean? "oh, it is just Station Limits." Came the reply. Once again, what does that mean, that is just a name and it is ARTC we are talking about. The vagaries that exist on their trackage are often mind numbing in both concept and logic. Instead of station limits you could just as well call it an FJ Holden and it would have equal lack of meaning.

Fortunately there are people about who were able to demystify it for us. It turns out that for some unspecified technical reason, the track designers were unable to apply the use of predictors for these locations. The answer they came up with was - axle counters. I am reliably led to believe that the attitude of ARTC is that drivers do not need to know how a system works, they just have to look at the signals. Ohhhhhh contraire !!! If you stop to think about it, the application of axle counters dictates that there is no track circuit. Hence, if there were a serious incident within the confines of these locations, the application of a track circuit jumper cable would be futile. You would have to venture outside the realms of these station limit locations for a cable to be of any use !!

But no, of course we don't have to know that.

The Goulbourn Valley.

Let us once again turn our attention to the subject of reversing the decisions of bloody Jeff's great rail purge..... why oh why does the track to Cobram remain closed? The track and basic infrastructure is still there. Yes it needs a huge upgrade and capital investment but this particular closure was indeed particularly stupid. This service was extremely well patronized. It paid for itself. Indeed evidence of this lies in the fact that the Hoyes company made a tidy living on it with their provisioning of trains. They were smart. Unlike West Coast, they recognized that traction operations were not central to their core business and subsequently were not interested in it. They played their long suit and provided the staff who looked after passengers and ticketing and those on board things that turned them a profit. I could never fathom why bloody Jeff ever closed the passenger service beyond Shepparton.

We are still running freight trains to Toomuc so it is just a matter of ensuring that passenger trains turn right at Strathmerton and we are in business. I have contacts in Cobram and I can assure the known world that they reeeeeeally want their train service back. Hey Spring street, there's votes in it !!

Way out west.

The previous Labor Government was at least smart enough to rectify one of bloody Jeff's acts of stupidity when they reinstated the broad gauge passenger service to Ararat. But does this go far enough? I would argue that if it is fair enough to reinstate the service to Maryborough, then while we are in the mood for such acts of atonement, we should also do something about the service further out west.

Let's put a depot back in at Ararat, bogie change a couple of Velocity cars and use them to meet the broad gauge services at Ararat and run extension services, not only back to Dimboola where once passenger trains ran, but with the high speed capability of these machines, indeed, to Nhill and return. Imagine each daily broad gauge service that reaches Ararat, being able to transfer passengers over to the standard gauge and run deep into the heart of the Wimmera. Print a new batch of tickets Mr. Baillieu, you're going to need them.

Some like it...no hang on, no one likes it hot.

At V/Line, an instruction from management has recently appeared, to the amusement of many, regarding the idling time of Sprinter trains. This instruction/edict, dictates that if a Sprinter is going to be left idling for more than a brief period, then it should be shut down. Keeping the interior of the vehicle cool on hot days need not be a consideration because it only takes twenty five minutes to fully air condition the interior of a Sprinter..... yeah...right... what a load of red hot CRAP!! This instruction was clearly written by some knucklehead engineer sitting behind a desk whom has never been near a Sprinter in his sheltered life.

I am here to tell ya' people, if you were to climb inside a dead Sprinter on a thirty five degree day you would find a stinking hot hell bucket that is at about fifty degrees on the inside. Twenty five minutes my skinny butt!! Perhaps V/Line management have forgotten about the recently agreed to deal that if the forecast temperature is going to be over twenty five degrees then all saloon cooling on all trains should remain active.

I for one will be adhering to the agreement and will leave the vehicle running and not only look after our customers but the next bloke who has to drive it.

Further, at the conclusion of another year and at the start of another summer, can I implore drivers and loco staff at every company to think about the next bloke and keep the cab cool by pulling down the blinds before you leave?

If you can't crawl, then you shouldn't try to walk.

At V/Line, we have many a driver and trainee who have never driven anything more than a passenger train or a spark. This is not their fault and is indeed a sign of the changing times that people are only trained on the mode of traction which is unique to their company. But this reality conjures up the potential for dilemmas that no one has contemplated. In a perfect world, trains will never break down. Of course, rail companies assume that we indeed do live in a perfect world. Let us imagine a situation where the stars line up and conjure up this possibility. The driver of a V/Line train is instructed by a train controller to detrain his/her passengers, cut off the loco and proceed into the section ahead and assist a freight train.....

Let us assume that this driver has never driven freight. He/she arrives at the front of the disabled train. Does he/she surrender his/her locomotive to the freight driver? Does he/she insist that the locomotive is his/her responsibility and insist on driving the train his/her self?

Would this V/Line driver understand things such as in train forces? Track train dynamics? Would that person, for example, pre release the brakes on a freight train?

If this driver were assisting from the rear, would it be

sufficient for them to simply accept instructions from the freight driver? If so, what would then transpire during a radio failure? Would that person apply a train or independent brake in panic?

The fact remains that all of our safe working instructions take all such contingencies as radio communication failure into consideration. But of course, the world is perfect and this will never happen....will it?

My attitude is that V/Line should instruct all drivers who have never driven freight trains that they should refuse to assist freight trains on the grounds that it would be unsafe to do so. It just makes sense and may save not only damage to rolling stock, but perhaps injury, I mean, do any of you old timers remember what it is like to be on the receiving end of a fifty vehicle run in?

May I wish all my rail comrades and their families a safe and happy festive season.

**Fraternally yours, Michael A. Hinch
Aka Talkback.**



Apex Kilmore East
Picture courtesy of:
Wayne Hicks

Letters

When is it too old to drive trains?

Michael Hinch recently asked this question in *Loco Lines*. Here are some facts from the past.

-In 1896 the oldest locomotive driver in Victoria was 57 years old.

-In 1907 the oldest was 60.

-In 1917, 60 years and 2 months.

-In 1929 a few drivers were 64 years old, perhaps 1 ½ % of the total.

Keep in mind that there was a Federal age pension for males at 65 from 1909 and note that the majority of drivers retired before that age.

-In the 1970's the effective retirement age was declining.

-In the 1980's early retirement offers encouraged drivers to finish up and people began to talk of the standard becoming retirement at 55.

-In 1994 there were three drivers aged 64 out of a total of 1062 – approximately 0.38%.

In the last decade some drivers have been fit enough to continue beyond the previous mandatory retirement age of 65 but we should not regard this as a right. Neither the Good Lord nor the railway doctor guarantees it.

Tony Peterson

Thankyou and Farewell

16 December 2011

Due to my inability to continue to drive trains I reluctantly tended my retirement to Metro as from the 1st April 201.

I would like to take this opportunity to bid farewell to all my mates and friends gained over many years of working for the railways in many guises.

I would also like to thank the R.T.B.U for its help and assistance over the years and hope that all members stick together and work as one team, and all non-members to get on board as the larger the membership the harder to shift.

All the Very Best for future endeavours

Lionel Williams
Driver— Cranbourne

Thankyou and Farewell

Due to my retirement from the Driving grade on 6/8/11 I wish to tender my resignation from the RTBU.

I would like to thank all the Union officials over the years who have worked to improve the working conditions of drivers.

As a driver who worked under countless Transport Ministers, some good but mostly bad, I realise what a fine job the Union has done.

I firmly believe that during the Kennett era it was our unions efforts that protected my job at that stage and protected the superannuation benefits that I enjoy today.

Once again thank you and good luck in the future.

Yours faithfully,

John Landy (retired driver Eltham)



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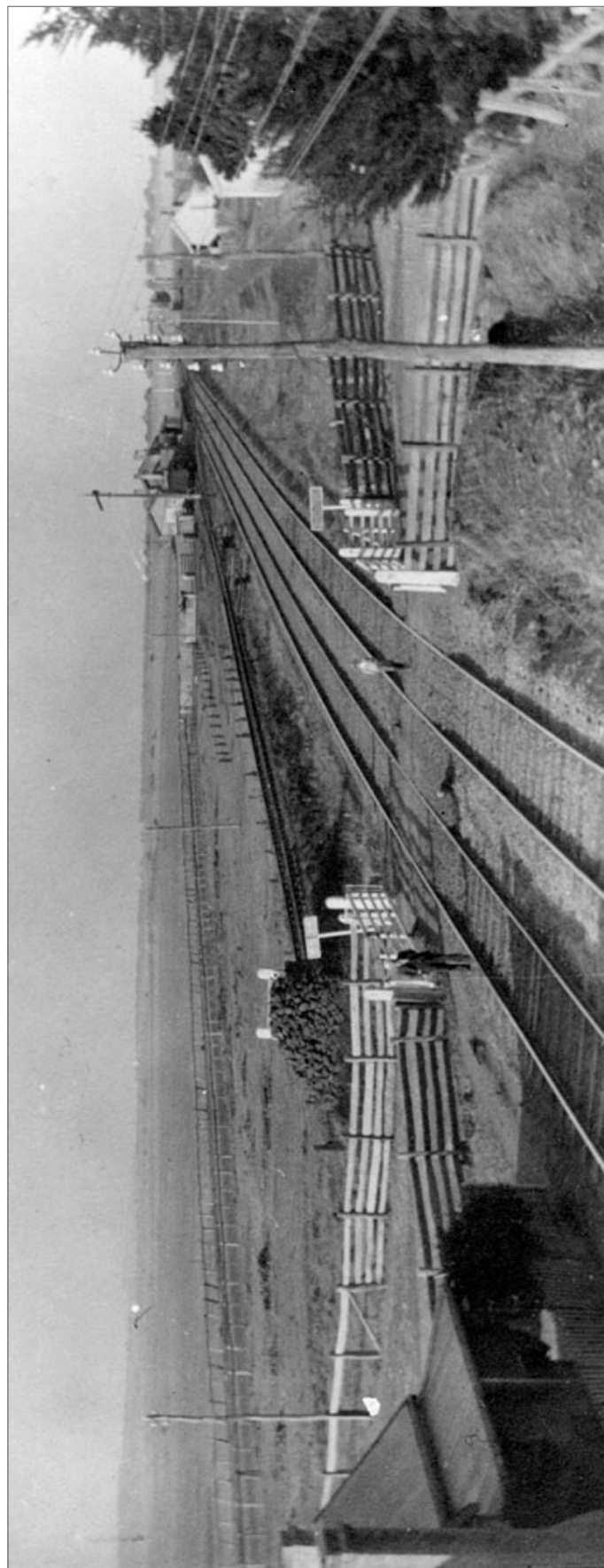
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Where is it ...?

With Trevor Penn

Passenger Sub-Division, Southern Cross



The previous *Where Is It ...?* [bottom] was at Malvern. Running the 6.12pm Leongatha Pass, oil burning J553 was approaching the Prince's Highway underpass at Malvern in January 1956. The photograph was taken by Brian Goodwin.

The winners were notified and received their nominated prizes. Congratulations to them.

Meanwhile if you think you know the location of the photograph on the *left of this 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 after final distribution of the current *Loco Lines*.

Prizes can include a Union mug, or a cap. Good luck!



Previous Where is It? Malvern

Don't Mention the War!

By Trevor Penn

Passenger sub-division, Southern Cross



This friendly looking German Driver had a young Fraulein firing for him when they posed for this propaganda photograph, somewhere on the Eastern Front in the early 1940s.

No one knows what became of the “lok”, a captured enemy freight engine fitted with wooden slats on the cab side and tender to protect against shell fragments. Likewise, the fate of the crew is equally unknown. They would have found themselves in very hostile territory indeed following the Red Army’s table-turning victory at Stalingrad by 2nd February in 1943.

This rather poignant image can be found in *Die Deutsche Reichsbahn 1939–1945* by Andreas Knipping and Reinhard Schulz, a fascinating look at European railroading from the “other side” of World War 2.

(Photographer unknown)

The Footplate has launched!

In 1918 the Victorian Locomotive Engine Driver's, Firemen and Cleaners Association began the publication of a newspaper known as *The Footplate*. This ran until 1938 when a national publication replaced it. Now available on line it tells of enginemmen and their union.

By 1918 railways had been in existence in Victoria for 64 years. Some retired enginemmen could recall starting their careers in the 1860's. One, George Brown, contributed a series of articles recalling these early days.

The union had its beginnings in 1861. Building its strength in Victoria and reaching out to similar groups interstate and in New Zealand it formed an Australasian Federation in 1899. A serious clash with the Victorian Government in 1903 almost destroyed the union but its membership, finances and influence recovered. By 1914 an ex Driver was a member of the Victorian Parliament and the union owned a hall in North Melbourne. Four years later it would begin a monthly newspaper. Each issue ran to at least 12 pages and often more. There were regular features such as a question/answer section. Letters to the editor promoted debate on many subjects. Depending on the local secretary there were detailed reports of meetings from branches throughout Victoria. Through these and social news, members could keep in touch with past colleagues and remain up to date with work issues.

There were difficulties at first. A fire in the flat of the printer – he lived above the print shop – almost stopped the enterprise in its first year. There were difficulties in distribution. And then there were other unionists; a strike by the printing trades delayed at least one issue. But the paper survived. Along the way it serviced the Tasmanian Branch, encouraged a similar publication in Queensland in 1924 and eventually developed into the magazine of the federal body of the union.

The union in 1918 comprised senior men who had gone through lean years in the 1890's, had been reinstated after the strike of 1903 – some with their pension entitlements lost or reduced – and had rebuilt the union. There were younger men who joined during the rebuilding and would see the influence of their union grow in the Labour movement and their colleagues serve in Federal Governments. There was a wide range of experience. Several hundred members were serving overseas in the Australian Imperial Forces.



Charles Franklin was the first editor. He joined the Victorian Railways in 1911 and was active in Union affairs for many years. In the first edition he stated its aims: to improve the lot of enginemmen, to maintain a constant defensive against those opposing them and provide an opportunity to express views and exchange opinions. To him *The Footplate* was part of "the great fight for industrial freedom". He may have borrowed these lines:

***"They are slaves who will not dare
All wrongs to right
All rights to share"***

but they appeared in every issue.

There were many contributors. Alec Ellison produced the drawing that became the banner of the paper. The office bearers, executive members and branch secretaries were listed each year in a Directory. The secretaries gave their home addresses. G. Lynch, Institute Instructor at Wodonga, provided a Running Steam Test of Valve Settings. Technical papers delivered by railway officials were reprinted if they were of interest to enginemmen.

Issues discussed included the value of Trip Valves on trains when train stops were not fitted to signals. Incidents, accidents and decisions by the Discipline Board were covered and the men were advised to Always Be Careful.

Sometimes explosives from the mines were left in the coal supplied to locomotives. And enginemen could see how their working conditions were improving. After nine winters the cabs of electric trains were fitted with radiators.

The Footplate illuminated a little of the lives of the enginemen when they were away from the job. There were annual smoke socials and enginemen's picnics. Members and families were invited to the cinema at Loco Hall, North Melbourne. Retirements and obituaries marked stages in life. Expressions of sympathy came when wives and children died. It was a time when many metropolitan members lived close to depots in North Melbourne and Port Melbourne. Families of workmates were neighbours.

Differing views were expressed in the area of politics. Despite the number of men serving in the First World War there was often an anti war view expressed. This continued into the 1930's as N. Pullar, later a union life member, spoke against the rise of Hitler as early as 1934.

Many members championed the ALP and a parliamentary process to improve conditions ("Why all AFULE members should be ALP members"). There was support for the One Big Union movement which would make this unnecessary and for a time some expected a collapse of capitalism. In the meantime there was concern about the theft of bicycles from North Melbourne Loco.

For a time *The Footplate* provided coverage on both Victoria and Tasmania. After Prime Minister Joseph Lyons defected from the ALP harsh words were printed. He was a Tasmanian and the enginemen in that state decided that they would have a journal of their own.

The Footplate recorded the development of the enginemen's union.

After 1922 it became the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen registered in the Federal Arbitration Court. Around 1926 it toyed with a new name – The Australian Brotherhood of Locomotive Enginemen – but after a couple of years it reverted to the AFULE. The focus was becoming national.

Regarding Victoria *The Footplate* reported the formation of new branches and, depending on the local secretary, the proceedings of their meetings. State officials communicated the latest developments in the Arbitration Court. Sometimes there were difficulties. When the Shrine of Remembrance opened the number of trains prevented the holding of the Jolimont Branch meeting. In 1919 Government regulation banned meetings, not for the purposes of political suppression but because of the out-

break of the Spanish Flu pandemic.

Throughout its life the price remained the same – 2 shillings (20 cents) per year. As production costs rose capitalism came to the rescue. Murray & Company Real Estate and Coles and Garrard were among the companies that took advertising space. Corr & Corr, the long standing solicitors for the union supported it as did Melbourne Bitter and Old Court Whiskey.

In 1938 it was time for a change. *The Footplate* was replaced by *The Locomotive Journal* which ran until the 1970's.

In 2011 the Locomotive Divisional Committee of the RTBU agreed to pay for the digitization of the 3500 pages of *The Footplate* which are held by the University of Melbourne Archives. They will be available to view on line on a site hosted by University of Melbourne. Additionally the Correspondence book from 1880 to 1882 has been digitized but the quality of the handwritten document is difficult to read and so is not available on line at present.

I wish to thank the Committee for this decision to preserve these documents of our union heritage.

For the people who suggested ways to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the formation of the Victorian Locomotive Engine Driver's Association in 1861, I hope this project is to your liking. Some suggested that it would be good to hear from the old timers. I could not think of a better way to achieve this. Please read about their struggles and hopes, get inspired. Be proud to be Union.

Thanks from the Union

On behalf of all members, the RTBU-LD wishes to thank the University of Melbourne for its efforts in preserving and digitising these documents.

A link will be placed on the RTBU-LD website which will allow everyone access to these documents which provide an insightful look into the history of not only the Union, but also those who have driven before us.

Our sincere thanks again,

RTBU- Locomotive Divisional Committee



Terry Sheedy
State President RTBU

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Message from Terry Sheedy

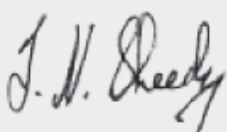
The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) and Maurice Blackburn have a proud history of fighting for fair outcomes for union members.

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If you need the help of one of Maurice Blackburn's expert lawyers, contact the union for a referral today – call us on 9600 3030.

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Terry Sheedy

Rail Tram and Bus Union (RTBU)
President



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We are proud of our association with the RTBU and as a member offer you and your family:

- Free telephone advice
- Free first consultation
- No win – No charge*
- Free standard Will (for you and your spouse)

**Conditions apply*



RAIL, TRAM & BUS UNION VICTORIA

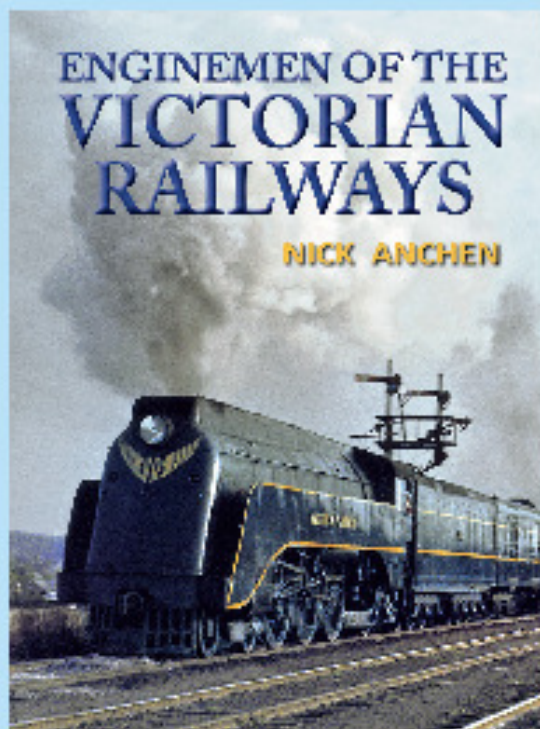
LOCOMOTIVE DIVISION

RTBU Embroidered Merchandise Price list Available only at Loco Hall

	Name of item	Price
	Polar Fleece zip up jumper Color logo	\$48.00 each
	Sweat Jumper (Dark Blue) Color logo	\$45.00 each
	Polo T-shirts (Dark Blue) Color logo	\$42 each
	Bomber Jackets (Dark Blue with Leather look sleeves) Color logo By special order	\$105.00 each
	Caps With small yellow RTBU logo	\$7.95 each
	Mugs	\$3.50 each
	Badges	\$3.50 each
	Keyrings	\$3.50 each

*Images for informative purposes only – merchandise may slightly differentiate

NEW BOOK BY SIERRA PUBLISHING



While the life of a locomotive engineman in the steam era may have appeared glamorous, the reality was often quite different. Long hours, poor conditions, relentless shiftwork and bad pay was the engine crew's lot, in an era when men relied on their workmates, and the Victorian Railways were still considered essential to the fortunes of the state.

Enginemens of the Victorian Railways provides a rare insight into life on the footplate, through the fascinating recollections of a selection of railwaymen – Laurie Zarth, Reg Walton, Bob Vine, John Wotherspoon, Gerald Dee, Harry Spiess, Graeme O'Brien and Barry Luhrs – whose careers were as varied as the locomotives and lines they worked. From Mildura to Cudgewa, from the *Spirit of Progress* to Puffing Billy and from steam days to modern diesel locomotion, their stories paint a picture of life in a once-proud industry.

In recent decades, the importance of railways has receded in the face of improved road transport and government apathy, and the branch lines, the trains and most of the men from this era have vanished, taking their stories with them. Memories and photographs are now all that remain of this fascinating era of the Victorian Railways.



Enginemens of the Victorian Railways – 182 pages hardback, full colour throughout, lavishly illustrated with 127 magnificent photographs – most never before published. Includes map of the Victorian Railways for the period 1934 to 1993. This publication is sure to become a collector's item, and normal price will be \$50. Now available directly from Sierra Publishing at a once-off RTBU members' price of just \$39.95 plus postage.

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Membership Form

I..... the undersigned hereby apply to become a member for the Australian Rail, Tram & Bus Industry Union, An Organisation of Employees registered under the Australian *Industrial Relations Act 1988* as amended, and hereby undertake to comply with the rules and by-laws for the time being of the union.

Mr Mrs Ms (Cross out which is not applicable)

Surname:.....Given Name:.....

Address:.....Post Code:.....

Home Ph. No:.....Date of Birth:...../...../.....

Employer:.....Employee Number:.....

Date Commenced:.....Grade:.....

Location:.....Work Address:.....

Work Ph. No:.....Work Fax No:.....

I certify that I have received a copy of rule 14, Notification of Registration from Membership

Date:...../...../.....Signature:.....

- 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;
 - o At the end of three months; or
 - o 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.