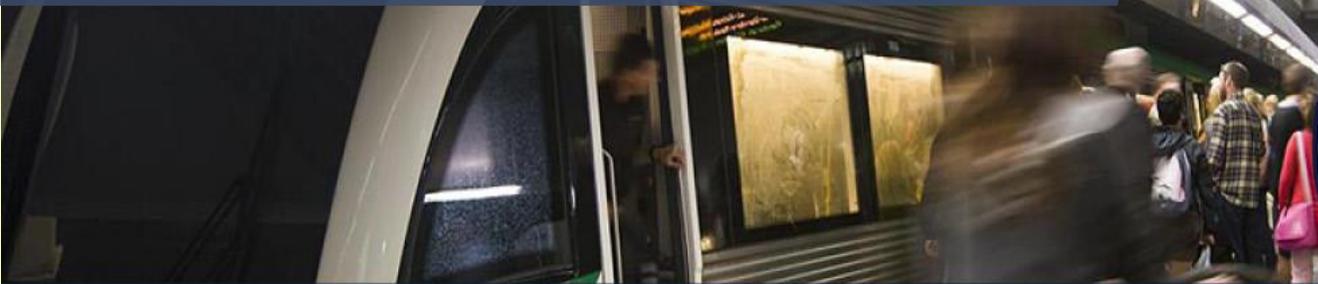


# Membership Newsletter

March 2021  
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## RTBU WA PTA BRANCH UPDATE



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### Union Meme!



### Secretary's Address

Labour Day to many is a day that you either get a paid day off or paid public holiday rates for working it. But why is it that we get this public holiday and what exactly is Labour Day a celebration of?

Labour Day is to commemorate the achievements of the Australian labour movement. The celebration of Labour Day has its origins in the eight-hour day movement, which advocated eight hours for work, eight hours for recreation, and eight hours for rest.

Today, people work for eight hours or sometimes a little more, but the situation was worse back in the early 19th century. At that time, most labourers used to work for 10-12 hours for six days a week which severely affected their health and safety. However, the labourers started to build a movement for reduced working hours and better working conditions.

On 21 April 1856, stonemasons and building workers on building sites around Melbourne stopped work and marched from the University of Melbourne to Parliament House to achieve an eight-hour day.

Their direct-action protest was a success, but it did not come without cost, with many sacked for their active participation. They are now though noted as the first organised workers in the world to achieve an eight-hour day with no loss of pay, which subsequently inspired the celebration of Labour Day and May Day.

The Labour Day public holiday is celebrated across Australia, in fact 80 countries across the world, and is an enduring reminder of the advances made by unions on behalf of the workers.

In Solidarity!

### A Quote with Relevance

*"Those who have long enjoyed such privileges as we enjoy, forget in time that men have died to win them."* — Franklin D. Roosevelt

\*\*\*In Loving Memory of Alex Turner\*\*\*

## Out on Track



Below are just some of the recent and current issues/matters dealt with by our Union:

- Explored if the PTA was prepared for any potential COVID-19 outbreak by conducting an extensive review of its Emergency Management Manual and supporting documents.
- Supported numerous members through discipline investigations, including drafting responses to allegations, attending interviews, and viewing CCTV of incidents.
- Attended numerous meetings with managers from several employer groups (PTA, EDI, Spotless and Delron etc) to discuss and address a variety of workplace matters.
- Assisted members obtain 'COVID-19' leave/pay due to quarantine requirements.
- Prevented the PTA from forcing a member onto annual leave when they were in the middle of their workers compensation *Return-to-Work Program*.
- Prepared for the Union's annual audit and completed the required governance documents.
- Conducted numerous site visits at stations, lines, and depots to meet with members.
- Assisted in the creation, implementation, and review of the *Development and Improvement Observation* document for Transit Officers.
- Sought legal advice on an outstanding dispute regarding access to 'reasonable' paid time off from normal duties to perform functions of a Union delegate.
- Referred and managed members' interactions with industrial, family, criminal and workers/criminal compensation lawyers.
- Met with Customer Service Management around the lack of consultation and EBA compliance regarding 'rostering' for the Degraded Mode of Operation.
- Instigated the reissuing of new fabric face masks to PTA employees to ensure members possessed masks that complied with WA's current health advice.
- Responded to emails, calls, and provided advice daily to countless members on a range of workplace topics and issues.
- Addressed numerous 'Lockdown' and bushfire matters with Employers & Government to ensure the best outcome and treatment of those impacted.
- Attended the Department of Health's 'COVID Vaccine and Rollout' briefing.
- Reviewed, corrected, and increased the PTA's annual leave loading calculations for the Passenger Ticketing Assistants as result of recent changes to their Base rosters.

***"Instigated the reissuing of new fabric face masks to PTA employees to ensure members possessed masks that complied with WA's current health advice."***

## THE POWER OF UNION



## Take the Day Off!

A long-standing dispute, dating back to 2016, recently reared its head again. The dispute was around the requirement to work a Public Holiday whilst on a *Return-to-Work Program* (RTWP). It was discontinued at the time as an interim solution was found. Unfortunately, over the years the interim solution - which involved members' RTWPs, formulated by their external Return to Work Provider, stating the member was not required to work on Public Holidays - diminished, as some PTA Managers refused to sign off on the RTWPs that contained such wording. This resulted in many members, compelled to work a Public Holiday, advised they would have to clear a day of annual leave to obtain the day off. The thing is, annual leave cannot be 'cleared' on a Public Holiday, resulting in the use of one's leave entitlement unnecessarily.

After several conversations with the PTA's Labour Relations department, this matter has now come to a head once and for all. Employees on RTWPs, who are not carrying out an 'operational' shift, are now no longer required to attend work on a Public Holiday nor are they required to submit an annual leave application to get the day off. A sensible outcome reached, and a win for members!



## Bargain Collectively or Beg Alone!

Collective bargaining is the process in which working people, through their unions, negotiate agreements with their employers to determine their terms of employment, including pay, benefits, hours, leave, ways to balance work and family, and more.

Collective bargaining is important. It permits employees to work together as a unit to negotiate with employers on a more level playing field. By negotiating as a 'unit', employees have more bargaining power and leverage at the bargaining table. It is no secret that if you fail to bargain collectively, you will beg alone.

Recently the RTBU has negotiated 3 Agreements.

1. *Downer Bombardier Joint Venture EA 2020* - lodged with the FWC
2. *Public Transport Authority/ARTBIU (Transwa) Industrial Agreement 2021* - in principle agreement reached
3. *Public Transport Authority/ARTBIU (Transperth Train Operations Rail Car Drivers) Industrial Agreement 2021* - in principle agreement reached

The mobilisation and organisation of the EDI maintenance team, especially at Nowergup Depot, was impressive to say the least. Negotiations of this Agreement, on behalf of the RTBU, were led by Industrial Organiser George Johnston and number of EDI RTBU members. Their efforts saw improvements they should all be very proud to have achieved, especially given the current climate.

Improvements include, but are not limited to:

- 4-year term, securing the wage escalations and improved terms & conditions
- Wage escalations totalling 9.5% over the life of the Agreement
- Increase to the Electrical License allowance, First Aid allowance, and the On Call allowance (with annual increases to occur to each)
- Overhaul and improvement to the On Call or Call Out Responsibilities clause
- Personal leave clause updated to improve and clarify evidence requirements and the insertion of an Employee Representative Training (Union) clause

TransWA negotiations were interesting as we saw, as part of the negotiations, the 'bringing back in-house' of the *Prospector/Avon Link* onboard customer service staff. This now makes them all officially State employees and employees under the TransWA family umbrella, but required changes to the Agreement to reflect such.

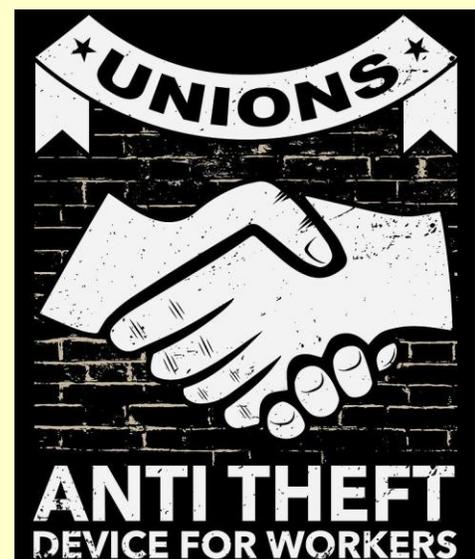
These negotiations, unlike EDI, were subject to the restrictive State Wages Policy. Still, several improvements were achieved that include, but are not limited to:

- 2-year term, securing pay, improved terms, and new conditions
- \$1000 per annum applied to Base Wage Rate and increases to the Monday to Friday shift work allowances
- Insertion of a new clause that provides an additional day of paid leave for Easter Sunday & the insertion of the long sought-after *Job Share* clause
- Increase to sick leave days without medical evidence and the overhaul of evidence requirements for sick & family leave.
- Incorporation of the previously trialled system of *Overtime Allocation and Recording* & agreement to trial a new system of 'expenses' allocation.

Urban Rail (TTO Drivers) negotiations, also subject the State Wages Policy, saw numerous 'other terms' placed on table, some unseen in any recent public sector negotiations or any previous PTA ones. The State Government scrambled to ensure a worthy offer was presented ahead of the upcoming State election, paving a positive path for other PTA Agreements to follow. More to come next newsletter as there is much to consider, and discuss, regarding the recent offer made. Watch this space!



*"By negotiating as a 'unit', employees have more bargaining power and leverage at the bargaining table."*



## Time to Vote

Our Union, the **Rail Tram and Bus Union**, is a proud contributor of The Public Good, a community campaign led by WA unions.

[The Public Good](#) works to highlight the prominent and positive role that the public sector workforce and public services play in the lives of Western Australians. Now more than ever we know how important the public sector is. In the current pandemic we turn towards public sector workers for health care and public transport among many other services that keep our State running.

The sale of public assets and contracting out undermines the quality of our public services. Privatisation leads to the loss of

## Stop the Bus!

Our Union has officially joined the **'Stop the Bus'** campaign to stop the Federal LNP's IR Omnibus Bill.

The Morrison Government's proposed Omnibus Bill will leave Australian workers worse off at a time when they can least afford it. It tips the balance of our Federal industrial relations system in favour of employers - and will lead to less workplace rights as well as cuts to your pay and conditions.

We urge all RTBU Members to support our campaign. You have the power to stop the Federal Government's Omnibus Bill.

For more information visit [www.stopthebus.com.au](http://www.stopthebus.com.au) or [www.rtbuwa.asn.au/2021/02/08/stop-the-bus/](http://www.rtbuwa.asn.au/2021/02/08/stop-the-bus/).

## Workplace Delegates

Your Workplace Delegate is a dedicated voluntary role - they freely give their own time to help you. Your delegate should be your first port of call for all things Union. They are there to assist with matters at the workplace level. If the matter is more than they alone can deal with, then they can assist with getting you in touch with the Union Office. Some of the things your delegate can help with are:

- Keeping you and the Union aware of issues throughout your workplace;
- Elevating your matters/concerns/issues to the relevant department of your employer, or the Union Office; and
- Resolving workplace issues quickly and effectively

Workplace Delegates for each Sub Branch are as follows:

**Customer Relations** - Joshua Ayanami, Helen Martin, Sean Hodgson, David Riley, Cedric Edmonds, Mark Counsel, Tracey Widdington, Eric Faranda and June Wiscombe.

**Security** - Jamie Reed, Michael Ioppolo, Matthias Schnisa, Ryan Sumner, Danny Delanty, Mark Byrne, Mark Parsons, and Chad Miles.

**Transwa** - Dean Harris, Gregory Brennan, John Pilkington, William Lovely, Peter Steele, David Busing, Paul Hopkins and Karl King.

**N&I** - Barry Irvine, Giorden Goodall, Harry King, Dwayne Knight-Hall, Marco Mitic and Aparangi Hemara.

**Urban Rail** - Kelley Jenkins, Terry Joy, Craig Dearth, Glen Clingin, Michael Falk, John Bray, and Ron Tully.

public sector jobs, rising costs of services, maintenance and safety concerns, and a lack of accountability.

Cuts to public services mean that those keeping our community **safe, strong, and healthy** must do more with less.

We will always take a stand against Governments who seek to remove services from public hands. Privatisation fails to deliver services for less and instead just delivers less services.

We are proud that the current State Government will continue to value our public sector workforce and invest in our public sector for the benefit of the whole community.



*Which one of these is not like the other!*



*Help us 'Stop the Bus'*

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