

# RTBU WA BRANCH

## NEWSLETTER



**DECEMBER 2020**

### **FROM THE SECRETARY...**

Dear Members

Unfortunately, there have been a few medical episodes to report. One in the Pilbara, Narngulu and Kwinana. All members involved are now on the mend. We have kept our Workers Compensation Lawyers busy with many referrals to Turner and Freeman for further follow up.

George Johnston has now permanently moved into a full-time position with the PTA and our new Organizer will be introduced later in this newsletter.

In unity,

**Craig McKinley**



Craig McKinley WA Branch  
Secretary Email:  
[craigm@rtbuwa.asn.au](mailto:craigm@rtbuwa.asn.au)  
Phone: 0402 686 502



We now have own Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/RTBUWesternAustralia/>

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

The rail industry has continued to support its members in staying safe during this pandemic. Some issues were raised by Pacific National members regarding booking time off across borders in South Australia and having to go through the check points and possible quarantine. This issue has now been addressed and we continue to strive for the best outcome for our members.

### **MENTAL HEALTH**

In times like these, the uncertainty of the world around us can overwhelm many. These stressful times can not only affect your private lives but also your work life. Whilst your employer has EAP services available, members may sometimes feel uncomfortable using them. I always recommend talking to family and friends and referring to your GP or medical professional. We do have resources in the office and our door is always opened to assist anyone who may be struggling. Please call for assistance.



<http://helpingminds.org.au> 1800811747  
<http://blackdoginstitutue.org.au>  
<http://www.thriveatwork.org.au> 0892664668  
<http://beyondblue.org.au> 1300224636  
<http://lifelinewa.org.au> 131114

# INDUSTRIAL NEWS

## KWINANA ROSTER

We are making good progress with the Freight Operators' rostering issues and are in the final stages of sign off with the company. It has been an arduous task, but we are all hoping for a very favourable outcome for our members.

### WA'S DEADLIEST TRAIN CRASH REMEMBERED 100 YRS ON



Around 9pm, one hundred years ago on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November, the Hayward children were in their beds in Wokalup when they heard a loud crash. In time, the story of the Mornington-Wokalup train crash unfolded. A survivor was able to get to Wokalup to raise the alarm and 150 men worked until 2am looking for survivors. Today a sign was unveiled to acknowledge this tragedy and the 9 men that lost their lives. The story of the 100-year-old crash will be placed near the Wokalup Tavern.



## 14 Day TEST BRAKE TRIALS

Aurizon are trialling 14-day brake tests within its WA branches. They have stressed it is to align themselves with the Queensland standard by pushing the brake testing from 2 days to 14. Aurizon has pursued the line that we have the same operational infrastructure as Queensland. Your union stresses that they do not.

The WA branch and its members are and have been opposed to this as the time frames are too great and the reliance of rolling inspections is beyond its primary function.

Our principal concern is the safety of all our members, and we have had many discussions to ensure that we are all travelling on the same path. Aurizon's Engineers have met with your union and this was very helpful. We as a union will continue to push for the safety of our members above all else.

## BHP

Due to the border closures, there are restrictions on Pilbara FIFO operations. Consequently, the FMG, BHP and Roy Hill sites have been vigorously recruiting from existing drivers. This has placed a large strain on the already depleted driving stocks which holds major concerns for the future. Although Aurizon, PN and WATCO have trainee programs, as a union we feel that the numbers are still inadequate to meet the future roles, particularly with an aging workforce. We wish all those moving to the North West the absolute best. They take with them their union membership and we look forward to continuing representing them.

A safe working incident in the South West could have led to an accident. This is now under investigation.

I am convinced in the next two years a large portion of membership will belong to the Pilbara infrastructure as our growth has mainly come from the North West. The Pilbara remains largely untouched as far as union representation is concerned. There are some large infrastructure projects developing in the Pilbara and we are recruiting members largely through John Holland, EDI Downer etc. This is an exciting time for the RBTU. We are vigorously expanding into this new region. We will expand our industrial resources to meet this membership demand. Next year I plan to take a trip to the Pilbara to promote this great union of ours.

We have help meetings with the CMFEU and an understanding has been reached regarding membership eligibility.

## TIER 3

Your union and the government have been briefed on the Tier 3 Engineering Assessment. We have decided to undertake the full rebuild option. This will mean new earth works, bridges, culverts, concrete sleepers, heavy metal ballast and heavy rail. The rail system will be Mainline standard.

\$500 Million for 300 kilometers

- **Merredin to Kulin OR**
- **Merredin to Narrogin via Corrigin** (preferred option)
- **York to Quairading**

It is likely that 150 new wagons will be built. Work sites to be at Narrogin and Merredin. Your union's position is that content and jobs will come from the wheatbelt where possible. This is good social policy.

A submission has gone into Infrastructure Australia. There will be public consultation shortly. The WA Government is confident that the funding will be approved.

## MacARTHUR MINERALS

Three rail companies have tendered for this contract. 40-year mine life, 1.1 billion tonnes of high-grade iron ore. There is now a potential that some product may be railed to Kwinana, but we have a capacity issue that needs to be overcome. We are working with MacArthur to deal with the political walls, and all is going well. 260 new wagons are to be built locally.

## NORTH WEST

We have completed an EA with EDI Downer. Given the current circumstances, it is quite attractive. EDI Downer has significant work in Tom Price, also John Holland. Your union has been developing a steady footprint in the North West. I have had discussions with CMFEU and there is an amicable agreement in place. We also have a legal mechanism.

Your RBTU's push into the NW is a historical first. We now have members from approximately 7 rail companies. Early next year we plan on visiting this area.

## REMEMBERING THE MORNINGTON TRAIN CRASH



A rescue crew found nine people dead and two injured at the crash site in 1920. (Supplied: Rail Heritage WA)

A timber train known as **the Jubilee** had been carrying railway sleepers and Mill workers from the Mornington Mill when it careered off the tracks. Media reports from 1921 show an inquest heard the crash was due to insufficient brakes being applied before the train began a descent, but blame was not attached to anyone.

Ms Dickinson, a Harvey Shire councillor says its important the community remembers the story for generations to come.



The Jubilee was travelling from Mornington Mills to Wokalup when it came off the rails.

## INDUSTRIAL

The EDI Downer EA has now been completed. The meetings were amicable and productive. Given the COVID 19 pandemic, it was a good outcome, despite Downers posting a considerable loss.

The ARTC EA is currently progressing but it is largely being driven from the east coast.

The Pacific National train crew EA is going to be negotiated next year as well as the ARC EA.

We have three official disputes running with Pacific National and one with Aurizon.



A rescue crew found nine people dead and two injured at the crash site in 1920. (Supplied: Rail Heritage WA)

## WELCOME

**George Johnson** our organizer has now transferred to RTBU PTA. **Kristy Martin** has now assumed the position of State Organizer.

**Kristy Wolfe** is our new Affirmative Action Representative. **Leysha Olde** is now our Vice President.

I would like to introduce **John Theodorsen**. John heads Theodorsen Industrial Relations. He works for us on an as required basis, and I have received particularly good feedback from members. Later next year John will undertake our ARC EA negotiations for us.

Please remember we have lawyer Mary Roseingrave for all family legal matters. Our members receive a discounted rate.

Lavan Lawyers

Family Law

Ph: 9288 6844

While I am not allowed to divulge any details, the ARTBU has had success with an unfair dismissal case resulting in a substantial win for our member.

Cory our lawyer did a great job on this case.

Amalgamation between the WA branch and PTA branch is ongoing. It is being driven by Sydney with our input. Legally, bureaucratically, and politically it is overly complex and outside the scope of this newsletter. Please call me if you would like any information.

I am trying to get around and visit as many depots as can. Wagin and Bunbury are next. Thanks to both Albany and Esperance members for making me feel so welcomed on my many visits.



MORNINGTON HILLS DISASTER

## INTRODUCTIONS



### KRISTY MARTIN



Hi to all our members,

My name is Kristy Martin and I have gratefully taken on the role as your new Industrial Organizer.

I have 3 years' experience in the rail industry as my previous role was as a Dual Function Maintainer out of the Picton Aurizon Maintenance depot. Before my rail employment I worked as a Chemical Process Operator at South 32.

My drive to represent you the members comes from not only my own personal experiences but hearing and seeing companies slowly chip away at the solid foundations we had built for many years. For too long companies across the board have taken its workers, our members for granted, be it with safety or just general working conditions.

I want to help bring the momentum back in the worker's court. I am passionate about safety over production and will endeavor to work with you and for you to better your conditions.

I look forward to a challenging and rewarding future representing you the members.

[“In Union there is strength” Aesop](#)

**Kristy Martin | Industrial Organizer**

Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union, WA Branch

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## Hi Ladies

My name is Kristi Wolfe, and I am your newly appointed Affirmative Action Councillor with the RTBU WA Branch.

I have worked in the rail industry for almost 5 years and am proud to represent such a progressive and inclusive industry. Once a male dominated workplace, we should celebrate the female success within the industry in recent times, which provide many paths to choose from that can lead to fulfilling careers.

The Affirmative Action Councillor role is to support and give advice on challenges that women may encounter in the workplace or at home. Issues that may be fundamental are:

- Race, ethnicity, gender, and cultural bias/prejudice
- Sexual or non-sexual harassment; unwelcome, offensive behaviour/conduct from a boss or co-worker
- Underrepresentation of women's rights/policies that don't support women (due to male dominated workplace)
- Parental/maternity leave support
- Domestic violence, restraining orders, child related matters; Financial union members receive significantly discounted rates at Lavan Family Law Services and a free 10 min initial phone conversation

This is only a slight overview of the problems females may face in the modern workplace. If you feel the need to raise your concerns or simply have a chat or vent, please do not hesitate to contact me either by phone or email. I understand the need for confidentiality in all matters.

Do not be afraid to step outside your comfort zone, seek the support you need, and most of all, rise to the challenge to be the best you can be, with integrity and honesty.

Cheers and thanks for reading.

*"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,  
Nothing is going to get better. It's not."*

— Dr. Seuss, The Lorax

## KRISTI WOLFE

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On behalf of the RBTU WA Branch, I would like to wish all our members and supporters a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

It has been a very busy year for the union, and we are continually grateful for all the support we have received.

Please remember to check-in on those who may need that bit of extra support during this period, try to relax and enjoy the festivities and the loved ones around you.

We cannot wait to see what the new team we have here in Western Australia can achieve in the New Year. Please stay safe over the holidays.

Best wishes to all...