



RT&BU LOCOMOTIVE DIVISION

LOCO LINES

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

EDITION 64 MAR 2015

'Rail Revival Study'

An Alternative Proposal

for reinstatement of passenger rail services

Article on Page 15

DIVISIONAL EXECUTIVE

	NAME	MOBILE
Secretary	Marc Marotta	0414 897 314
Assistant Secretary	Jim Chrysostomou	0404 814 141
President	Wayne Hicks	0407 035 282
Vice President	John Marotta	0414 864 702

DIVISIONAL COUNCILLORS

Metropolitan	Kevin Duggan	0404 811 589
Metropolitan	Paris Jolly	0422 790 624
Metropolitan	David Mortimer	0404 898 023
Metropolitan	Sharon Brown	0404 813 936
V/Line Passenger	Howard Hand	0447 841 206
V/Line Passenger	Matt Billman	0400 245 195
Pacific National Bulk	Ross Bramwell	0427 392 428
Pacific National Intermodal	VACANT	

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Publisher
Marc Marotta

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RT&BU-LD Address: Level 6, 1 Elizabeth St,
Melbourne Victoria 3000

Ph: 9682 1122 Toll Free: 1800 134 095 Fax: 9682 3344
mail: reception@rtbuvicloco.com.au

RTBU LOCOMOTIVE DIVISION WEBSITE

www.rtbuvicloco.com.au



SECRETARY'S REPORT

By Marc Marotta
Divisional Secretary

Metro are an odious mob

Members would be aware of Metro's latest actions in delivering its 'Just and Fair Culture' towards its employees, and Metro's commitment towards rail safety. Its efforts are unprecedented; a review of Metro's conduct for 2014 is most revealing. It demonstrates what sort of organisation has been installed to run the metropolitan rail system at the cost of Victorian tax payers.

Rail safety and Metro

Metro's commitment to the safety of its employees.

1. Metro has invented its own sub-category for signals passed at danger (SPADs). Metro call it a SPAD B. According to Metro, a driver can continue to drive a train after a serious safeworking incident (a SPAD). This is not consistent with the Victorian Book of Rules and Regulations. For all other Rail Operators in Victoria, any safeworking incident such as a SPAD require those involved to be alcohol and drug tested including signalmen and others involved. No other rail operator in Victoria takes safety risks. In other Rail Operators, after a SPAD a driver is required to stop their train and be relieved for a mandatory drug and alcohol test.

In 2014 Metro's SPAD B procedure allowed a situation where an individual under the influence of a drug (ICE) to drive a train with passengers and perform shunting operations, all in the interest of Metro's on time running statistics and the pursuit of more tax payer's funds in the way of bonuses.

Metro's response to the drug affected driver and its flawed SPAD B procedure was the production of copious amounts of new procedures that seem to order the driver to do a number of things after a SPAD, but hidden in the fine print, the driver has to agree to continue driving the train in the new procedure, thereby transferring the responsibility and liability onto the driver if something further goes wrong.

So really Metro has produced paperwork to cover its own liability and give the impression that the driver will continue to drive. That is exactly what the driver under the influence of ICE did. Metro has taken steps to deflect liability to the driver.

If you have a SPAD, the Locomotive Division believes drivers should get relieved and tested.

Train Drivers can be prosecuted as recent events demonstrate.

2. Metro's safety conscious decision to place trains into service without working head and tail lights. If head and tail lights

became defective while a train is in service, Metro mandated the train continue operating for up to 22 hours in hours of darkness.

My personal view is that this was the main contributor to an accident in 2014 that nearly cost a driver's life.

Locomotive Division Assistant Secretary and HSR Jim Chrysostomou challenged Metro's decision in a legal tribunal at great cost. The case was settled two days prior to the VCAT proceedings were to commence. Metro agreed to NO trains coming into service without working head and tail lights and trains that become defective in service are shunted out.

It is my view that Metro chose to settle because the court case was scheduled to occur through the period of the Victorian State Election and it would have been a fine show case for Metro's commitment to rail safety.

It should be noted that all other rail companies in Victoria prohibit the operation of trains without working head and tail lights.

3. Siemens trains are fitted with dry static invertors. I believe Metro chose this type of inverter because of cost. The problem arises because the static inverter (SIV) becomes defective - producing a flammable gas in the electrical cabinet. Once sufficient gas builds up in the cabinet, the operation of other electrical components ignites the gas causing an explosion.

The below photo shows one of the recent explosions in the Mordialloc Yard on a Siemens train:



Metro's Just and Fair Culture in action.

Fair and Just treatment of Jim Chrysostomou

After numerous attempts to get Metro to fix the serious safety problem, the Union advised Metro we couldn't let members be exposed to serious safety risks because of the exploding static inverters on Siemens trains. The Union issued a memo to on 6 January 2015 regarding the exploding static inverters. Metro's response was to allege Unlawful Industrial Action and the matter was resolved in the Fair Work Commission.

In the Fair Work Commission, Metro agreed to install additional mitigation measures to stop the flames issuing from the train and it was done within 7 days.

A week later Metro charged Jim Chrysostomou through its internal discipline process of Serious Misconduct and three days later tried to terminate his employment on 23 January 2015.

An application was made to the Federal Court for an injunction that was granted on 23 January 2015. Jim's employment was reinstated and the matter will proceed and will be heard in the Federal Court in September this year.

Other examples of Fair and Just Culture.

- A newly minted driver, who (in her nativity) reported a safety hazard in writing which identified her. She received

some motherhood statements about the issue but in the end nothing was done.

A week later she was summoned for a discipline meeting to discuss the reason she took two consecutive days off sick leave approximately a year ago.

- Then there is the out-station driver who was minding his own business walking in a corridor at Flinders St and passed "some old bloke in a suit" his description. The driver did not know him.

The driver was summoned for a meeting – his crime was not acknowledging 'the old bloke in the suit'.

Metro's attitude toward female staff

I received complaints from two female drivers that a male Metro manager was entering the female change/locker rooms and the female toilets unannounced. I unofficially raised this with the manager whilst he was escorting me into the building, and suggested that a procedure be formulated and distributed amongst the female staff for when he is required to enter the female amenities to avoid embarrassment.

When the Metro manager returned to escort me from the premises he asked the identity of the complainants. I declined this request. The Metro manager advised he spoke to his manager, presumably Mr Russell Evans, who instructed that the Metro manager should continue making the inspections without a proper procedure.

The New Divisional Council

On the 12 Dec 2014 the first Divisional Council was convened, it is good to see some new and youthful faces.

I'd like to personally extend a welcome to Mr Matt Billman and Mr Howard Hand from V/Line Passenger and Ms Sharon Brown from MTM as new Divisional Councillors and a not so new face from Pacific National Rural and Bulk- Mr Ross Bramwell. And of course the newly elected Divisional President Wayne Hicks.

Picture to the right– the New Divisional Council 12/12/14

From Left to Right:

John Marotta-Divisional Vice-President, **Kevin Duggan**– Metropolitan Sub-Division President and Divisional Councillor, **Sharon Brown**– Divisional Councillor (metropolitan), **Paris Jolly**– Metropolitan Sub-Division Secretary and Divisional Councillor, **Marc Marotta**– Locomotive Division Secretary, **Wayne Hicks**– Locomotive Division President, **Matt Billman**-Divisional Councillor (V/Line Pass), **Jim Chrysostomou**—Locomotive Division Assistant Secretary, **Ross Bramwell**— PN Sub-Divisional Secretary and Divisional Councillor, **Howard Hand**– Vline Pass Sub-Divisional Secretary and Divisional Councillor.

Attempted Kidnapping

The almost unbelievable conduct of Metro managers after a driver injures her leg. A female driver had an accident at Frankston and attends a medical centre in Frankston. The Metro managers drove from Melbourne to the Frankston medical clinic and attempt to transport her to another doctor of Metro's choosing against her will and after she had been treated by the Frankston doctor. The injured driver refused to be transported.

This driver was then subjected to five disciplinary investigation meetings once she recovered from her injuries.

Metro's betrayal of trust to the trainee drivers

In 2014 Metro unilaterally decided to not pay trainee drivers the pay rates at the various stages of progression through the driver grade, as Metro has set out in the letter of employment and as set out in the Enterprise Agreement.

Metro was paying the trainees at the various stages of their course until about mid-2014, the same time that Mr Russell Evans was appointed as the new Manager by Metro.

The Locomotive Division will shortly commence a class action against Metro in the Federal Court.

These are just some activities that Metro has indulged in and are the hall mark of the way this company operates and treats its workforce.

I encourage all readers to contact your local State Member of Parliament and the Minister for Transport to convey what sort of organisation is operating the public rail system and how they manipulate the system to achieve their statistics, on time running, station skipping, phantom services, and changing train describing numbers.

The Victorian State Government will be making a decision whether or not to extend Metro's franchise this year. Your input will help the Government understand the worthiness of Metro for an extension of the franchise.

Minister for Transport Jacinta Allan :

jacinta.allan@parliament.vic.gov.au

Find your local minister:

<http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/members/ministers>

Odious Synonyms

Adjective: Hateful, Horrible

Abhorrent	Disgusting	Hateable	Obnoxious
Abominable	Detestable	Horrid	Offensive
Creepy	Execrable	Loathsome	Repellent
Contemptible	Foul	Mean	Repugnant
Repulsive	Revolting	Vile	

I think that this pretty much covers Metro as an organisation

The new councillors are starting to realise the amount of work required to represent the members diligently, and I hope they have a long careers as office bearers for the Locomotive Division



Pacific National (Southern District)



Senior Management for Pacific National requested a conference to discuss on going challenges to their operations in Victoria. On the 29th Jan 2015 the RTBU Locomotive Division State Assistant Secretary Jim Chrysostomou and I participated in a telephone conference with Steve Cowan- PN General Manager NSW/Vic, Bridgette Byrne- PN Senior HR Manager NSW/Vic and Gareth Troy – PN Service Delivery Manager- South/West.

A summary of what was presented is as follows:

- International variability in grain export business
- The sustainability of the current work model
- No real proposals were put at this conference, the conference ended with the Unions recommendation that all the delegates from the affected depots participate in a any future meetings.

On the 4th Feb 2015 RTBU LD delegates Richard Gordon (Sth Dynon), Luke Bunting (Geelong), Tim Paech (Dimboola), George Cooper (Maryborough) and I participated in a conference with Pacific National Management Bridgette Byrne-HR, Stephen Taylor- Superintendent Southern Division, David Geary- Operations Support Manager, Gareth Troy, and Steve Cowan who was on a phone hook-up.

Items discussed:

- PN outlined its view about labour flexibility in Victoria; they also took the opportunity to appraise the delegates of the current state of the export grain market. Some of the issues identified by PN Management was the level of undertime experienced in some country depots.
- Delegates were quick to point out that the anomalies of train running and the fact that drivers in those locations went out of their way to assist in the running of trains had created the situation where undertime was not a true reflection of their commitment to PN.

- I was conscious of the fact that this sort of conference can easily degenerate into an accusatory forum of perceived wrongs and rights of conduct on either side.
- To the delegates great credit the atmosphere of the meeting was less adversarial but more about trying to get a clear understanding of what PN may want the workforce to assess.
- Mr Gareth Troy also issued a brief summary of the 4th Feb meeting, he rightly reported what PN had briefly discussed :

"In particular the business has a concern about the level of undertime currently being experienced. We will continue to seek the RTBU's input on this concern and possible responses, including the review of our current roster arrangements, to better align with the export grain business."

- The issue of blank line rostering was also mentioned by P.N, the RTBU asked for information about how blank line rostering works or what is PN's understanding of the conditions of blank line rostering . PN has agreed to produce some details about this at the next scheduled meeting on the 5th March 2015 .
- The other issue that was raised was flexible labour work arrangement. As all members know there was preliminary presentations made by PN management in Aug / Sep 2014, it's fair to say what was presented probably produced more questions than answers, but we will continue to work with the company to try and understand how they wish to apply something like this in the workplace.

At the time of writing we are still some time off the next scheduled meeting but the delegates and I will keep members informed of the events of the next meeting on the 5th March 2015.

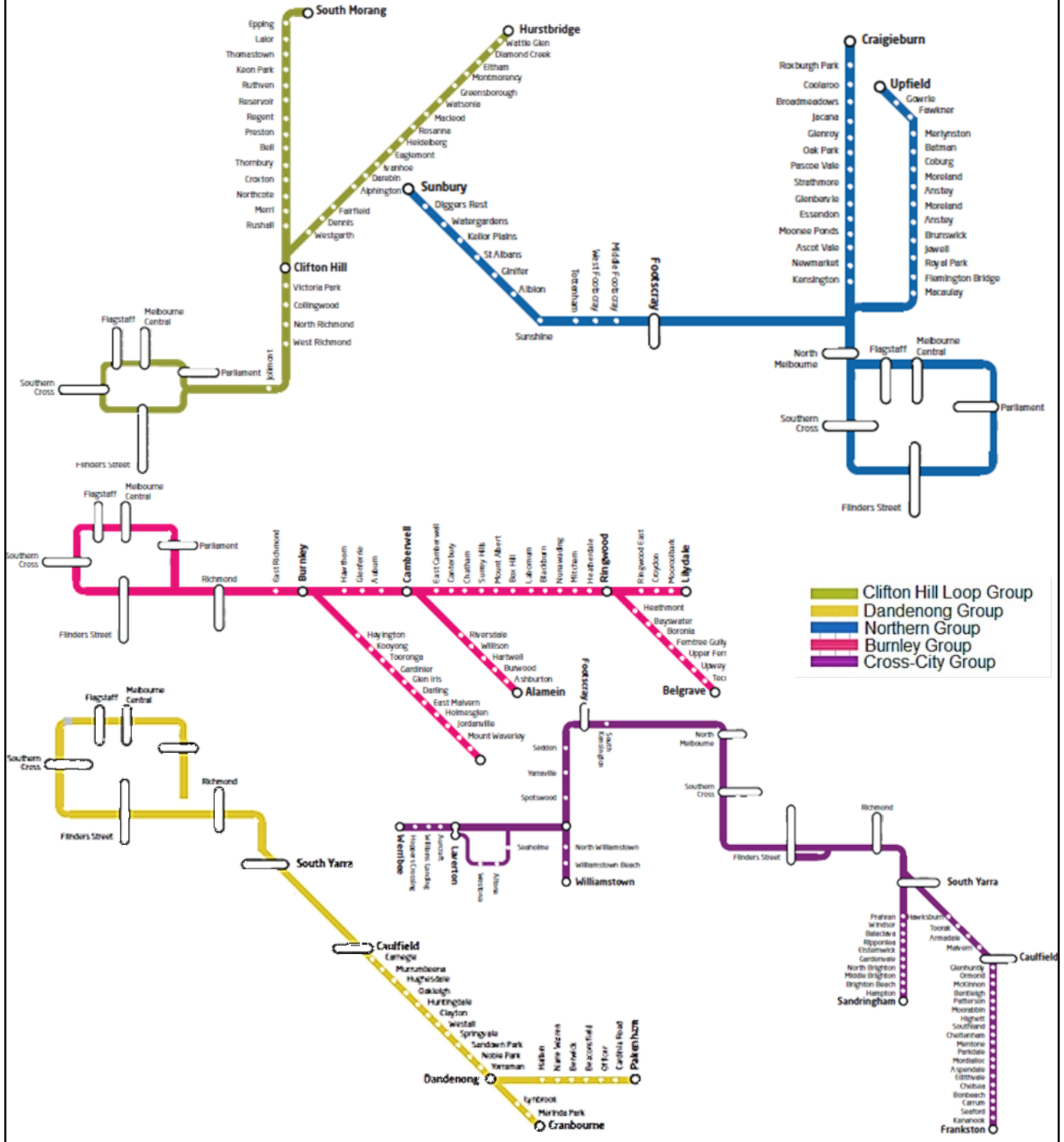
Metro's Future Plans for Train Drivers

In Metro's 2014 Strategic Operational Plan, a document not readily available, it describes some plans Metro wishes to implement over the next four years.

In the executive summary, it states that it must *"simplify the railway by completing the establishment of the 5 independent railway groups, a program of junction rationalism and more efficient driver management."*

The five groups it wishes to establish are listed below-
The completed process Metro describes as **Segregation**:

- Clifton Hill Loop Group
- Dandenong Group
- Northern Group
- Burnley Group
- Cross City Group



This document has a time line for the implementation of Metro's plans. It predicts that driver **decentralisation to the 5 groups to be completed in July 2015**. For those that have the document see pages 4-5. For those that don't have a copy, contact the Locomotive Division's office for one.

Metro states that the benefit of **'5 operating groups to improve discipline and target weakness in the respective groups'**. This statement may have a double meaning, given Metro's record it would be fair to assume the negative meaning, of targeting drivers for discipline and it also states in the document it will *'simplify driver management'*.

Metro also described the **Segregation** of the metropolitan rail system that it will **'provide for staff rostering and training efficiencies, particular for drivers'** especially if drivers are only rostered in the segregated territories. In the current Enterprise Agreement there's severe limitations on repetitive running.

I believe there's a direct correlation between these stated aims and the 16 week E.M.U. operating Metro Trains Rolling Stock

training course. This course that has been compiled in secrecy and Metro is attempting to implement now with the help of collaborators. Metro is denying this in its most recent publication titled *'Straight down the line'*, in which a number of claims are made by the author, Mr Brier.

Metro claims its not implementing a train driver course, but it now has a new title, a **Depot Train Operator** and will not be able to operate outside a maintenance facility for now, according to the author. The partial course that the Locomotive Division has in its possession does not reflect 'straight down the lines' claim. The Locomotive Division wrote to Metro and asked if Metro intended to instruct the proposed sub-category of train drivers in the following:

1. Three positions signal areas;
2. Mainline operations;
3. Dealing with signal irregularities;
4. Double-line system;
5. Applying fatigue management strategies;



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Training Officer x 6

An opportunity has arisen within Metro's Learning & Development Academy which is to be based at the South Kensington for a number of experienced Trainers to join the team and contribute to the successful training of Metro's Trainee Train Drivers. This is a unique opportunity for individuals who are looking for a new challenge and to deliver nationally accredited training. Part of your role will be to conduct training, supervise and assess the suitability of the candidates to be Train Drivers.

To be successful in securing this role you will have the following demonstrated skills:

- Analyse data and write and present reports
- Communicate with internal and external stakeholders (verbal and written)
- Comply with Australian Qualifications Training Framework requirements and other relevant legislative and policy requirements
- Conduct assessment using a variety of methods conducive to the learners environment
- Conduct teaching programs and determine instructional and assessment strategies
- Demonstrate knowledge of the VET sector
- Establish and maintain effective relationships with all levels of staff and management
- Facilitate student learning, with continuous improvement
- Follow occupational health safety and environmental procedures in the rail industry
- Influence and negotiate
- Lead continuous improvement systems and processes
- Lead, mentor and motivate staff
- Manage student learning difficulties and/or referrals to specialist services as appropriate
- Plan, advise and analyse training needs and co-ordinate training for a diverse multi-skilled work group
- Problem solve and make decisions based on information gathered
- Ability to work independently as well as within a team
- Certificate IV Workplace Training and Assessment
- Certificate IV Transport and Logistics (rail operations) is highly desirable.
- Certificate IV or Diploma Frontline Management.

Interested applicants please forward your resume via on-line by the COB 13th February 2015.

How to apply:

- If you have NOT registered with our Online Application System, you can begin your Application by clicking the 'Begin' button.

6. Applying safeworking rules and regulations to rail functions;
7. Operation of dual point control point machines;
8. Duties during emergencies and incidences;
9. Exceptions to pass fixed signals at stop;
10. Route and point indicators;
11. Assisting disabled trains and setting back trains;
12. Preparation for trains;
13. DTRS, Digital Train Radio System.

These dot points were in the part of the course that is in our possession dated 25 November 2014 and approved by a person named Frank Vincze. **To date Metro has not produced its course or provided any explanation for the contents.**

It is my view that Metro is attempting to legitimise a second tier substandard train driver position without any conditions of rostering and shift lengths that currently exist in the Enterprise Agreement. The only conditions of rostering and shift length that would apply in this case are the National Employment Standards in the *2010 Rail Industry Award* reproduced below, which provides for:

19.6 Employees may be required to work up to 10 ordinary hours per day. If the employer and majority of affected employees agree, up to 12 ordinary hours per day may be worked.

20.1 The employer may change shift rosters or require an employee to work a different shift roster at the direction of the employer where operational circumstances require. The employer will provide the employee with as much notice as practicable prior to any change in the roster and, wherever possible, the employer will consult with the employee before any change to the roster is made.

20.2 The employer will arrange overtime work or shiftwork in

a manner that ensures employees are provided with a break between work on successive days or shifts. The minimum break will reflect the operational requirements and conform to the principles of fatigue management.

Coincidentally advertisements for mysterious rail entry positions \$70k to \$130k pa have appeared in Victoria, N.S.W, W.A and in the local papers the Diamond Valley Leader and Glen Waverley Local paper.

Good old 'straight down the line' also claims Sunstone will NOT take over driver training. Sunstone is a subsidiary company of Metro, a labour hire company and there are 6 training officer advertisements to work out of Sunstone premises in South Kensington. These are contract positions not covered by the Enterprise Agreement and its protection. Oh, by the way, you don't have to be a driver either.

Just in case the author of 'straight down the line' has not seen it, I have reproduced the advertisement on the left page.

There's an old saying, 'if it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it's a duck!' The introduction of **Depot Train (Driver) Operator** 'will not represent any job loss for drivers' is a further claim; we know this is true and should be reassured because the C.E.O, Mr Lezala said so.

Metro is already seeking a meeting to change rosters at Epping, Craigieburn, Westall, Newport and Ringwood to remove workshop shifts and those jobs from their rosters. So drivers should not look at this as losing a position, Metro will give you another place to work, but just not here. That's not a job loss according to the touts at Metro.

"Straight down the line" makes claims about Enterprise Agreement Negotiations, which is not correct. 'Straight down the line' is about as straight as the Luna Park roller coaster.

Enterprise Bargaining for 2015 (Metro)

The various Divisions have written to Metro in Dec 2014 to commence discussions for new Enterprise Agreements. Metro has not responded and therefore no negotiations have started. All our delegates and office bearers get are weasel words from Metro to try and disguise their true intentions.

I believe Metro is stalling the E.A. negotiations and will continue in its attempt to frustrate the process because it wants to establish its substandard driver course and include it into a Rolling Stock Agreement to exclude Locomotive Division input. The recruitment of the mysterious entry level rail positions \$70k - \$130k p.a. with no roster conditions or shift lengths other than National Employment Standards and keep those applicants on a merit list.

Metro will announce decentralisation of Flinders Street in July 2015 and offer Flinders Drivers employment to one of the five segregated companies and it will claim it is impossible to meet the roster code in the current Enterprise Agreement because of **segregation**, drivers will be left with the decision to accept a position under **Metro's false construct** of segregated rail system or leave the industry.

Metro will have its merit list of applicants ready to train to operate trains on one line at a vastly reduced training time. Do you know how many return trips to Pakenham/ Cranbourne can be completed in 8 hours? It's even more in 10 hours.

Metro's plan is to deskill the driver training standard, reduction of wages and conditions, create an environment of intimidation and therefore a compliant work force: **not on our watch.**

Metro's Own Goal

I've received an angry call from a member in the meal room at Flinders Street.

He reported he was watching Metro Manager Jim Hall in the company of a lock smith breaking into the Union Notice Board.

I contacted Mr Hall who was somewhat surprised and I asked if he knew anything about the Union Notice Board? He advised me he had instructions to edit the message on the Board because the script alleged Metro interference with correspondence between the members and the Union.

Mr Hall advised me that "the lock just fell off but it's not broken and it was available from him in his cubicle." (*honest*).

On reflection of this bazaar turn of events, it's struck me that Metro went to a lot of effort of bringing in a lock smith to gain access to the board to interfere with the communication between the Union and its members. Isn't this just confirmation of the original allegation?

Marc Marotta

Department of Education and Early childhood Development

Locomotive Division Student Scholarships for 2015 CLOSED

2016 Scholarship applications Open NOV 2015

Scholarships are available for children of financial members of the Locomotive Division. Applications can only be made online at the following address:

<https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/scholarships/>

Scholarships are awarded after consideration of the student's school involvement and end of year results together with the student's involvement in a community group (such as sporting, church, hobby or charity).

Please check opening and closing dates for applications on the application form of the scholarship you wish to apply for as NO late applications are accepted.

Each scholarship is for One year available to sons or daughters of financial members of the RTBU Locomotive Division.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Wayne Hicks
Divisional President

The Justice System:

It seems that even "Fair Work Australia" cannot protect workers from questionable, 'unreliable' individuals making false allegations or accusations against employees in the rail system.

If Human Resources deem the allegation to warrant an investigation, they have the right to stand down an employee until the matter is fully investigated.

One must question the impact being stood down has on an employee when the allegation is false or unfounded. During this investigation they are advised not to speak to anyone about the accusation as this is against Company Policy. This in turn denies them receiving support from work colleagues and fostering rumours as to why they may have been stood down in the first place. The stress of being stood down impacts heavily not only in their working environment, but also their home environment.

In the interim the complainant that made the allegations carries on normally without any impact to their work or social life. The accused, however, is only afforded this opportunity once the investigation is complete, no matter how long this takes.

Our Justice System at work once more????

V/line:

The Waurn Ponds doubles is still an issue and this dispute was lodged with Fair Work Australia and a hearing took place on Monday 17th February. The union and Management entered into conciliation with Commissioner Lee who presided over proceedings and instructed both parties to enter negotiations with the view of resolving the dispute and reporting back to Fair Work on February 26th. Should there be no resolution, the Commissioner will then arbitrate on the matter.

Training:

Crew rostered for training will take place on public holidays and management will give staff two weeks' notice.

Restructure:

Restructuring within V/Line is well under way with three additional regional driver supervisor positions being called (seconded for a 3 month period). A restructure is also taking place in the training and compliance area. This will be divided into 2 parts, the first being classroom and assessments and the other being courseware development.



Management are also calling for three Line Manager Positions which they will select from the driving grade. These positions will be placed on a contract and will not come under the protection of the Locomotive Division of the RTBU.

Drivers Advisory System:

Management are progressing in the implementation of the Drivers Advisory System and have indicated that more features will be added. Trialling will commence on 09/03/2015 for day and afternoon shifts for a period of two weeks to gather more data. A meeting will occur on 04/03/2015 to work through the parameters required for the trial

Automatic Signal:

Metro and V/Line have been reviewing rule 1, section 3. Drivers who are detained at an automatic signal will ring a designated phone number where they will hear a recorded message, informing them of the above rule. At this time, no documentation has been forthcoming for us to review. In my opinion, there should be no permissive signals (automatic signals). They all should be absolute signals (home signals).



"HEY, PETE - I FOUND A SET OF TRACKS."

The Tarneit link:

The Government announced that the opening of the RRL has now been put back to the 21st of June instead of 19th of April. This is due to the Victorian Liberal Government not placing the order for the new trains early enough for the planned April Crew training for Southern Cross and Geelong Drivers is almost complete. A test run has been organised to run over the Tarneit line at 160kph. There also needs to be a completed run at 160kph in both directions. Currently the train to base radio system which operates on channel 10 is not operational.

Travelling Allowance:

Management have put forward a proposal for changes to the travelling allowance. Despite Southern Cross Sub Branch voting against the proposal, management are in the process of putting a document in place to implement the changes.

Identification cards:

Identification cards for drivers are now back on Management's agenda with Management wanting drivers to wear a rail identification card complete with your name on your arm. This proposal was rejected by the Locomotive Division.

Memorandum

Memo. Railways Traffic Officer:
Hit cow. Milage 123.
Engine O.K. Cow dead.
Driver Murphy

Memo. Driver Murphy
Your report as to the demise of a bovine creature is to hand, but it does not indicate fully the details of the incident that are necessary for departmental analysis. You are hereby advised that a further report from you is to be submitted as per the example on Circular B.F.S./15/16789 exhibited in the enginemen's notice case for guidance. Please have your addendum forwarded promptly to this office.

Railways Traffic Officer:
Per J.K. Ch'kd.B.T. Int. P.L.

Memo. Railways Traffic Officer:
No more to say. Engine still O.K. Cow still dead.
Driver Murphy

Memo. Driver Murphy:
Your unsatisfactory addendum to your original memo is to hand. Your attention is drawn to the requirements of Circular B.F.S./15/16789, which sets out the following questionnaire:

1. What was the boiler pressure at the time of the incident?
2. Was the sand gear working?
3. Was the throttle fully open?
4. What was the position of steam cut-off lever?
5. Was the brake applied?
6. What was the nature of weather and direction of wind?
7. What was the name of the fireman and guard?
8. Was a creature on railway track at time of incident?
9. What was the nature of the injury to creature?
10. In your opinion was the creature culpable for incident?

11. Give a description of the creature; the age, sex, type, etc.

12. What is your assessment of the damages claimable by department?

Advise immediately of these particulars and forward same by urgent dispatch to this office.

Railways Traffic Officer:
Per J.K. Ch'kd.B.T. Int. P.L.

Memo. Railways Traffic Officer:

1. No steam.
2. Yes.
3. No.
4. None.
5. Yes.
6. Cow not killed by weather or wind,
7. No fireman or guard.
8. Everything happened for engine to kill cow.
- 9-12 Not enough left of cow to find out the rest.

Driver Murphy.

Memo. Driver Murphy:

Your further unsatisfactory memo is at this office. You are to forthwith explain why your locomotive was not under steam at time of incident and also your reference to your locomotive not being equipped with the standard steam cut-off lever. For prompt and full report please.

Railways Traffic Officer
Per J.K. Ch'kd.B.T. Int. P.L.

Memo. Railways Traffic Officer:

Driving diesel engine.
Needs no steam.
Has no cut-off lever.

Driver Murphy

Memo. Driver Murphy:

This office still awaits your full report as to how creature was killed by your locomotive. We refer you to the relevant questions on

Circular B.F.S./15/16789:

- Was creature of railway track at time of incident?
- What was nature of injury to creature?
- For urgent return to this office by first available dispatch.

Railways Traffic Officer
Per J.K. Ch'kd.B.T. Int. P.L.

Memo. Railways Traffic Officer:

Saw cow walking over line. Engine swerved to left to miss cow. Cow kept walking. Engine hit cow.

Driver Murphy

Memo. Driver Murphy:

With reference to your memo forwarded to this office you are hereby fined \$1.00 for insolence. Herewith is a final demand for the completion of this correspondence:

- What was the nature of injury to creature?
- Advise without delay of your reply.

Railways Traffic Officer
Per J.K. Ch'kd.B.T. Int. P.L.

Memo. Railways Traffic Officer:

Went to where cow killed. Cow is definitely dead. This cost me \$2.00 expenses.

Driver Murphy

Memo. Driver Murphy:

Herewith find special payroll No. 180/274, to be signed in duplicate for \$2.00 expenses as claimed.

This correspondence is now closed.

Railways Traffic Officer:
Per J.K. Ch'kd.B.T. Int. P.L.
App'ved H.G. Filed T.Y.
Cert. J.F.



ASSISTANT SECRETARY REPORT

By Jim Chrysostomou
Divisional Assistant Secretary

Tax Payer dollars at work!

There was a recent age article dated February 22nd, 2015 *"Commuters could suffer without train technology boost, public transport chief warns"*.

Some may remember the public transport chief of Public Transport Victoria (PTV) Mr Ian Dobbs from his previous role in the Public Transport Corporation (PTC) where he was instrumental in millions of taxpayer dollars being spent to separate the Melbourne Rail Network in two which was previously known as the Hillside and Bayside network as part of the privatisation model.

The separation of the network was a resounding failure only to have millions more taxpayer dollars spent to put the network back together and refranchised to a sole private operator.

Now the former Chief of PTC, the current Chief of PTV, Mr Dobbs, believes that separating the network in to five separate networks, with the initial cost of commencement on the Dandenong corridor estimated at more than 5 Billion dollars of taxpayer dollars, is a good idea.

The Liberal government attempted to rush through and sign off the Dandenong project before they were thrown out by Victorians in the last election. With very little detail other than the introduction of High Capacity Signalling and 25 new generation trains with an estimated 5 billion price tag of taxpayer funds.

Let's take a look at a component of the project; "High Capacity Signalling (HCS)". Now HCS is based around a train network that does not have multiple operators that run on the same tracks with varying types of trains.

A breakdown of the 5 Billion dollar Project;

1. 25 trains fitted with technology to run on HCS.
2. 203 trains not fitted with technology to run on HCS.
3. 2 current safe working systems for V/Line Trains, Freight Trains and Suburban Trains.
4. The introduction of a new safe working system for 25 trains increasing the total safe working systems to 3.

It seems that the 5 Billion price tag for the purported upgrade is the tip of the iceberg as we have previously seen with misspent taxpayer funded projects like the new train projects, Digital Train Radio System and Myki just to name a few.

Now maybe the PTV Mr Dobbs endorsed project is part of a grand scheme to break the network down even further. Previously the network was broken into 2 and did not work and now the PTV endorse the proposition to break the network into 5 groups and this won't work either given that HCS is based around an isolated network.

In order to make HCS feasible and cost effective for the long term here would have to be a complete separation of operators on the network e.g. V/Line trains and freight trains would stop wherever suburban trains start, meaning the network would be fractured even further.

The most important question is 'why in Victoria do we consistently rely on people that have not made a meaningful contribution to the railways both in Australia or internationally that comes at considerable cost to the taxpayer'?

When is this nonsense going to STOP!

V/LINE ROSTERS

By Gavin Anderson

State Roster Co-ordinator- V/Line

The government has announced the new rosters incorporating the new RRL line from Deer Park to Manor have been put back until 21 June 2015.

The reason being is the government feels there is insufficient rolling stock to run the new services efficiently. When it is finally implemented Geelong will have a 20 minute off peak service Monday to Friday while Bacchus Marsh will have a half hourly service, also Monday to Friday.

The other major centres will have additional peak hour services. Weekend work will not change significantly.

All relief weeks (not Holiday Relief) on C roster will be replaced with shifts and C Roster may be extended beyond 102 weeks.

The new work to be placed on all rosters is mainly Monday to Friday which will allow for better rostering enabling permanent swaps to work more efficient.

RADIO REPORT V/LINE

By Lionel Britton

Radio Testing Party -V/Line

Auditing

Auditing of the NUTR, LTR and SW channels has started with the beginning of the new year, this will most likely be the last year of testing the NUTR at outer locations where N class locos are rostered. E.G. Traraglon to Bairnsdale as the ICE RADIO is fitted to N class fleet.

Radio Issues

Repeated failure of the LTR at Ballarat has resulted in the Vline communication manager requesting signal strength testing in that area.

Failure of LTR in Geelong tunnel is being addressed and requires further testing.

Channel 10 NUTR on the RRL from Southern Cross to Manor junction, Deer Park west and Sunshine again failed testing when a number of our pages and ID's were not received at train control, and will have to be retested by Tony and myself before it is commissioned.

Ice Radio

I'm glad to see at the last branch meeting a motion was past, that the ICE RADIO be fitted with one of the most basic requirements of a radio, a VOLUME KNOB.

I have requested members to consider my original request that the U1 and U2 be configured so the one selected is the only one that work.

The other channel can be preset to the drivers needs and only transmits and receives when selected. This will make a single volume knob an easy fit.

With these changes the radio may be more user friendly.

Joining the Radio Testing Party...

Any members interested in joining the radio testing party please contact Tony Coscarella or myself so we can forward your nomination to the branch.

CONNECTING VICTORIAN REGIONAL CITIES

By Marc Marotta
Divisional Secretary

The RTBU Locomotive Division has become aware of the efforts of 2 organisations attempting to promote the reintroduction to rail services in central Victoria and Gippsland. The organisations are called the 'Rail Revival Alliance' and the 'Southern & West Gippsland Transport Group'.

The Rail Revival Alliance (**RRA**) has produced a document that identifies accurately the problems confronting its proposal which is to reopen the line between Castlemaine and Maryborough which is a distance of 55km, they also promote a passenger service from Castlemaine and Maryborough and an increase of rail service between Maryborough and Ballarat which is a distance of 69 km, it also advocates a passenger service between Ballarat and Geelong. Its also proposing a Castlemaine—Bendigo service.

It certainly is a forward thinking proposal as these areas will grow in the future. The Proposal in itself goes into details for the engineering requirements and the funding required for a staged re-introduction.

What I like about the submission; it tackles real problems and offers a lower cost alternative then the one that was produced by PTV.

The Rail Revival Alliance is a non-political community based organisation that is committed to the re-instatement of passenger rail services between Bendigo, Castlemaine, Maryborough, Ballarat and Geelong.

The group which has been in existence for less than 12 months has nearly 400 members, covering both regional and metropolitan areas and encompasses members from all of the major political parties.

This document contains an engineering report on the alternative to the government's nearly one billion dollars to bring Rail Revival into reality.

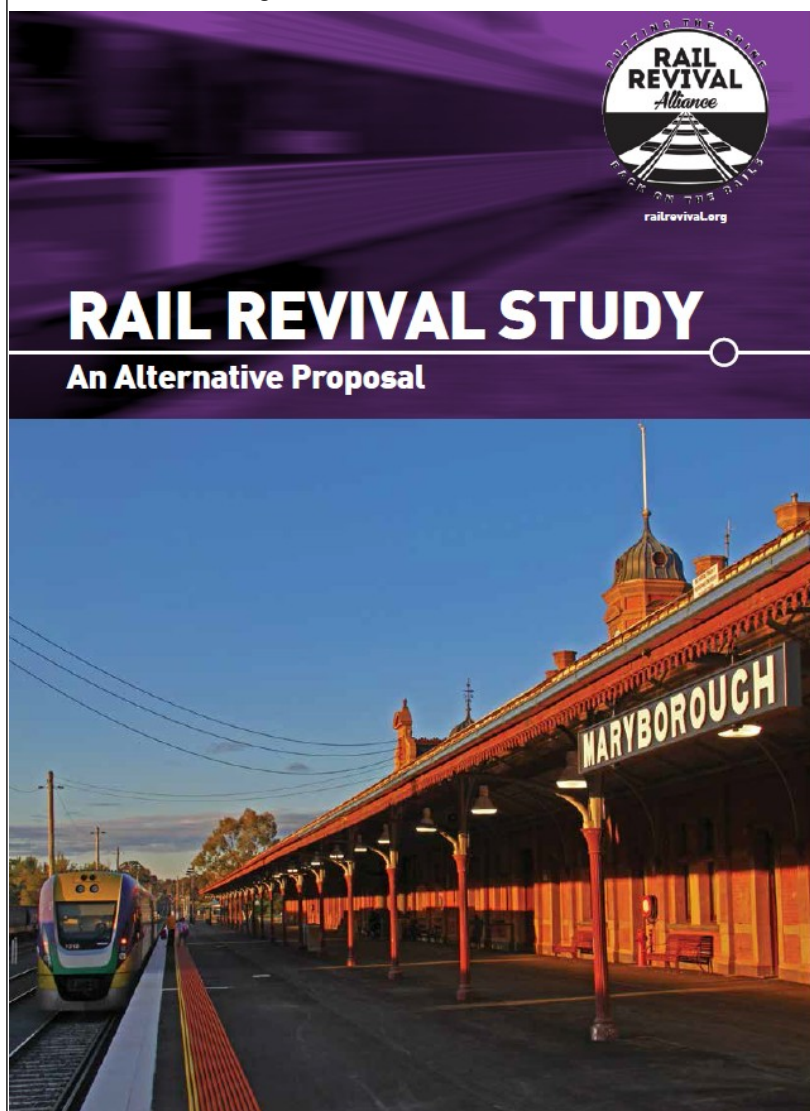
In addition, to the report, there is a selection of photographs and commentary of the Rail Revival Alliance in action within the community.

Noel Laidlaw
President
Rail Revival Alliance
c/-Post office
CARISBROOK VIC
3464
www.railrevival.org
www.facebook.com/groups/railrevival

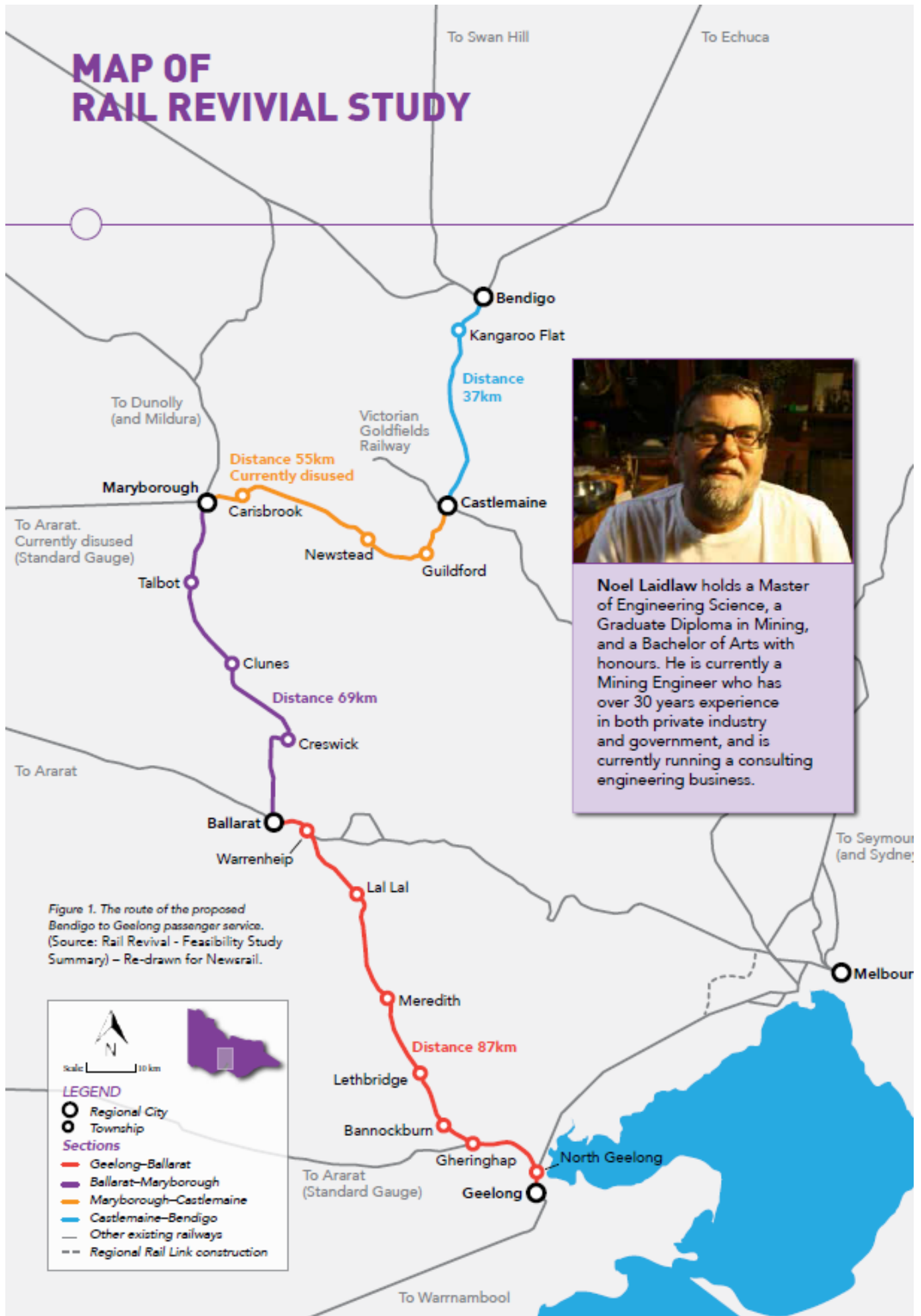


The South & West Gippsland Transport Group (SWGTT) aims to improve public transport. It is advocating the return of the rail services to Leongatha, to establish a rail loop between Cranbourne and Pakenham and to improve bus services between towns and Melbourne.

The SWGT outline a whole range of benefits of their re-introduction to rail for the Gippsland area as listed on page 17:



MAP OF RAIL REVIVAL STUDY



Noel Laidlaw holds a Master of Engineering Science, a Graduate Diploma in Mining, and a Bachelor of Arts with honours. He is currently a Mining Engineer who has over 30 years experience in both private industry and government, and is currently running a consulting engineering business.

South & West Gippsland Transport Group

a new rail solution for public and industry

get onboard!



- Support for extension of rail loop between Casey and Pakenham to ensure that all 300,000 new residents are within 10 minutes of public transport.
- Provide a link to Port Anthony at Barry Beach and Port of Hastings to provide access for export of goods from the Valley and import of prefabricated plant and equipment.
- Provide a low carbon competitive transport for dairy industry, forestry, farming and mining particularly in light of peak oil and the proposed new carbon tax.
- Reduce pressure on growth of Melbourne fringes by facilitating commuting by public transport to Melbourne, as is occurring on the Ballarat, Bendigo and East Gippsland lines.
- Revitalize and stimulate the growth of small towns such as Koo Wee Rup, Lang Lang, Nyora, Loch, Korumburra, Leongatha, Meeniyar, Fish Creek, Foster and Toora to reduce pressure on growth of Melbourne.

- Ensuring ongoing viability of tourism in an era of increasing petrol prices by proving a rail line to a tourist hub for Wilson Promontory in Foster.
- Make owning and living in SW Gippsland affordable for young people working in South West Melbourne.
- Address the growing problems of buses being caught up in congestion and gridlock on Monash Freeway particularly in the late afternoon and mornings.

Andrew McEwen,
Chairman
South & West Gippsland Transport Group
committee@swgt.com.au

The Locomotive Division is most supportive of the Rail Revival Alliance and the South & West Gippsland Transport Group and endorses their objectives.

Copies of the 'Rail Revival Study an Alternative Proposal' are available upon request at the Locomotive Divisional Office or online at www.railrevival.org.



SOUTHERN CROSS REPORT

By Howard Hand

Secretary—V/line Southern Cross Sub-Division

Absenteeism in the work place

Currently Vline is campaigning against drivers that take sick leave and have developed a guide for managers to investigate those who are a little sicker than others. Crews are advised that any more than three consecutive days without a certificate will raise the possibility of a welfare interview as will any more than five days without a certificate over twelve months or days sick before or after a public holiday or anywhere they think a pattern has developed. Of course this is not about intimidation or discipline it's all about your welfare because they care. Let's not forget to mention the ten questions you will be asked when ringing off sick. These include name and relationship of caller (if not the employee), (if sick leave), are you going to see a doctor, dentist or hospital. Have you sought medical advice, and what was the advice? Really! If carers leave, who are you caring for and why? You're kidding right!

OUR POSITION ON RINGING "OFF SICK" HAS NOT CHANGED

Uniforms

Women's uniform is still a major concern for our female colleagues and this has dragged on for over five years and still being no closer to being finalised. It seems our uniform committee has been flogging a dead horse trying to get suitable garments for trial but keep getting blocked constantly time after time, delay after delay, mistruth after mistruth. They even had a mover and shaker from Collins Street who was going to get things done, one meeting and MIA ever since. It has now got to the stage where it has now cost us a very dedicated uniform representative who has had enough of the bullshit and has resigned from her uniform committee position. We would like to thank her for her efforts and wish her well.

Driver Advisory System

Since 2012 Vline has been investigating the use of a Drivers Advisory System (DAS) on board our trains. DAS is essentially a screen within the cab of a train that advises the driver when to coast and when to accelerate to meet the planned timetable and reduce fuel use.

If successfully implemented the DAS has a range of potential benefits for Vline ; it may:

- Reduce fuel use (therefore costs and environmental

impacts) by encouraging more efficient driving behaviours

- Capture data to identify if our timetable is realistic and identify 'hot spots'

From a drivers perspective installation and use of the system may;

- Reduce time at red signals
- Reduce or avoid the need for running sheets
- Help to avoid missed stations by advising and reminding what the next stop is
- Provide an indication of the train location and upcoming signals in reduced visibility conditions
- Potentially be compatible on a tablet format and therefore be part of the future opportunity to move towards increased technology for drivers communication.

Although this also raises a number of serious safety concerns; while we are monitoring these screens for driving advice, who is looking out the windscreen. Let's face it; running high speed trains, the last thing we need is another distraction in the cab.

With the current SPAD prevention and overshoot information we are getting, it seems rather strange that this will solve all our problems and save fuel while giving us a state of the art result.

How will it deal with a cut out Traction Motor, Speed restrictions, defective signals, WOLO's, rule 1 section 3, inclement weather or late running?



Above: The DAS screen with ruler measuring 15 cm

Is the screen now starting to have smoke emitting from it and making 'woop, woop danger Will Robinson' noises.

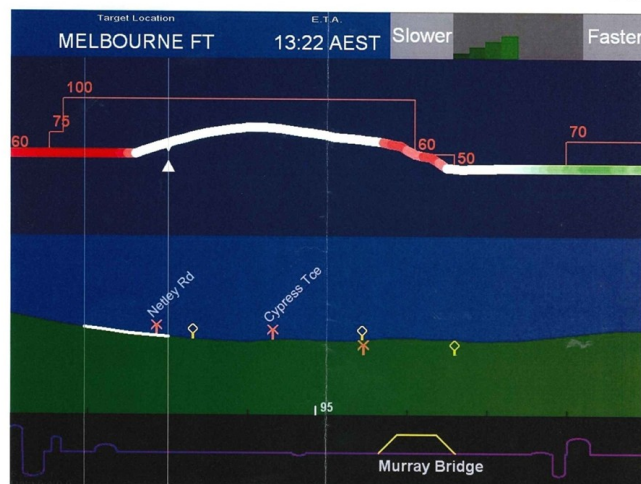
The screen size is about 15cm which is half the size of

the ICE radio screen and we have trouble reading that.

We have found in the past that this type of system had failed at the sparks and really didn't cut it at freight either.



Above: Screen shot from the system



At this time we are seeking the involvement of drivers in providing feedback on the demonstration unit to help tailor this display and the operation of the units to our needs.

In the image TOP RIGHT :

- The top line shows the next stop with an estimated time of arrival based on where the train currently is
- The thick link shows the train speed- with the different colours showing when to accelerate, coast and brake
- The pink line above it with the numbers shows the permitted line speed
- The green line at the bottom shows the track gradient (i.e. upcoming hills etc.) with upcoming level crossings and signals shown
- The coloured lines in black at the bottom show the upcoming track (curves, loops etc.)

Personally I could think of many issues that could urgently do with a funding boost within our industry with regards to poor track conditions and rolling stock defects and this proposed Driver Advisory System wouldn't even get on the list.

Remember safety doesn't take a holiday !



CAB COMMITTEE REPORT- S.C.S

By Karl Costanzo

Cab Committee Committee

During recent meetings regarding the V/Line fleet, the topic of 'life extension' for the 'N' class locos and 'Mid Life' refurbishment of the older Vlocity trains, has been discussed.

Life extension:

V/Line are negotiating funding for the fleet of N class locos, N car sets and H car sets that will carry the fleet, reliability wise, into end of life, which from what I have heard will be as late as 2028! I have been asked as to what driver's need for the locos and a list is being compiled to submit to management. Suggestions are welcome. For the car sets, they are looking for ways to maintain and improve the air conditioning units and as for H cars, fix the door issues.

For Vlocity's, the two car sets that are going in for the addition of a new 13 or 'TM' car, that will make them all 3 car sets, will also have a refurbishment of sorts. This will include new carpets throughout (there have been many bookings from drivers in regards to carpet condition on the cab floors). Re-covered seats and livery change to the PTV purple. The cab committee have called for the list of outstanding mods to be completed on these cabs as well as funding to standardise the fleet with electric mirrors and the controversial foot whistle.

Among other items that is a mod of sorts, but which the cab committee sees as an improvement in safety and conditions are the new type door vent panel in the cab access door. Recently a driver had an unnerving incident that saw an out of control passenger, kick in this old aluminium vent, in an attempt to gain entry to the cab and assault the driver enroute! As we know, these panels are substandard, with most falling to pieces and held in with double sided tape, the adhesive of choice for a Vlocity. A

suitable replacement was made and fitted to a few units plus the new trains of several years ago, but suddenly stopped being replaced, unbeknownst to the cab committee.

A new high/low VL headlight is being trialled on units 30, 40 and 50 to address the high globe failure rate of the current lights. A benefit of this is that on the trial, you now get a true high/low headlight function, and I believe a better 'low' spread pattern for suburban use. I would like to see L.E.D's trialled, but have been told they don't come in a spread pattern and would only 'compete' with the HID high beam. Your comments would be appreciated.

VL12, as of writing, will be released for track tests following accident repairs. For now it will remain in two car configuration, although will look a bit different as the first and perhaps only 2 car Vlocity in the new livery. The same is now taking place for VL05, but it is anticipated that it will go straight to Dandenong for a 'TM' car insertion, when it is released.

Brand new Z car bogies are currently being cast and tested to eventually replace the entire fleet, and permanently solve the bogie cracking problems.

Wheel defects; it seems wheel wear is on the increase of late, with many N class locos visiting Newport workshops for underfloor wheel lathe work or replacement of wheel sets. The wear seems to be concentrated on the right hand side wheels, showing signs of ariss on the wheel flange. Similarly, Vlocity trains are suffering abnormal wear of the flange.

Loco seats:

Below is a copy of an email sent to our train services manager, and is an indication of the current situation of the N class loco seats:

Craig,

N470, currently at Newport workshops undergoing CCO, was fitted with the new type air ride seat roughly 4 years ago. In that time, the loco has spent time on both the standard and broad gauges, clocking up something in the order of 800,000 kms. I have not had the opportunity to conduct a pre exam inspection, but I was in the workshops last week

and I noticed the seats removed from the loco. They appeared in reasonable condition for their wear, but it was obvious which one was on the driver's side. I am assuming these seats will be re installed as they are.

I would like to see a new set of these seats installed on the locomotive, so that the worn ones can be refurbished and placed in stock for the following exam loco, so that we achieve a rotation of the new type seats every CCO, and eliminate the kind of long term wear and fatigue that is causing locomotives to be removed from service due to rough riding and injury reports. I again am asking for funding to be fastracked. With only 10 locomotives so far fitted in 4 years, it is becoming a matter of urgency to fit out the rest of fleet. I see this as the number one item in the cab committee list for the life extension upgrade.

The I.C.E fit out is underway at Sth Dynon. It takes about 10 days to complete the radio fit out. It would make sense to coincide this with the seat upgrade as well.

Sincerely Karl Costanzo, Cab committee.

ICE radio:

Below is a response sent to a PDT who requested a second speed indicator be fitted on N classes with ICE radio:

When ICE was first trialled in the N class cab, we could not find a place for the HMI to mount without it interfering with the driver's vision out the windscreens or second person's side window and mirror, for driver only operations.

The HMI design was one of two (the other is the original unit and much larger, mounted horizontally).

We chose the unit designed for the XPT as originally, they also had troubles with a suitable location to mount.

If a HMI unit was designed to be the same size as the old L.S.D.U, nothing would have needed to have been changed. This is a nation wide project, and no consideration or consultation (to my knowledge) was given to V/line's requirements of the various types of trains that we operate in driver only operation.

Sprinters are proving a challenge too. So the speedo on the N class was relocated to line of driver's sight with the centre windscreen pillar, to preserve the driver's vision, but, consequently it obscured vision for the instructor.

During one of the ICE radio meetings, it was suggested and documented that a second speed indicator would be required for the instructor. That was the responsibility of the train crew manager to investigate. We have not officially heard or agreed to an 'App' to mitigate this. When the first standard gauge N was fitted, I asked for comments on the fit out, the only ones received was that until all N's were done, it would be bothersome for the driver, remembering where to look for the speed indication. One positive side effect of the change is that the screen of the HMI is in easy reach and within the driver's gaze whilst viewing the track ahead. The cab committee has since been approached by several other concerned PDT's and driver supervisors, one of which is currently doing their own investigations in conjunction with the cab committee.

Karl Costanzo. Cab committee. S.C.S.

SIGNAL SIGHTING REPORT—METRO

By David Mortimer
Signal Sighting Committee

The most important issue in a driver's life (besides going home) was my annual leave.

Upon return I was able to negotiate my way around the system without any issues. A big plus in this micro managed environment. The main reason this occurred is that nothing had changed.

The same vegetation obscured the same signals, the same spider webs resided in the same hood, the same rusted mask and post held up light style fittings, the same signals and speed boards covered in graffiti or hidden by a friendly tree where still there hidden and graffitied.

I appreciate it is difficult to believe anything will be done but please keep reporting issues, to Metrol. Appreciate it is like banging your head against a Brickwall, but keep going.

Projects.

BRIP Newport Workshop Yard

This is to automate the workshop roads so general class drivers can depart or shunt to any road of the workshop storage area without shunters. This is part of the BRIP project or more correctly we want "extraps to Frankston" now political agenda of the Naptime government.

The project boys have struck a few problems which have slowed them down but in a Metro style onwards and upwards with minimal cost.

Shops driver will still be required to move equipment from the stabling roads to the workshop.

It was identified during risk assessments that there was a potential for flank collisions at the point of arriving trains into the yard and movement from the yard to the workshops, whilst the chance of a flank collision at any other point has been removed.

BRIP Frankston and Werribee / Williamstown

Signalling for this project has been identified for replacement and contracts and equipment to be bought.

Whilst not all light style signals will be converted to LED the most important ones will be upgraded

Appears in the review of operations of extrap on this corridor it was discovered that over 150 overhead structures on the Frankston corridor were life expired or not capable of handling the additional loading that extraps will place on them.

Also 4 additional substations are required to meet power draw requirements between Frankston and Werribee. These are being installed at the moment. Overhead structures are in the process of being replaced. Thankfully the overhead branch spoke to us about maintaining sighting lines for signal and thankfully they seem to have done this.

There is only one at the moment that I think will interfere but a slight tweak of the 'B' light might be sufficient.

Completion date for this should be October 2015 when operation of extraps along this corridor will begin.



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TALKBACK WITH HINCH

By Michael A Hinch

Passenger Sub-Division—Southern Cross

Adventures in Wang

Comrades,

Just prior to xmas 2014, I was rostered to sign on at 19.00hrs on a Saturday night and travel per car to Wangaratta and relieve a light engine and run level crossing equipment trials. As an instructor, I figured this would be a cushy little job, as my conversion driver trainee was freshly delivered to our shores from the unhappy kingdom of PN Intermodal and was a person intimately familiar with Wangaratta and its surrounds. What an easy peazy lark thunkedNot so...

Upon arrival at Wangaratta I relieved the driver on duty and was then confronted by a person wearing the uniform of one of the labour hire companies. She introduced herself and advised me that she was my...“Pilot.” I responded, “No you’re not” and she said “Yes I am” and I said “No you’re not” and she said “Yes I am” and this continued for a few choruses until she finally asked me what I was talking about and I asked her if she was conversant with the VICTORIAN rules of CTC? She replied that she was so, I then asked “Well riddle me this one Riddler, where in the rules of VICTORIAN CTC does it make any mention of a Pilotman?” It doesn’t. “So?” I asked, “Are you here to assist me?” She replied that she was, so I said “Ok, I’ll call you an FJ Holden because you are NOT a Pilotman. The reference to a Pilot is an outdated safeworking title that has a redundant safeworking application and meaning.

Just to add to the grab bag of happy safeworking surprises, a young Feller’ steps up and introduces himself as my PPO..... “Ohkaaay” I responded “...just exactly what is a PPO? Because I’m pretty sure that VICTORIAN CTC doesn’t have one of them either.” He told me he was my Possession Protection Officer. So I was silly enough to ask exactly what a PPO is and what he does and he held up the Occupation Authority and proudly announced, “I carry this.” I asked this person as well, where in the rules of VICTORIAN CTC did it require a so called PPO to carry out this chore and he responded that in New South Wales they “Did this all the time...” I responded by saying “Well young feller’ last time I looked at Google maps, it listed Wangaratta as existing on Victorian soil, but bugger it and welcome aboard”. I asked him if he knew who Charlie Wheelbarrow from Albury was and he replied that he didn’t. I just remarked that he was very lucky that Charlie was not with us. Then the FJ Holden handed me a book and said “I need you to sign this document.” Scrutiny of the document revealed something that resembled our V/Line locomotive log book in that it had one page with two carbon copies. Beyond that it had some legal jargon on it and lots of fine print. It appeared to ask the signer to indemnify the Australian Rail Track Corporation against any liability for this or that legal jibber jabber. I am not a lawyer and I am not aware of any obligation for any train crew member in the field to have to sign such a document. I handed the book back and simply said...“No.” FJ asked me what I meant and I replied that she had best come to terms with the substance, depth and meaning of the word...“No”. She told me that I have to sign it, it is an ARTC requirement. I responded

“No I don’t and no I won’t”. I asked FJ how long this had been a requirement and she told me it is something new. Well there we have it. Something new.

The FJ Holden then disappeared to seek reinforcements and left the PPO to take center stage. He regaled us with his whole six months of rail experience anecdotes and they were amusing as you would imagine. The FJ then re appeared with a Victrack person whom I recognized from my previous incarnation as a signal sighting rep back in the dark ages. He asked what the problem was and I informed him that there was none except I would not sign the legal document. He said “But you have to.” I responded...“Bugger me there is an echo in this cab.. No I don’t and no I won’t.” I asked him if there was any memo that existed signed by both ARTC and V/Line management which gave agreement that the individual in the field will willingly and happily sign an indemnification document. He said that there was such a document and I asked him to produce it and he responded that he didn’t have it. “How wonderfully convenient” I said. “Now, it is like this,” I proclaimed. “It is 23.00 hrs. on a Saturday night, we are in Wangaratta, I am the last man standing, I am not gunna’ sign your document and you have no options... so what’s it gunna’ be?” Both he and the FJ Holden looked at each other awkwardly for many seconds having not encountered this problem until now and then the FJ spoke and said... “Well... maybe I could just write in the diary that the driver refused to sign.....” I slapped both of my thighs and proclaimed “Well there ya’ go...now that didn’t even hurt did it?” The whole time wishing Wheelbarrow (an Albury driver who is extremely good at this stuff) was with us.

Through the course of the night we then proceeded to make a number of light engine runs at the chosen level crossing until 02.00 hours rolled around and I advised the group that the Safe Working circular we had been issued with stated that the occupation would come unhappily to an end. The coach had turned into a pumpkin now and we were rostered to then proceed light engine to Albury, tie up and go to rest. The Victrack chappy then advised that he had an email from V/Line which stated that we would be required to stay at the occupation site until 05.00. Well sadly that email apparently didn’t reach the rostering or the safe working section of V/Line because the circular was quite specific and NO, I was not about to work an eleven hour shift through the black Hole because some Victrack manager decided it would be a good idea. Bugger me...am I just plain old obstructionist? I did however concede that commissioning a level crossing was an important task and indeed one not to be taken lightly so I offered and provided one more run at the crossing.

It then came time to leave the happy shores of dear old Wang and head to Albury. The train control in Junee then advised me that the home departure signal could not be placed to proceed because so many trips in each direction within the station limits of Wang had transpired that the axle counters were confused. (Note, at Wangaratta and Benalla there is no track circuit)

"Ohhhkay then. No problem, please give us a caution order." The senior train controller told me that he could not issue a caution order because June Control did not own the track for safe working purposes. "What the dickens are you talking about?" I asked. "I'm sorry Driver, but the PPO owns the track and I can't override him, he must give you authority for rule one section three.." "What the Frigg?" (I just cleaned that up) I said. Ok, what you the reader have to now understand is that they were now relying upon New South Wales rules and regulations on VICTORIAN soil. And to the young ones, always cover your butt. Not wishing to be stuck there until the following week, I sought a compromise. I asked the senior controller if our conversation was on tape and he replied that it was. I asked him to reiterate the reason that a caution order could not be issued and asked him to exchange names. We did all of those things and I then cautiously accepted the authority from the PPO to proceed past the signal and into the section, given that the occupation went as far as Wodonga junction.

Now, I don't really care if V/Line and the Public Transport Corporation are happy to sit back and let the Australian Rail Track Corporation New South Waleserize the VICTORIAN tracks. All I ask is that we the operators be given the appropriate training in New South Wales Rules. I say to V/Line...Don't you dare, willingly and knowingly throw us out into traction operations situations for which we are unqualified, unprepared and untrained.

Oh Boy!! It's the Abloy

In their infinite wisdom, Public Transport Victoria have decided to introduce a new key which is apparently supposed to replace all of our other keys, both safeworking and otherwise. It's called the Abloy and I can tell you this thing has some sharp edges. I reckon that charlatan Bear Grills could gut a baby camel with this thing. I have poked quite a number of holes in my pockets with this beastly already. Why on earth was this new key not ordered in the Switch Blade configuration just like any modern car key? Most of you would know that this thing opens both electronic and mechanical locks and is poised to be introduced system wide.

If we are to replace every 1p,5p,6p,28p,5pSW and ROA1 lock with the Abloy, it will take a very long time. I have heard figures such as 6 years. Upon delivery of the new key, many of them began failing straight away. Ahah, the keys we were supplied with have apparently been sitting on the shelf for so long that the batteries have passed their use by dates and needed to be replaced. Now that brings a must be asked question to the fore. Is this new technology? If it is then why have the keys been sitting on a shelf for so long?

Technology these days has one nasty trait. It tends to become redundant 'Yesterday'. Just try buying a computer and some software and then going back to the shop six months later only to be told it was out of date and needed to be upgraded. However we are talking years here kiddies. My guess is that this new format will see its roll out completion in a few years only to find that we will need to start all over again with a new system. Consider that these things will be out in the weather. Subject to rain and dust etc. and all the while remember that they are both mechanical and electronic. I can appreciate the logic that if a person were to leave the system tomorrow and not return their key, then with the touch of a keyboard, that key can be rendered inoperable. I concede that, that makes sense. But is it really worth the trouble and expense? Presumably every freight

company will have to be supplied with these things and just exactly who pays for that? My guess is, the Tax Payer. This whole project must have cost a bomb and I really don't see the need for it.

Radio Shunt at V/Line

A component of the latest Enterprise Agreement (EA) was a return to discussions to implement Radio Shunting (RS) at V/Line. If any rail worker were to come visit V/Line from any other part of the railway universe, they would not recognize just exactly what it is that we do in terms of shunting at Spencer Street. We actually use hand signals and hand lamps. We do not use radios to perform shunts as every other rail system from here to Alpha Centauri does. What's in it (RS) for management? The EA demands the reduction in the number of Shunters at Spencer Street, however I am informed that those numbers have been reached without the introduction of radio shunt. But management being the impetuous kooky guys they are just needs to plow ahead with it so, I was asked to reinvent my position as one of the Drivers reps on the team and get back to the negotiations which began and stalled in 2007. Understand all, I occupy no official Union or other elected position. I was asked to return to the negotiations as a representative of the RTBU and I accepted because I genuinely care about this issue and I have experience in this area. If anyone objects to that then please note, it is clear that I have declared it up front and all correspondence is to be directed to your elected Union representative.

What's in it for us? No money, that's for sure. I personally believe it will improve safety but I am in the minority, for the reason alone that I believe it dictates that it will have to try ten times as hard to impress me. My demands will be that it MUST be the safest system available over and above manual shunting and it MUST prove to me that it will fail safe under all circumstances and not simply "As reasonably practicable". Andrew Morley also reprises his role on the committee as at the original meetings, he was the Radio Working party coordinator, and a sharp thinking little cookie he is.

When I returned to V/Line from Freight nine years ago, I came as the recently retired state coordinator of OH&S at Freight. I expressed an interest in assisting with the RS committee because I had seen the classroom courseware that was, at the time, being looked after by Rail Training International and it was the same basic unsafe crap that we inherited in the nineties when Jeff sold the railways. At Freight, we pulled that courseware apart and made it safe. I was keen to assist the Pass side to take the long step from Kindergarten to University without having to go through the pain of development the we had, had to at Freight. So, the games began in earnest and the Shunters were difficult chaps to persuade. Ultimately, they weren't persuaded and all negotiations broke down unilaterally. In fact, we only made it as far as trying to work out how to set a loco and rake back at a platform using the radio. Beyond that is - setting back to the Bank, setting back from the Bank to the platforms. Setting back to the Cars and the reverse of course. All movements of the Pilot and how the Lead Shunter, No 1 Box, the Yard Master and Drivers of course, all interact, communicate and undertake shunt moves all without crashing into each other.

How many radio channels would all of these participants have to monitor simultaneously? What are the risk factors in using multiple channels for multiple moves? We didn't even get to the first risk analysis. However what we did achieve was the risk

assessments for the manual shunting moves that we were already doing and that assessment highlighted many deficiencies. The outcome was the set of rules we work by today. There were so many factors to consider. Where are the air taps located on each vehicle? Oh, guess what? They are all over the place on the patchwork quilt of different types of rolling stock we use. As a result, many of them today are located in a more uniform fashion. How many Shunters on each move would guarantee a safe move? Management at the time produced a document guaranteeing two Shunters on every shunt into perpetuity. They most certainly have to at least match that today. Take into account the altered face of the way the Pass Yard precinct is operated today as opposed to then and the introduction of other factors such as ICE Radio and you have a real dog's breakfast.

The Shunters announced (I don't believe that they consulted) that they would take control of shunting at South Dynon Loco Depot for the sake of trialing RS. As far as we are concerned, we (Drivers) have had coverage of that area since 1962..."And that aint gunna' change!" Andrew and I have recommended the Storage Yard as a suitable place for trials. It has mostly straight tracks, it is relatively isolated from other intervening traffic and the Shunters already have coverage of this area. Let us wait and see. In the very least, risk assessments on all areas and scenarios will be lengthy and time consuming. I still feel it can work but the road will be long and the pitfalls many. Watch this space.

The talk of the town.

I never cease to be amazed by the unusual array of modern training techniques and vocational behavior outcomes that are fed to us and expected by the Registered Training Organization (RTO). One of their latest efforts just simply takes the cake. It is a beauty. They want us totalk to ourselves. There is an entire training session that has been developed by the RTO that insists that we....talk to ourselves. They have glossy brochures about it and there is a training video that we have had to endure. The video features some of our Supervisors and Compliance people looking as though they actually believed that talking to themselves was a good idea. Damn fine actors if you ask me. I'm demanding Logics I tell you!

It works like this.....picture a Supervisor in the video driving a train and talking to himself. "Ok, I'm coming up to a bottom green, I'm putting the brake on, now I am releasing the brake. Ok, I'm back to forty kilometers per hour. Oh I see a Ganger up ahead; I will just blow a whistle. Ok He has acknowledged my whistle now I will accelerate again and blah, blah blah." You all think I'm joking don't you? It is now expected that we will spend the entire driving time of our shift.....talking to ourselves. With your kind permission I will quote Captain James T. Kirk... "Oh my."

Michael A. Hinch.
Aka Talkback.



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That's OK, just give us a call or email us your email to register, and you will then receive your log in details.

In the Members Area:
Union Forms and information
Circulars
Members Resources
Members Benefits



WHERE IS IT?

with Trevor Penn and Des Jowett
edited by Warren Banfield



THE previous *Where Is It ...?* [below right] was at Deniliquin, in the Riverina region of New South Wales. The railmotor was 63RM and the photo was taken by Warren Banfield on Monday 26th December 1977.

The winners who correctly guessed Deniliquin were Geoff Ralph of Metro and Mark Tobin of VLP.

Congratulations go to them. 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, Sparks and Loco, will be drawn two weeks from distribution of the current *Loco Lines*. Prizes can include a Union mug, or a cap.

Good luck!

DENILIKUIN

by WRB

WITH the railway from Melbourne to Bendigo opening in its entirety in 1862, then Bendigo to Echuca on the Murray River in 1864, there was a great desire to have a reliable rail connection provided to Deniliquin to tap into the productive Riverina area of southern New South Wales.

The New South Wales colonial government showed no interest in building a railway that would basically serve the rival colony of Victoria, as their railway system had not yet reached that part of NSW.

Pressure mounted however and in 1874 a NSW Act was passed for the construction of a private railway of 5 ft 3 in gauge from Moama, on the NSW side of the Murray near Echuca, to Deniliquin for a distance of some 44 miles. The line would leave north out of Echuca and cross the Murray on a redgum trestle bridge with a lifting span for passing river traffic. Once in NSW the line would pass through Moama and Mathoura to reach Deniliquin.

And so in July 1876 the Victorian consortium-built Deniliquin & Moama Railway Company opened its line for traffic. From the outset the railway had four 0-6-0 tender engines, Nos 1 to 4, passenger and goods vehicles and guard's vans.

With the introduction of the Westinghouse automatic air brake on the Victorian Railways in the late 1880s the D&MRC felt no need to follow, probably due to the very



flat terrain along the length of the line and the cost of such a fit-out to the rolling stock. Handbrake stops sufficed, for the entire life of the D&MRC.

The plan to build a line to Balranald NSW from Barnes on the Deniliquin railway was part of the passing of the *Border Railways Act (1922)* through the Victorian and NSW state parliaments. In preparation for this the Victorian Railways acquired the assets of the D&MRC for £165,000 with the VR taking over operation on 1st December 1923.

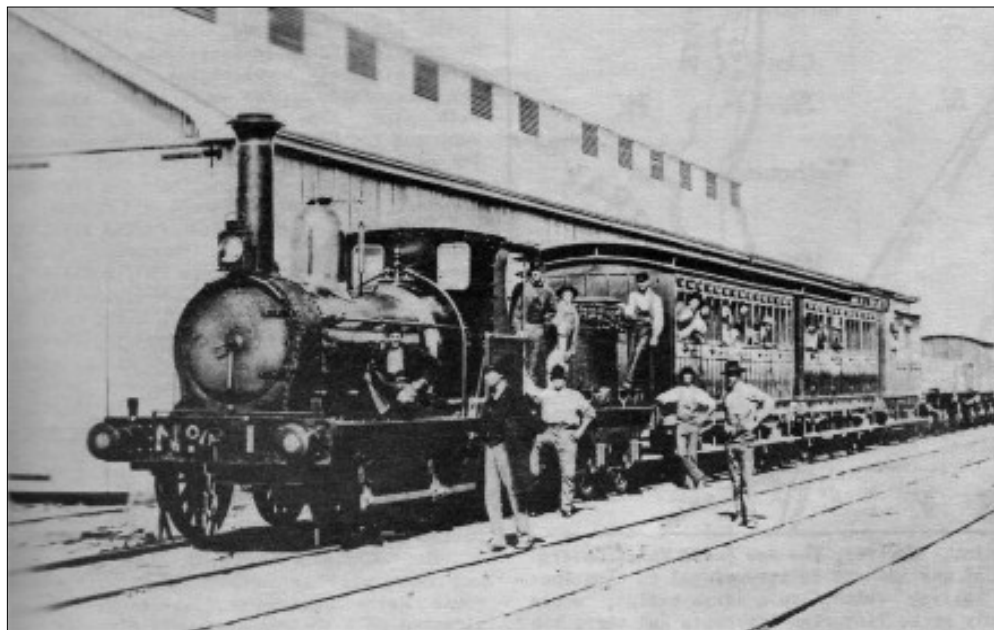
The rolling stock was the original equipment from 1876 and, being non-air braked, was not much use to the VR. Engine No 3 survived in minor service and it was scrapped in 1927. The other three locos were disposed of in 1925.

In April 1924 the Deniliquin station building was destroyed by fire but replaced by a nice brick one seen in the pic at top right. This was very similar to the station buildings at Moulamein and Balranald, with that line opening in 1926 by the way.

As an example of the line's safeworking, in the late 1950s it was large type Electric Staff from Echuca to Moama and Moama to Barnes then Train Staff & Ticket from Barnes to Mathoura and Mathoura to Deniliquin.

Deni enjoyed a railmotor service six days a week to and from Bendigo. This was withdrawn in early 1979.

Rice traffic was always a large portion of the line's revenue. Today at Deniliquin it is a very bleak scene with the passenger station demolished and platform removed and many other structures obliterated. LL



The Deniliquin & Moama Railway Company's locomotive No 1, with mixed train, at Deniliquin apparently on the opening day of 4th July 1876.

J. L. BUCKLAND COLLECTION; ARHS *BULLETIN* FEBRUARY 1961

NELSON'S COLUMN

If you're easily offended stop reading now Princess.

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 sod off now or e-mail me at piss.up@myplace.come.ok or call toll free 1800 FAR QUE.

Rolling Stock Deferments at V/Line.

Ever since the last Enterprise Agreement came in at Pass, we've had train faults deferred for upto 72 hours which means that V/Line and Metro now exist in parallel Universes where rolling stock is now travelling upto 2000 kms (approximately) before any genuine attempt at rectification.

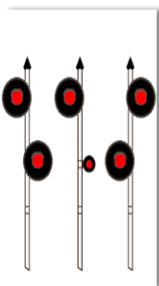
V/Line and Metro are treating State Owned rolling stock with contempt, if everybody treated their family car the same way, **VicRoads** and the Cops would put you off the road.

Not only that there is the wear and tear factor if say a 3 car VLocity is running around with 1 engine cut out then the other two engines have to compensate to the order of 150% each as the now unmotorised trailer becomes 50 tonnes of dead weight to be pulled up hill and down dale also if it is a leading car

then it will also push back against the trailing cars increasing the effort required to shift the not inconsiderable weight not to mention the loss of Hydro-Dynamic braking on the effected vehicle which pushes out braking distances considerably as I discovered one day at Yarragon one day, Pharque Moi that's French for golly.

I do not believe that there is any real saving achieved through deferment of faults other than Bombardier seems to be telling V/Line how to manage its rolling stock, it must be great having a service contract with V/Line as you get to call the shots.

Automatic Signals.



In light of recent events I think automatic signals should be classified as absolute signals and not permissive, with the onus on Centrol/Metrol telling you when it is safe to pass the signal and what speed you can proceed at with the final decision being left with the Driver as he is the one that has to front the coroner.

Remember under Rule 1 of Section 3 in the Rules and Operating Procedures Book 1994, you do not have to pass an automatic signal if

you have reservations about safety of the train or track, you can sit there all day if you feel that is the best course of action.

This situation should have been rectified in the aftermath of the Barnawartha accident when the Up Goods ran up the rear of the "**Spirit of Progress**" killing the crew (Driver George Sandford and far too young Fireman Mark Wilson) of the Goods all those years ago.

That's my opinion anyway.

Kennedy's Lane.

On the North-Eastern line at a level crossing called Kennedy's Lane there is a curious situation as the crossing is over the Broad and Standard Gauge lines at



about the 80 kilometre post, what's curious is the on the Standard Gauge the maximum speed for XPT is 120 km/h and Freighters is 115k/mh while on the Broad Gauge right beside it, all trains are to reduce speed to 65 km/h due to FKW.

The other day I ran the 1716 Seymour (N Loco and 6 x H Cars) which had to traverse this crossing, at 65 km/h, which is in the



strange or just plain unfathomable.

basin between Broadford and Tallarook which is fair enough except whilst I was going about this, the **Cane Toad Express (QR Freighter)** went ripping past at 115km/h on the gauge,

On arrival at Seymour I shunt my train then have tucker and run the Up Albury Pass back into Melbourne and you guessed it went flying over Kennedy's Lane at 115 km/h.



The problem arises because the Standard Gauge is leased to **ARTC** while the Broad Gauge is operated by **V/Line** on behalf of **VicTrack**, you'd think those two companies would work in partnership where they share corridors.

Managers And Managers.

I have watched in morbid fascination as **MetroTrains**, in my opinion, decided to clean out its management ranks over the last couple of years, what was amazing that with 100% accuracy they managed to rid themselves of any body with a shred of integrity and ability while maintaining a level of incompetency based management that beggars belief and is a laughing stock in the industry.



When I occasionally speak to people in management roles in this industry the general consensus seems to be that **Metro**

do not know how to manage people effectively to the point that **Metro** will suffer serious manpower shortages in the long-term. **MTR (The Chinese Communist Government Owned Company that Runs Metro)** will never change though and I think the state

A bad manager can take a good staff and destroy it, causing the best employees to flee and the remainder to lose all motivation.

Extend RRL.

The RRL should be extended to incorporate Pakenham, Craigieburn, and Sunbury. This would cost Gazillions of Bucks I know but it would effectively give Melbourne two rail systems that could operate along side each other with little impact on each other,

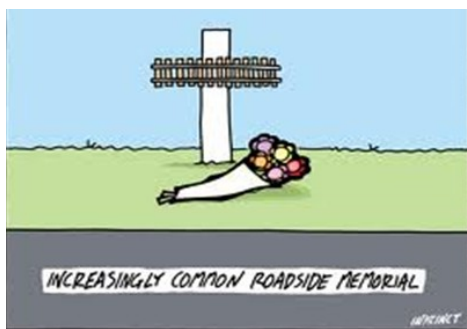
The state has demonstrated it is prepared to build entire new lines to separate *V/Line* and *MetroTrains*, (mind you the Baillieu/Napthine nearly blew it by not ordering enough rolling stock), and it would certainly be worth investigating the feasibility of such a project.

While were on the subject of Networks I think all Safe-Working and Timetabling in Victoria should be in the hands of *VicTrack* without reference from the Operators.

It's about time the State took responsibility for Public Transport in Victoria and admit that privatization was a disaster.

The Road Lobby Talks And The Railways Walk.

Why is that the Feds say that historically the Commonwealth does not fund urban or passenger rail in general, but only when the Tories are in power?

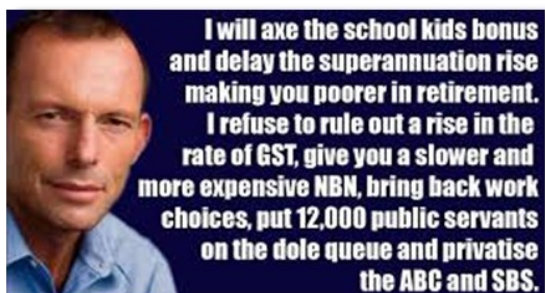


Under Labor Cranbourne, Sydenham, Craigieburn, South Morang and Sunbury Electrification and construction of the RRL from Manor Junction to Deer Park West Junction with the help of Federal Funding.

When Tony Abbott, (*The Suppository Of All Knowledge*),



history suddenly changed, mind you the Supreme Maggot said "No cuts to the ABC/SBS, Education, Health and Old Age Pensions" which of cause turned out to be porkpies or a "Non-core Promise"



In summary what I mean is they say whatever it takes to get elected, then when in office we get a budget emergency but only up till the next election then it will come good in about may next year and they'll start to pork barrel us with money.

That's all from me, please write in to the Mago, it's yours you know, have your say even if you wanna lob a few bricks at me, I don't mind in the least.

LETTERS FROM LANCE.

From Mike Hinch and Ernie Nelson.

These recollections from Lance Adams are just that and nothing more, they are how he recalls it and his memories may differ from others who were around in his time, so please do not take the hump because Lance saw it differently to you. EN & MH

People That I Met Passing Through The Engineman's Ranks.

I met a lot of individuals passing whist through the engineman's ranks as well as sharing some great footplate time with some great men. I suppose I was lucky to brush shoulders with people who could give me a first hand recollection of what the VR was like in the 30's, 40's over the war years, & 50's, & to each of these men I acknowledge sincere thanks for the input. In my roll as an instructor (OJT) each of my charges got a little bit of the input, hopefully to carry on to the generation that will follow. (May God have mercy on them).

During my trials & travels everybody was equally important with no one individual more important than the others, but some men were quite significant in the things they had done & I would like to name a few for posterity.

Whilst relieving in Yarram in the 70's, driver Ray Fox (aka the silver fox) took me out to a property in Won Ron just out of Yarram to meet a retired driver who retired as the DIC Yarram in the 50's & was living a hermits style existence in a tin shack with earthen floors. His claim to fame was he was the Fireman on a Royal train that ran from Ballarat to Geelong in the 20's. I was more interested in his tales of the Woodside line. I do not remember this individuals name, but he was the driver of the last train to Woodside in 1953. Ray Fox knew him quite well, & Ray is still living. Historical records should also mention the crew who manned this royal train between Ballarat & Geelong I'm the 20's.

Another individual that bears a mention here was Eric Coughlin who was a railmotor second man at Daylesford who retired in the 60's. Through a series of circumstances I ended up with one of Eric's comprehensive guards train books dated 1946 & appears to be from around the time he transferred to Daylesford whilst still in the Traffic branch (Transportation branch) before being taken into the Rolling Stock branch (formerly the Loco branch) This whole episode of VR history is better off being covered by Trevor Penn, Des Jovett or the like. I met Eric once on a morning on the platform at Daylesford. I am still in possession of this detailed Guards train book, & if anyone would like to look through it, they are welcome to do so, providing the book does not leave here or passes out of my possession. It is a very important piece of historical data.

The men on the job in the 50's & 60's were just fantastic and many score a mention in this fantastic book as drivers on the Daylesford line as junior drivers on the branch line passenger service, It was good to get this first hand account of the way things were and the way we were.

LANCE ADAMS. Yea 16/02/2015

Some Good Replies To Ridiculous Train Running Enquiries.

Whilst running on the main line on an up Yea goods against #125 North east we must lost time in the section Broadford-Tallarook, being a local crew it was easy to find us in the Tallarook Signal box waiting to split the load on #79 goods as was usual practice. After we had been back from Seymour some time, the control phone sprung into life with the controller wanting to know why we had lost 2 minutes earlier in the evening on #125 between Broadford & Tallarook. The driver calmly responded to this enquiry with "We are going up there again tomorrow night, I will have a look around to see if we can find them". End of conversation game set & match.

Another night running #113 goods a 0115 from Tallarook to Yea. We blew a hosebag climbing the Granite Bank and were there for some time locating & replacing the defective hosebag. It was a very dark bleak early AM operation & a suitable RS 12 A was submitted.

Several weeks later the questions started to flow, & some clerk somewhere had worked out that the offending vehicle causing the delay was Marshallled close to the engine. The reply sent back to the inquisitive over zealous clerk read "Judging by the number of burrs in my socks, this vehicle was not Marshallled near the engine"

We had a particularly bad run on a steam engine on the Narrow gauge after relieving another crew earlier in the day. Several weeks later questions were circulating around as to the condition of the engine when we relieved it. The terse answer submitted was "It was leaning up against the coal stage in an utterly exhausted manner" No other correspondence was received over this matter.

On another occasion after an incident in train running, the railmotor foreman Don Browning asked me for another RS12A to cover the incident he was referring to. I replied that if I ever make the railmotor depot without something going wrong, I will write and tell him, as that would be an unusual event!. He kicked me out of his office.

I was running a morning down Harris train to Epping and encountered a defective home arrival signal (2 position) at Merri. I carried out all the necessary procedures to pass the signal at the stop position, and submitted a covering RS12A to cover the event. Several weeks later I received in the correspondence a request for further information with details relating to dates & times which were on my original notice of irregularity. I just initialed it and scribbled "As Above" on it & sent it back. I heard more of this incident after that.

In later years I would not put reports in until asked about certain train running incidents. When I did submit them I would then have something to say. I would always fill any correspondence in pencil so it would fade in a short period of time. I would always mark the correspondence as "Duplicate" giving some poor clerk somewhere a headache looking for something that did not exist.

An old driver told me years ago & it is true! "Who runs the job? A clerk!" What's the difference between a job & no job? A line! Who draws that line? A clerk! Think about it.

LANCE ADAMS. Yea. 14/01/2015

Loading Elephants At Almurta.

Whilst doing a driving shift on the Wonthaggi branch I was up at Nyora simultaneously with the local Nyora crew getting a down goods train ready to depart for Wonthaggi when Fireman Gary Morcombe looking at the train boldly proclaiming to a gullible ASM Eddie Slack that there were elephant trucks (M Cattle trucks formerly on the Worth's circus train with a higher roof for conveying elephants) bound for Almurta.

Gary further announced that the Worth's circus farm at Almurta must be loading elephants today. He then stated that the special elephant trucks had too high a roof line to fit under the low wooden overbridge between Kernot & Almurta. Eddie had better arrange for the elephants to be walked to Kernot to avoid having the fitting problems under the low bridge. Eddie immediately went for the control phone blabbering unintelligible like the jibbering idiot he was, information to the hapless train controller who was at his wit end trying to understand this raging idiot. I was in fits of laughter & had to leave the station office to keep my composure & sanity. Eddie was quite a gullible person and was always good for a bit of fun, He always meant well but was definitely the Village idiot. We used to say about Eddie. Slack by name &

slack by nature!

I don't know how it all panned out, but the Wonthaggi bound goods train departed shortly thereafter, with me following on the railmotor several hours after it. Neither train experienced any problems en route.

Gary Morcombe was quite a comic, & Eddie was a good target for his satire. Gary later transferred to Toolamba, passed for driving & ended up in Seymour He is now retired.

LANCE ADAMS. Yea 29/12/2014.

A Little Known Off Shoot Of Our Heritage.

The Electric Loco' Assistants were an appointee position at the ERD & there were approximately 24 of them involved assisting with the running of the suburban goods trains & select pilots around the Flinders Street yard & the Princes Bridge passenger yard. Around the early 60's an operational decision was made to have these operations removed from the ERD to Dynon & run by Loco crews. This did not happen overnight & it was the early 70's before this move was completed. In this transition period numbers of Electric Loco Assistants dwindled so as to enable the service to run, Firemen from Dynon were sent across to the ERD to act as assistants to the spark drivers on the black locos as required. If the conscripted person was an Engine cleaner there was a slightly less remuneration for acting as an Assistant on a black loco than as a fireman on a normal Locomotive. Several firemen were actually stationed at the ERD to man the 2 former ABM swing door sparks utilized on the East & West workshop pilots. Neil Warren who ended up a supervisor at the ERD was one such man who spent a good deal of his firing time at the sparks. I have an old colour Image of 156ABM on the East end workshops pilot which I will try & find and attach to these ramblings.

The black Locos were originally fitted with trip gear, but it was removed when they moved them to South Dynon. Part of the duties of an Electric Loco assistant was to hold out the trip gear when shunting to prevent undesired back tripping during shunting operations. I cannot remember the names of any of the Electric Loco Assistants but my brother Lindsay, might, as he fired over there too from time to time & I will raise the subject the next time I have contact with him. Several of the former assistants were still around the ERD as Suburban Guards when I transferred there in 1984.

They were all quite aged then & quite bitter on the demise of the Black Loco's from the ERD rosters.

LANCE ADAMS. Yea. 14/02/2015

The Black Locos.

The black locos are probably not a subject you would expect to hear about from a Yea driver but after yesterdays lines on them, I think some of the insights, history & folklore might not be common knowledge. In an attempt to leave some experiences behind for future enginemen to ponder over, I am going to put down what precious little I still remember but wish I could forget.



They were not a romantic part of my younger days! The last driver of a Steeple cab black loco on the day they were written off, operating in multiple unit on the APM goods at Fairfield was Frank Woods. He confused the No 18 brake valve on a Tait train with the No4 brake valve on a black loco & consequently caused an accidental overcharge of the brake, which resulted in a runaway whilst bleeding the brakes & the 2 steeple cab locos were wrecked. I had a similar incident years later when I gave a steer of an NA steam locomotive to a retired spark driver who confused the two brake valves & he too overcharged the brakes when he left the handle of the No4 brake in the charging position. I was drifting down a long steep grade at the time, & the whole thing sorted itself out without problems.

I first came into contact with the black locos during my early years firing in Melbourne. My regular mate at the time was Jack Scully. We used to work exclusively on early morning shift allowing Jack who was a keen punter on the horses (and was very good at it) to attend the various meetings during the day. Our favorite job was the Lilydale paper train which was loco hauled on the days it was required to run beyond Lilydale but hauled by a black loco on days it was not required to run beyond Lilydale. We would get relieved by a Lilydale crew at 0600 & travel back to North Melbourne. Jack lived at Burnley so got off there in the early AM. He would then have the day free to attend the various race meetings. On the days when this service was hauled by a black loco the train was scheduled to shunt Burnley, Hawthorn, Camberwell, Surrey Hills, & Box Hill. At the time the third line to Camberwell had not been built, so the Hawthorn goods yard was accessed from the former Kew platform (Back platform, now the down line) & it was its only use at the time. The Box Hill goods yard deserves a mention here as it was a terrible designed yard, with top quadrant throw over points everywhere. Everywhere you sat, you were sitting on points that you did not know which way they laid. We had countless derailments in this yard, because of this set up. Box Hill was a terrible yard as you could only hang on to 9 trucks before you had to run around them & push them down the long siding over the Station Street crossing passed the Signal box. I ran many a Warragul ex Box Hill over the years with "L" class engines savoring the delights of this horrid yard whilst making up the relative trains.

Upon qualifying to drive at Dandenong, the powers that be insisted that I be trained additionally in "L & E class" locos because they ran into & through my depot. They also insisted on me qualifying in all the Railmotors, so they could use me anywhere. (Loose Cannon) on anything.

On one occasion during this time frame, I ended up driving an early AM down Dandenong goods with a black loco, with an Engine cleaner Q who was reluctant to work on these black locos firing for me. Going up the Toorak bank, air was becoming short, & there was a real possibility of the pantograph falling on to the roof. In desperation as we were operating from the No2 end, I got the cleaner/fireman to access the hand pump under the Firemans seat in a long box, & supplement the supply of compressed from the air compressor. It was a half hearted feeble attempt on his behalf, so I ended up coaxing him into the drivers seat while I had my turn on the hand pump. It was a horizontal contraption, & it was like rowing a boat. I must have looked a sight! We made the middle road at Caulfield when the

pantograph fell on the roof & we were totally disabled in the middle road. A relief engine (an "L" class) was dispatched to me & we completed the job to Dandenong on that. It must have made a big impression on my mate, as he left the job almost immediately after this & probably still has nightmares over this event. It turned out that I had split a flexible Main Reservoir supply line to the pantograph. I had no hope & was lucky to get out of it. Luckily I noticed it when I did! Just in time.

On another occasion I was running the same early AM local goods, with another black loco when running between Noble Park & Dandenong, adjacent to the local road. With no Speedos on black locos, I knew we were scooting along quite nicely. A motorist paralleling the whole proceedings, indicated to me I was tracking at 55 MPH. I immediately reduced the speed a little bit to enter the yard area.

I have very few pleasant recollections of these beasts, gone & nearly forgotten.



In later years these machines were painted in VR Livery (Blue & Gold with the VR wings) but the name black locos stuck. They were known by many uncomplimentary ones too.

LANCE ADAMS. Yea. 20/11/2014



Brighton Beach 1917



Transport Health
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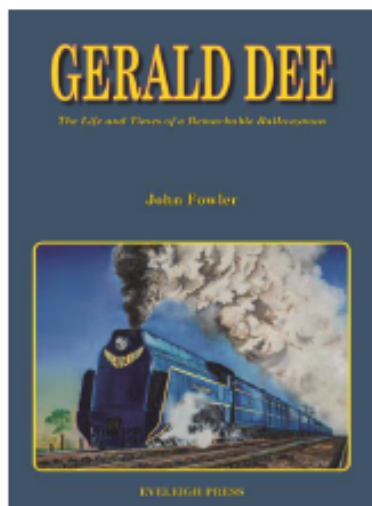
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EVELEIGH PRESS

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Captivated by the steam locomotive from infancy, Gerald joined the Victorian Railways in 1951 as a *lad labourer*, beginning a life-long railway career which transitioned from the steam era into modernisation.



Attaining middle management, Gerald was widely acclaimed for his unique management style of recognising the wellbeing of the men as a priority.

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Written by John Fowler, who at one time fired with 'Ger', the book is presented in the style of first person narrative, interwoven with events of the time, allowing the reader to experience a vivid picture of Gerald's love of the railway, his footplate experiences and a career path toward management. The latter is no easy road for Gerald and offers surprises as he becomes caught up in the twists and turns of a railway continually attempting to reorganise into a modern management style.

Of further interest to the modern day historian and modeller is the way in which Gerald became a major force in fostering the preservation of steam locomotives in Victoria, through his efforts in establishing the ARHS Vic. Division Railway Museum, conversion of *Polly* to Z526, and the saving of *Heavy Harry* and X36.

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Gerald Dee can also be purchased online at australianmodelrailways.com



Have

your

Say!

Asylum seeker

Men and women of the train-driving world - we now face a crisis as management attempts to circumvent our EBA and agreed conditions: the proposed division of the network facilitates corridor training for contract drivers

The new "fitter training" scheme provides the blueprint for a revised driver training scheme to replace the driver work force with a non unionised grade of workers bereft of any roster code or award protection.

The two miscreant individuals conducting the training enjoyed a tempestuous relationship with their superiors at best, and are desperate to receive some adulation. One, a broken down tragic who has spent most of his life trying to find a friend and the other who gave up finding a friend years ago and once even stood for a senior union officials position - clearly exposed as not that union savvy.

Whilst surfing the Internet I googled Andrew Lezala and was shocked by the results. Articles posted related that Andrew was previously employed as CEO of Metronet, a company commissioned to maintain parts of the London underground. These articles stated he was also dismissed for a lack of governance and mismanagement. Metronet ignored normal tendering process and awarded contracts to its own shareholders and suppliers. The company went into liquidation with millions unaccounted for and the directors contracts were paid out.

The following quotes were taken directly from the site and as such do not necessarily represent my views or the views of this publication and are referenced as written by the individual authors;

From Brian Cook Chairman of Travel Watch

"its very regrettable that either the taxpayer or the

fare payer will end up paying the bill for these people who have run a thoroughly disgraceful company"

Or from the evening standard
"Except for the fact that the turfed CEO of Britons hapless Metronet in this case was none other than one Andrew Lezala = who left the London's financial and structural train wreck only to be appointed CEO of Metro trains in Melbourne"

Or from the independent Australian

"Here, where I am in Victoria, we seem to have a penchant for giving away our top jobs to failed foreign asylum seekers. Our head hunters must executive search from the head down"

Recently metro trains commissioned Sunstone, a labor hire shelf company assembled from the quagmire of obscurity, metastasising its way through

the bowels of this organisation, There is a train of thought that identify the scam. allegedly receiving favorable the verisimilitude created by treatment in the securing of Metro Trains with convoluted It would appear that the state contracts. Rumors are rife that and fraudulent statistics election result has thrown a Sunstone gets the contract portraying on time running and spanner in the plans. To the regardless of tender. If this is so, service delivery was done with the trainees in the system, the a correlation with Metronets blessing of the previous innocent victims, hang in there operation is all too obvious. government. this is a battle we need to have and need to win.

There appears to be no governance Indeed the ex transport minister or control mechanisms in place Terry Mulder, was forever and Sunstone are expone- claiming improved results as united we stand tially expanding. One question evidence of his governments is—where has the PTV been or are success. Fortunately the general they apart of it? populous were smart enough to

The praying mantis

Andrew Says....

Let's all play a little game of 'Andrew Says'.....

And what does Andrew Say.....well, you can read what Andrew Says for yourself.

(I believe we'll all be getting our very own personalised copy any time now)

But of vastly more interest is what Andrew doesn't say;

- He doesn't say anything about Sunstone Resources, or any 'family' or 'business' associations he might have with them, or any of their related off-shoots.

- He doesn't say anything about reports of 'asset-shifting' or long-term contracts being awarded to any of these companies.

- He doesn't say anything about Phoenixing any, or all, of these 'related' companies.

- He doesn't say anything about Sunstone 'taking over' E Gate and their employees, or the conditions (contracts - sign it, or go) under which they are to be employed, or the by -passing of their existing Enterprise Agreements.

- He doesn't say anything about the terms under which drivers will be employed or by whom.

- He doesn't say anything about the new, truncated single line/depot/train type training scheme that underpins the 5 Railway Plan, or the recruitment of large numbers of qualified and trainee drivers that are being sought, in local, national and international advertising, to come here and support a 'lockout' of existing employees.

That's a bit of an 'oversight' then, isn't it.....
Or is it deliberate 'lies by omission'?

Now you all know "Honest Andrew's" track record, and can make up your own minds about whether or not you can trust anything he says about anything - but Andrew is the CEO of an outfit that has made it their business to alienate and demoralise and bully and intimidate their entire workforce at every opportunity.

The blame shifting and union bashing.
The 'all spin, no substance' and outright lies in the media.

He oversees those who unlawfully have, and continue, to refuse to pay Trainee Drivers the staged pay increases that are due to them under their existing Enterprise Agreement. And the buck stops with him! (The EA provides for those increases to be paid on a timeline, so that trainees are not disadvantaged by the company's inability to meet their training commitments, whatever the reason, and regardless of the unilateral re-interpretation by any of Andrew's underlings - and Andrew could, and should, have fixed that!) Instead, it looks like legal action will be required.

He oversees the increasingly obvious decline in maintenance standards across every aspect of the system - fleet, track, overhead, buildings & infrastructure generally - while at the same time pocketing bonuses for 'performance' and shipping huge profits to Hong Kong.

So you make up your own mind about Andrew's 'assurances', such as they are.

I know I have!

ANON

Lezalas Admissions

A concerned driver wrote to Mr Lezala taking issue with the content of a letter that was sent to drivers by Mr Lezala.

Mr Lezala phoned this driver to have a chat, to which the driver advise 'I'm happy to have a chat if I can bring a Union Rep'.

After a long pause Mr Lezala started to speak about issues in general, his first admission was that Metro is creating the 5 Rail Groups and Segregate the drivers because "it will prevent SPADs due to the current Metro system being too big and drivers can't remember where signals are".

This first admission that Metro is going to try and divide the system into 5 separate rail groups is typical of the tripe that Mr Lezala trots out to try and justify a Metro proposal.

For his information the Metropolitan System used to have literally hundreds more fixed signals, those that are senior enough to remember, the bridges of signals across the Via Duct and all the various yards. The difference between then and now is the quality of training. Drivers used to be tested on every signal and Safeworking system in the State. Metro has delivered substandard training and poorly equipped trainee drivers in all aspects of a drivers duty (that might have more to do with the upsurge of SPADs)

Another example of Mr Lezalas tripe; his justification of the substandard second tier driver course - "we have to do that so Metro can run all night trains".

Mr Lezala is indulging in duplicity or he is ignorant, the effect is the same. The manpower required to shut the rail system down and restart it again is much more than continuing to run trains through the night. I know this because we used to run trains through the night when I was transferred to the sparks.

Mr Lezala knows this because of the London public transport shut down on Christmas Day; the London rail operators are trying to phase the shutdown out because it requires more manpower to shut down and start up the trains then to keep them operating.

I did get permission from the driver to reprint some of his conversation and for those who are unfamiliar with the phrase 'TRIPLE'

Tripe noun (Stupid ideas)

Informal ideas, suggestions or writing that are stupid, silly or have little value.

Example 1: People talk a lot of tripe about fashion

Example 2: My teacher told me my essay was all tripe

Marc Marotta

Ode to the Metro Hall Monitor

"Nowhere Man"

He's a real nowhere man
Sitting in his nowhere land
Making all his nowhere plans for nobody

Doesn't have a point of view
Knows not where he's going to
Isn't he a bit like you and me?

Nowhere Man, please listen

You don't know what you're missing
Isn't he a bit like you and me?

Nowhere Man, the world is at your command

He's as blind as he can be
Just sees what he wants to see
Nowhere Man can you see me at all?

Nowhere Man, don't worry
Take your time, don't hurry
Leave it all till somebody else lends you a hand

Doesn't have a point of view
Knows not where he's going to

Nowhere Man, please listen
You don't know what you're missing

Nowhere Man, the world is at your command

He's a real Nowhere Man
Sitting in his nowhere land
Making all his nowhere plans for nobody

Beatles

Where does the money go Andy?

Lately there has been a great deal of discussion amongst the troops about the way management of various rail entities in Victoria are functioning. We have seen in recent times the collapse of El Zorro, the wholesale scrapping of still serviceable assets by Pacific National in the name of keeping competition out of the market place, the bizarre management practices being adopted by Metro and the peculiar course currently being taken at V/Line whereby an entire management structure utterly bereft of any practical railway experience has been appointed and is going out of their way to antagonise the workforce.

None of these events came as any sort of a surprise to industry insiders, given the current political landscape of disinterest in public transport and the whole-hearted embracing of Thatcherite principles towards suppressing unions. It didn't work in the UK, and all the indications are that it won't work here either. A demoralised, disenfranchised work force just doesn't care, and that right there is where the downward spiral starts. It starts with seemingly innocuous things like vandalism in the saloon, piston travels that are just that tiny bit too long, brake blocks that should have been changed yesterday, and so it goes on.

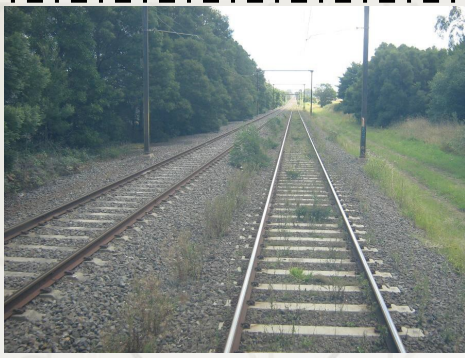
There is, in Victoria, a legislative safety net to prevent this gentle downward spiral developing into an all-consuming vortex that sucks everything in its reach into oblivion. The "Transport Integration Act 2010" was passed by the then Brumby Government, and was seen by some as a circuit breaker that *could* put an end to the madness, provided somebody had the political will to use it. In essence, it states that V/Line must have a contingency in place to assume the operation of any rail business in Victoria whose proprietor is unwilling or unable to carry on with that business. Sadly, it has not been used and the current management structure at V/Line would make it a pointless exercise anyway.

Does anybody remember when Theo Taifalos was a station assistant at Glen Waverley in the late 70's or when Craig Dance was a fireman in Mildura in

the early 80's, or even Judith Sturman's time as a buffet chick on The Overland? No. Nobody can remember that, because it never happened. None of these people, for all their theoretical training in business, industrial relations, and workplace culture change have any understanding of *how and why* a railway works. If they did, people would still be happy (enough) to come to work. It's that simple. There is a palpable hatred of management at the moment that I have never seen in my 30 years on the job. It's real, you can feel it and see it every day at work and it is dangerous.

So just where did this race to the bottom start? It would seem that Metro very much hold that dubious honour, with all other rail companies watching them very closely, to see how much they can get away with. At this point, my concern in the matter shifts from an employee's perspective to that of a taxpayer, and as such, I'm pretty darned sure I'm being ripped off, somewhere in the order of \$1.3 billion.

The Government, as is common knowledge, gives Metro an awful lot of money to manage the suburban rail network. No doubt, factored into this is the political expedience of having the whole public transport thing at arm's length, so when it goes wrong, as it often does, the boffins in Spring Street can say "It was them. We had nothing to do with it." On the increasingly rare occasions when it goes right, they get the luxury of saying "...good Government policy at work..." and stuff like that. So as a tax payer in Victoria, I want to know, am I paying for a good, functional safe transport system that gives sound returns for dollars invested? Is that system being managed in the best possible manner with suitably qualified and experienced people? Do the people running the outfit have taxpayer's best interests at heart? Is there clear, transparent accountability in the whole process? I am not privy to the internal processes that govern what we see every day, but I have the benefit of 30 years on the job, and the observations over that time of how things can be done and currently being done. I suspect the answer to all my questions is "no".



Do Metro spend their taxpayers money making sure the trackside vegetation is in the best possible condition it can be? With large trees so close to the track it hits trains and blocks the view of trackside signage and trees growing in the middle of the track, it would seem not. In fact anecdotal evidence would suggest that Metro have slashed their budget for vegetation control by something in the order of 80%.



Do Metro take all reasonable steps to ensure the track is maintained to the highest possible standard at all times? When a fault is reported by drivers, particularly when terms like "equipment damage", "injury to passengers" or "cyclic top" are used, do they immediately inspect and rectify the fault, or at the very least, put a speed restriction on until the fault can be fixed? This section of track at Narre Warren has been reported since 2013 with all those conditions mentioned, and nothing has been done about yet. It seems there has been no tax payer's money spent here.



Do Metro have a program in place to ensure all signal sighting issues are resolved quickly and without any fuss? Is there *at all times* a clear view of the track ahead allowing drivers to act in a timely and safe manner to any changing or unexpected situations that may arise? In amongst the trees in this photo are an automatic signal, a level crossing and Hughesdale station. Can't see them? Neither can I. Clearly not a single dollar of my tax money went into this little project.

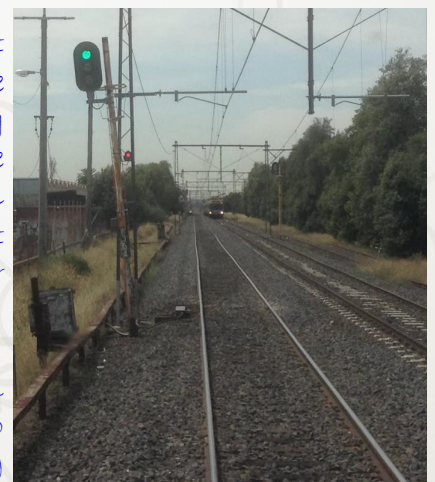
Are there protocols in place to effectively manage trackside vegetation to avoid dangerous and potentially life threatening situations, and minimise the likelihood of such events happening, particularly in locations where obvious and easily identifiable hazards exist?



The view on the left at Glenferrie a few years ago on a not unusually windy day in Melbourne would suggest that no such program exists. None of *your* hard earned tax dollars went here either.

Is all signalling equipment maintained to the highest possible standard at all times? Has every possible step been taken to ensure signals don't just suddenly fall over one day? Nothing speaks louder about neglect than a square that isn't, or a painted surface that is quietly rusting away. It would appear that no taxpayer's money was spent here either.

Where a situation arises that the view of a signal is less than optimum through unavoidable circumstances, is every opportunity taken to ensure that no other mitigating circumstances make the sighting of that signal harder than it needs to be?



In amongst the trees and scrub on the left of the image to the right is signal post 40 at Oakleigh. It is a home signal and was commissioned on the 15th of August 1974. Until about 4 years ago (roughly the time when "Metro" was created) there were no real issues with this signal. Now its visibility is reduced to about 150 meters. It has been reported since October 13th 2014, and to date, nothing has been done.

With Metro cutting their budget from \$154 million to \$1 Million for trackside vegetation control, it's quite clear that very little tax payer's money will be spent on this project.



So with all this money not being spent on trackside infrastructure, maybe it's being invested in the track itself to ensure a smooth safe ride for all trains at all times. Let's just take a random picture from anywhere in the suburban network shall we?



The mud holes at Officer level crossing are now so bad that drivers on locomotives doing track speed are at risk of being seriously injured due to suspension bottoming out. Clearly not one single dollar has been spent on this little gem.

I'm running out of ideas as to where all our tax dollars are being invested, so maybe it's being spent on making sure that all safety equipment is being maintained at the highest possible standard, thereby ensuring that everything is operating at its optimum level. Well...



This speed restriction (left) at the Macgregor's Road level crossing near Pakenham has been in place for about 3 years now and is a result of timing issues at the crossing. To date, no attempt has been made to rectify the fault, and there would appear to be no plans in the near future to do so. Public safety continues to be put at risk in order to save a few dollars.

Finally, as a concerned, and ever increasingly disgruntled tax payer, I really do want to know where *my* money is being spent.

Clearly none of it is being invested in a "state of the art", "world's best practice", "cutting edge" rail network that we can all be proud of.

It is not a system that we as taxpayers, whether we are workers on the system or travellers using it, can take any pride in or feel some sense of ownership towards. As taxpayers, we *do* own the system, not MTM or Sunstone or any other of the myriad of shelf companies being set up by Metro management for "questionable" purposes. The only way Metro is able to operate is by being continually propped up by tax payer's money. They do not legitimately earn a great deal of money at all, and very little of what they receive is re-invested into the network.

So Andy, just what are you doing with my money? It's clearly not being spent where it's supposed to be, and I want answers.

Victorian Tax Payer
Proud Mary

RETIREMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS



Dear Marc

I wish to resign my nearly 40 year membership of the RTBU-LD (and it's predecessor the AFULE), effective January 10th 2015, as I am retiring from my position of Train Driver Standards Officer.

I value the way RTBU-LD union representatives (in an often thankless job) have supported their members over the years, even though I haven't always agreed with the methods.

I want to stress to members the important of continuing support for ethical union representation, as fighting alone is a hard road.

Regards
Ross Jepson

Dear Marc,

Due to no longer being employed in the rail industry I wish to cease my membership with the RTBU as of 19/12/14.

I wish to thank you and your team at the Loco División for the support and guidance provided to me over the past 10 years and also the work done by the team to benefit all members.

I wish the RTBU LD all the best in the continuing fight required to establish and maintain fair working conditions for all members.

Strength in Unity!

Kind regards,
Alister Noonan



RAIL, TRAM & BUS UNION VICTORIA

LOCOMOTIVE DIVISION

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 Miss (Cross out which is not applicable)

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

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

Home Ph. No:.....Mobile:.....

Email:.....Date of Birth:...../...../.....

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

Date Commenced:.....Grade: Trainee, Trainee 2 or Qualified.

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:.....

Please keep the following for your reference.)

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.