

No. 180

Sept.- Oct. 2025

Sparks

THE RANK-AND-FILE TRANSPORT WORKERS' PAPER

ALP Flunky Toby's Rail EBA Campaign Circus and Smoke & Mirrors Performance, delivers below cost of living pay rises and smooths the way for major job cuts, speedups and privatisation! Likely once Union Elections out of the way. Organise grass roots committees for direct action to pull the brakes on the ALP Minns Govt. and Management offensive and secure legit pay rises!



NSW Railway News p.3; Rail EBA Circus p.7; Rail EBA Letter p.10; Sydney Buses News p.16; Victorian Rail News p.24; Victorian Bus News p. 18; Throat Cutting for Pay Rise Road Show p.12;

EDITORIAL

Welcome to another edition of Sparks.

Some of the most important news in the NSW Railways was of course the curtain closing on the Rail EBA circus, set up to fail industrial campaign orchestrated by ALP flunky and ring master, Toby Warnes, unelected RTBU NSW Secretary. In this edition we look at the method in the madness. Particularly its undemocratic running, the role of Corporate Media outlets and the curious “stumble bum” features of the so called industrial campaign. The EBA has delivered below the cost of living so called pay rises. We examine various aspects of the EBA which Toby has claimed as a victory. We look at various fairly transparent dark hidden agendas. Particularly major job losses and privatisation pushes. We also sketch out how a grass roots controlled industrial campaign would function. (See articles page 3 and 10.) We also look at how the EBA sets certain precedents for providing advantages for employers in further industrial EBA “Smoke and Mirrors” campaigns in the NSW Railways by the so called unions. (See article page 7.)

In Sydney Buses we look at the continuing problems of tight running times and inadequate layover breaks. Together with other corner cutting measures by management to boost productivity and achieve profits. We also take a peek behind the scenes regarding bus region contract renewal negotiations. We look at some “monkey business” involving Transit Systems management, Transport for NSW and the Minns ALP NSW Government and the issue of Bus Company loss making. (See article page 16.)

Sparks welcomes contributions in the shape of poems, articles and cartoons by transport workers. Please send to PO Box 92 Broadway 2007 NSW or via our web site www.sparksweb.org

To subscribe the damage is \$5 for a year's sub. Please make out postal orders to Rebel Worker. Sparks is published by the Sydney Local of the Network for Democratic Unionism. To subscribe to Rebel Worker, Paper of the Network for Democratic Unionism, subs are \$12 pa. Please send to PO Box 92 Broadway 2007 NSW.

SPARKS WEB SITE -

www.sparksweb.org

N.S.W. RAILWAY NEWS

Rail EA 2025, How It Missed the Mark.

By Crimson Coconut



Unions NSW declared that “union members at Sydney Trains secured an historic agreement” after the 92% vote in favour of the 2025 agreement. They also announced that a “redundancy deed” has been written into the agreement providing the best redundancy entitlements in the public sector. That will be handy for the Government and Rail Bosses to continue to downsize the rail workforce.

No sooner was the ratification announced then the Minns Government proposed slashing 950 jobs in the Public Transport sector. Though this did not involve sacking rail workers at the coalface interacting with the public at this stage.

How was the Enterprise Agreement fight conducted?

As with previous years, EA negotiations did not take place in the workplace with the workers affected. Many workers still don't know or understand what is contained in the agreement. This campaign was largely fought in the mainstream media with daily

interviews on television news and opinion pieces in the daily papers. It was not fought for on the job in any meaningful way involving mass meetings or stop-works that possibly could have hastened the process of securing an EBA. An EBA which eventually fell short of the original log of claims.

Taking the fight to the public by using mainstream media, which is opposed to workers rights anyway, seems like a losing strategy. The Shock Jocks on radio and the daily shit sheets went after the union and rail workers spilling out their daily filth and lies about how much train drivers and other rail workers earn. Lies fed to a public that fell for the bullshit and anti-worker sentiment.

It became easy to label railworkers as greedy, incompetent and disruptive as daily work-to-rule tactics, fiddly refusals and bans caused public anger over a year long campaign of defiance and inconvenience. Trains often ran late or were cancelled at short notice for over a year because of the bans and limitations.

At no stage did the Union leadership of any of the unions involved in the EBA negotiations call for a general stop work meeting, picket or mass meeting of rail workers even though this would not have been illegal during the bargaining period. It is useful to take all workers along and involve them in the struggle for their own working conditions. They get to understand what they are fighting for, it strengthens their resolve and it makes them more resilient and competent. Instead the union's tactics were to tinker at the edges of a campaign, to infuriate the public and cause the least disruption on a daily basis. Tactics such as refusal to clean graffiti, union badge and T-shirt logo wearing, emergency maintenance refusal and “work to roster” did little to bring the Government to the negotiating table. Instead it infuriated commuters who were late to work or stranded on platforms because of trains being taken out of service. The media also fed on this. A complete stopwork and mass meeting of the unions involved until the Government inevitably caved in to negotiate may have been less painful and more productive in terms of the Enterprise Agreement. One thing for sure is that it would have shown our power as workers and instead of pretending industrial action it would have brought negotiations to a head a lot sooner. I can't express enough how important it is to have the whole workforce engaged in such a struggle together in solidarity.

How did rail workers do out of the EBA?

Australia's official underlying inflation rate is 2.7% a year. On the face of it the 4%



pay rise over 3 years plus the 4% back pay for 2024 for rail workers looks good as it makes up for years of below inflation pay rises. The catch-up though is an illusion. Many essential food and grocery items have sky rocketed since the last pay rise as a visit to Coles and Woolies will testify. According to recent economic reports the price of food increased by more than 3% per quarter through 2025. (<https://tradingeconomics.com/australia/food-inflation>) A visit to the supermarket will astound most workers at the price gouging that is taking place. Some items such as cooking oils, coffee, cheese, bread have doubled in price in the last few years. Meanwhile house prices have jumped by approximately 40% over the last 5 years while it would be almost impossible to purchase a livable home in Sydney for under \$1.5 million. That is well out of reach of most rail workers with a family to support. Likewise rents have gone through the roof creating a competitive struggle to find accommodation at all. It is common for families to be paying half or more of their wage in rent.

So how is that 4% PA looking? There has been no catch-up as the wage rise has been swallowed up in the increased cost of living. This is a pay rise that fell short of that in the proposed union log of claims.

While there are some progressive changes in the EA which are positive there are issues for concern ahead which still have to be negotiated.

The amalgamation again of Sydney Trains with NSW Trains may lead to some job losses and downgrades of some positions. NSW TrainLink have already cut staff and hours on platforms without taking into account the concerns of employees. The EA still gives NSW Trains and Sydney Trains the right to make changes to working arrangements and employee reductions according to business needs. We say people must come before business needs.

The old idea of aggregate payments of current specified payments for Train Crew is again raised in this EA, although none of the language is specific. Does it mean that some allowances will be rolled into an aggregate payment in lieu of the allowances?

Many clauses in the EA are still up for grabs but are proposed to be negotiated. They are vague, without detail and may affect workers in the future. One such principle to be agreed to is the “staff work locations agreement” for station staff and cleaners. We don’t get to know what’s in the changes. Does it mean that you could be shuttled around the network at the employer’s whim no matter what is inconvenient to you.

All in all there are many unanswered questions surrounding the use of EA 2025. Many clauses still remain to be worked through, it is a work in progress. The Government has been given the right to continue the drive to privatisation. Much of what is contained within the EA with any clarity is just rehashed clauses continuing on from previous E A’s.

Is it really a “historic” agreement or more of the same?

Problems with this EA, like those before this, stem from the lack of union democracy, obfuscation, omissions, lack of clarity, ambiguity and interpretation. The same union hacks are called up to make decisions on behalf of a lot of other workers. To make sure that a bargaining process is agreed and understood all employees need to be involved. That can be done a number of ways.

Often we only get to hear about disputes in the EA through a press conference by a union leader. There is also the fact that the union bureaucrats that make decisions on our behalf know very little about our day to day tasks and how to solve problems that we face. They would spend more time talking to rail bosses than those of us who cop it each day on the shop floor.

Consultative committees in each workplace with elected leaders that represent the

people in the workplace could be useful to give feedback to the main body of the union so that they are better informed. Due to political considerations of those same leaders the possibility of consultative committees is unlikely. For instance the log of claims proved to be rather a lame duck. It did nothing but draw out negotiations over a year.

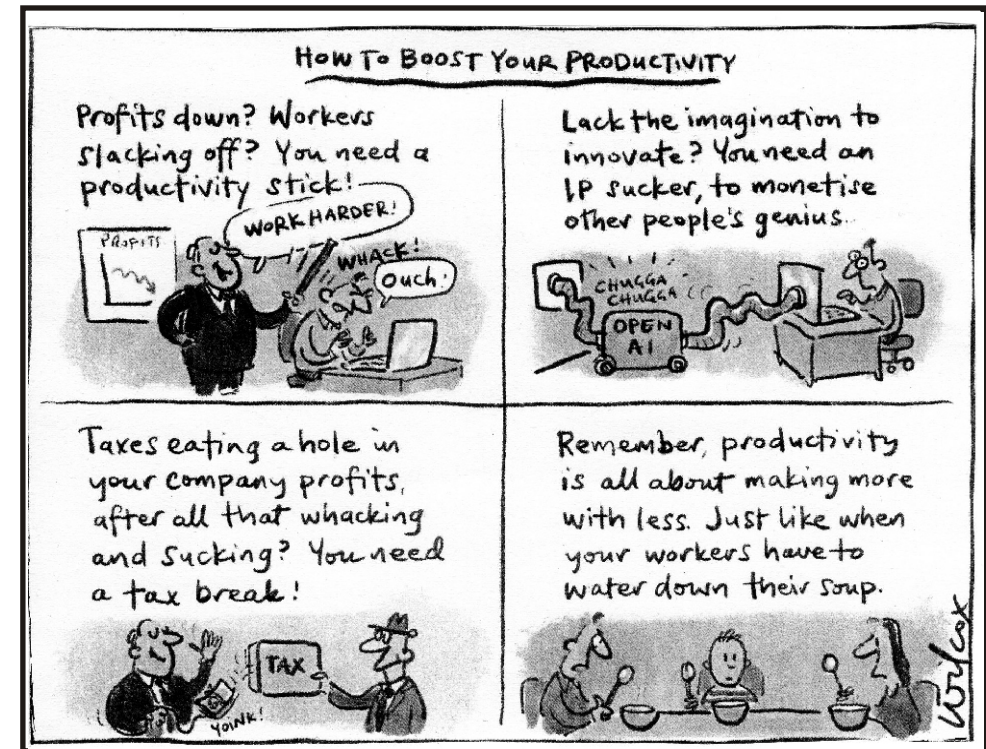
It would have been OK if the union leadership had ramped up a campaign of democratic control and implementation of dialogue that reached down/up through the workforce. That didn't happen so the whole campaign routed internally and into hostile media was a partial failure. Their answer is always, "you voted for us, we provide the service". That may be true, however providing the service does not necessarily mean cutting out the large majority of workers from the information and feedback loop or keeping them disinterested.

The fight for representation at grass roots level has to continue. After 12 months of negotiation, misunderstanding, fatigue, half arsed strategies, and fake industrial action many workers hurting economically voted YES to the incomplete EBA. The 4% cash deal backdated to May 2024 sweetened the deal for those tired of the shenanigans.

It was not a "momentous" deal nor an "historic" one despite the redundancy change increases that foreshadows job losses. Let's make sure in future that we make our voices heard and that our input has weight. We can only do that if we have the organisation in our own workplaces that reflects our varying voices and desires and that they are amplified.

Opinion on the Rail EBA (Enterprise Bargain Agreement)

The Fair Work Commission's decision in [2025] FWCFB 117 addresses applications under the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) involving Sydney Trains, NSW Trains, and the Communications, Electrical, Electronic, Energy, Information, Postal, Plumbing and Allied Services Union of Australia (ETU). The ETU sought bargaining orders under s 229, alleging breaches of good faith bargaining by Sydney Trains/NSW Trains and the Australian Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union (RTBU). Sydney Trains/NSW Trains sought a voting request order under s 240A to allow employees to vote on a proposed multi-enterprise agreement, despite the ETU's refusal to consent. The Commission dismissed the ETU's applications, finding no breaches of good faith bargaining, and granted the voting request order, deeming the ETU's refusal



unreasonable and the vote consistent with good faith bargaining.

The decision prioritizes finalizing a beneficial agreement (4% annual wage increases, back pay, and improved conditions) after a lengthy bargaining process, emphasizing employee and public interests over the ETU's late-raised concerns (Trades Uplift Claim and minor amendments to a clause). It sets a precedent for applying ss 240A and 240B, particularly on assessing "unreasonableness" and good faith bargaining in multi-union contexts.

Precedent Offering Employers Greater Leverage

The decision establishes a significant precedent that enhances employers' leverage in multi-enterprise agreement bargaining, particularly through the application of ss 240A and 240B. Key aspects include:

1. Low Threshold for "Unreasonableness" (s 240B(a))

- The Commission's finding that the ETU's refusal to consent to a vote was unreasonable due to the trivial nature of its proposed amendments and the late introduction of the Trades Uplift Claim sets a precedent that employers can seek voting request orders when a union's objections are minor or untimely. This lowers the bar for overriding dissenting unions, giving employers a strategic advantage in

pushing agreements to a vote, especially when most bargaining representatives agree.

- Implication: Employers can leverage this precedent to bypass minority unions with specific concerns, particularly in protracted negotiations, by arguing that refusals to consent are unreasonable if they do not significantly alter the agreement's core terms.

2. Prospective Focus on Good Faith Bargaining (s 240B(b)):

- The decision clarifies that a voting request order will be granted unless the vote itself would undermine good faith bargaining, focusing on future impacts rather than past conduct. By rejecting the ETU's claims of exclusion and withheld information, the Commission signals that minor or resolved disputes do not preclude a vote. This allows employers to move forward with employee votes even in contentious bargaining, provided no significant ongoing breaches of s 228 exist.

Implication: Employers gain leverage by framing dissenting unions' objections as historical or minor, reducing the risk that past bargaining disputes will block a vote.

3. Flexibility in Engaging Bargaining Representatives:

- The Commission's finding that separate meetings with the CRU (excluding the ETU after its withdrawal) did not breach good faith bargaining (s 228) affirms employers' flexibility to negotiate with different bargaining representatives separately. This precedent allows employers to prioritize discussions with majority or cooperative unions, marginalizing dissenting voices without violating statutory obligations.

- Implication: Employers can strategically focus on majority coalitions, weakening the bargaining power of smaller unions like the ETU, especially if they opt out of collective groups.

Using Employee and Public Interest to Undermine Genuine Bargaining

The decision highlights how employers can leverage employee and public interests to override legitimate bargaining concerns, potentially undermining genuine bargaining:

1. Employee Interests as a Justification:

- The Commission emphasized the proposed agreement's benefits (e.g., wage increases, back pay) and the fact that employees had not received a pay rise since May 2023. It framed the ETU's refusal as denying employees the chance to vote on a beneficial package, prioritizing the majority's interests over the ETU's concerns about trade relativities and clause wording.

- Impact on Genuine Bargaining: This approach risks undermining genuine bargaining by pressuring unions to consent to votes to avoid appearing obstructive, even when raising valid issues. The ETU's Trades Uplift Claim, while late, addressed pay equity - a substantive concern that could affect workplace morale. By dismissing it as untimely, the Commission prioritizes expediency, potentially sidelining issues that require further negotiation to achieve a fair outcome.

2. Public Interest as a Lever:

- The decision underscores the public interest in avoiding further disruptions from industrial action, given Sydney Trains/NSW Trains' role in public transport. The impending expiry of the s 425 suspension (1 July 2025) added urgency, framing the ETUEs refusal as a threat to public welfare.

- Impact on Genuine Bargaining**: Employers in essential services can exploit public interest arguments to justify voting request orders, portraying dissenting unions as obstacles to stability. This precedent may discourage unions from pursuing unresolved issues, fearing they will be overridden in the name of public interest, thus weakening their ability to negotiate robustly.

3. Risk of Marginalizing Minority Concerns:

- By prioritizing the majority-supported agreement and public interest, the decision marginalizes the ETU's concerns, which represented a smaller but significant group of trade-based employees. The Commission's focus on the agreement's broad benefits and the need to avoid further disruption risks setting a precedent where employers can bypass legitimate minority concerns by appealing to the greater good.

- Impact on Genuine Bargaining**: This approach could chill genuine bargaining by discouraging unions from raising late-emerging issues, even if justified by new developments (e.g., the CRU's in-principle agreement revealing relativity issues). It may also embolden employers to rush agreements to a vote, knowing that employee and public interest arguments can override dissent.

Conclusion

The precedent set by [2025] FWCFB 117 enhances employers' leverage by establishing a low threshold for deeming a union's refusal to consent to a vote unreasonable and affirming their flexibility to negotiate with majority coalitions. It allows employers to push agreements to a vote by leveraging employee benefits and public interest, particularly in essential services, even when minority unions raise legitimate concerns. While this promotes efficiency and resolution, it risks undermining genuine bargaining by marginalizing valid, late-raised issues like the ETU's Trades Uplift Claim. Future cases must balance these dynamics to ensure that employee and public interests do not consistently override substantive bargaining concerns, preserving the integrity of good faith bargaining under the Fair Work Act.

By Railway Johnny

LETTER

Dear Sparks,

The Rail EBA (Enterprise Bargain Agreement) is nothing spectacular: 4 percent per year for 3 years.

The First lot is backdated to 01/05/2024. But workers then lose 2 months as the 2nd

rise is from 01/07/2025. Then the 3rd from 01/07/2026.

As a RC grade gets not one benefit extra.

It was unfair that Transport officers were given a 30 dollars meal allowance but other RC grades don't get it.

The \$1310.00 union member only allowance is disguised, as it is probably unlawful. So you get the allowance if you do a union course in regards to workplace rights. The catch is this will be run by unions, so unions members get the course for free but non union members will have to pay a hefty fee. A further disgusting aspect is that everyone has 6 months grace to do the course.

Bringing down the gold free travel pass from 30 years to 20 years is a surprise, but this confirms that the Government believes hardly anyone will get to 30 years service in the future.

The other big positive is that wages employees now get the same penalty rates as salaried employees. Previously Salaried employees could take a sickie and keep their overtime, but wages staff overtime was counted from the 11th day. It is now equal.

There are some vague things e.g. SDM (Sydney Trains) reforms.

I don't like the word reform as it usually means job cuts.

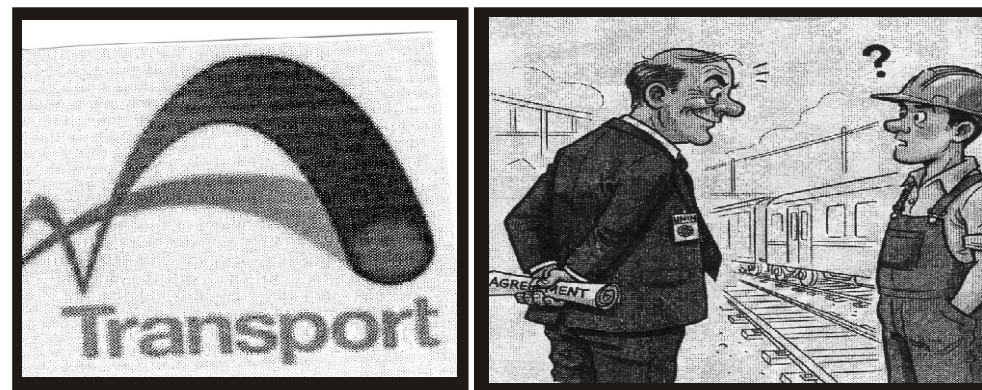
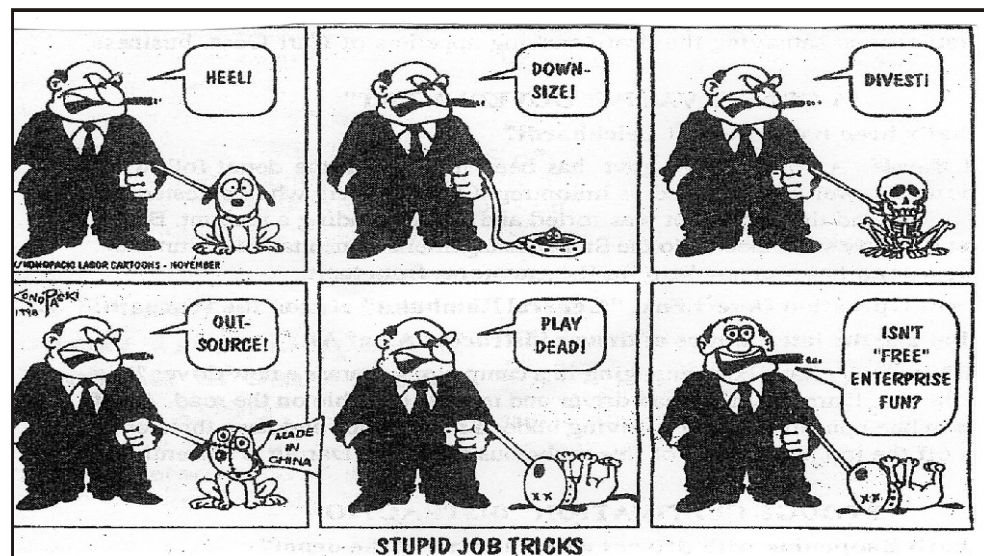
A higher grade SDM is proposed but I believe it's for a group SDM concept.

I also fear massive job cuts coming in the railways as AI starts to takeover.

Latest news regarding the EBA is that with the normal pay plus back pay ended with \$10,500 in the hand payment as a lump sum.

Tax was \$6500 deducted to get the \$10,500.

By Railway Jeffrey



“The Throat Cutting for a Pay Rise Road Show”

Warning: Political Satire

Meeting at NSW RTBU Secretary Toby Warnes Office

In Warnes room in the union office at 5pm 15/6/25 a meeting was held of his henchmen amongst the union reps following a union executive meeting. He was seeking feedback from his henchmen who were involved in the “Road Show” to railroad the Rail EBA. He was stunned to receive negative feedback particularly from the Loco Division. Members in the Division had been particularly stirred up about the NIF (New Intercity Fleet) ten car sets to be introduced from Oct. which were to be associated with a back door clause in the EBA to facilitate a new DOO (Driver Only Operation) push by a certain underground paper that gets around. A key prerequisite for one pathway to privatisation.

The members were also concerned about their failure to receive the full EBA document at least 14 days prior to the ballot. The members were also not enthused about the 24 hours running of trains to achieve Toby and the Sydney Chamber of Commerce dream of making Sydney “City of Business”. The reps warned that a looming crisis was building up and could explode if the EBA was used as a “Back door to introduce DOO”. The reps unanimously announced that the clause bribing drivers and guards for DOO had to be deleted.

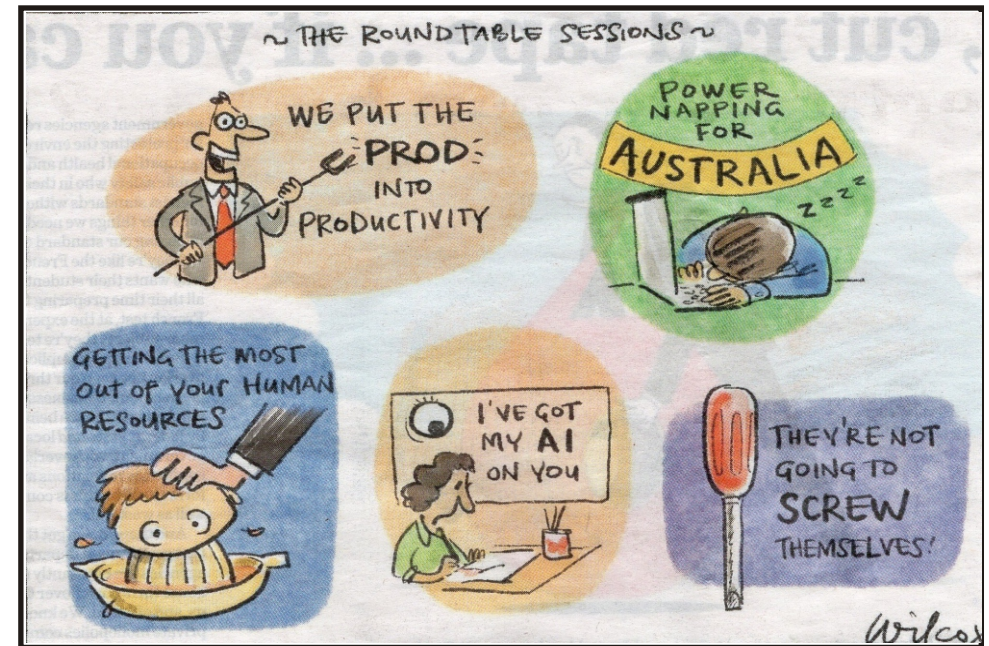
Following the meeting with the reps, Warnes made an urgent call to the Secretary of Sydney Trains Matthew “Light Handed” about the bad news. Warnes demanded an urgent emergency meeting at Transport for NSW Head Office with the usual suspects to review the Rail EBA document and to consider a revised version before the ballot would be held. Shocked by the bad news, the Sydney Trains Supremo nervously agreed to holding of the crisis meeting.

Toby's curious encounter with David Babineau in the union office corridors of power

After Secretary Warnes left his office, and was passing down a corridor he suddenly collided into David Babineau RTBU Bus Division Secretary. Warnes had noticed him acting in a suspicious manner. Sheepishly Babineau had been, furtively glancing over his shoulder checking whether the coast was clear as he exited the union cellar. He had been clutching a large brown paper bag which contained a particularly expensive vintage wine bottle worth \$3,000 air freighted all the way from a most illustrious and ancient winery in France which he had purloined. At bus division executive and other union meetings Babineau had often been noticed by union reps suddenly mysteriously disappearing from the scene and then suddenly reappearing. Then excitedly regaling the reps about a certain expensive vintage wine bottle. The pride and joy of the union office cellar! He would often announce to the reps, “you lowly reps from the working class with your beer tastes, wouldn't have the sophisticated palates to appreciate such an exquisite, expensive vintage wine. Only we in the upper crust of the union and the upper levels of management would be equipped to enjoy it.”

Warnes bailed up Babineau, and demanded to know the contents of the brown paper bag. He told Babineau, “David I certainly hope you're not getting up to any monkey business with that bag and breaching any union rules or getting up to something illegal.” Startled Babineau, blurted out, “Toby, you know me, I couldn't possibly get up to something like that. I always lecture the members, I would never authorise any “illegal” industrial action and the EBA provisions are legally binding on both parties. The bag is just full of “Top Secret” and “For the Eyes of the Bus Division Secretary only” documents from the Transit Systems bosses. The documents contain reports on how their shareholders are putting enormous pressure on the bosses for more productivity and profits to boost share dividends and tackle the operational loss. Its full of graphs and flow charts. The Transit Systems bosses are in a bind. They want to impose ever more corner cutting and speed ups in drivers' rosters to boost productivity but are worried about a big backlash from drivers and potential wildcat action. Toby, the documents are so boring you wouldn't possibly be interested in checking them out.”

Warnes looked concerned. He then provided some chirpy and cheery corporate jingles for Babineau to relay to members. “Well you can just tell the members, regarding the speed ups and corner cutting, you're not really working faster. You are just working smarter! With regard to excessively long shifts, “money, money, you can't get enough of it!” Another favourite of former State Secretary Claassens, is “Why did you all vote for the EBA? Its all your fault if you don't like the outcome”.



That should settle them down!” Toby continued, “David you should be “visionary and inspiring” with the members. Why not go around the depots and promote 24 hour shifts for the next EBA. Inspire them to power drive the 24 hour economy to make Sydney “City of Business” and make Australia Great Again! You could get all patriotic and bring along some union reps and the General Managers of Transit Systems, Transdev and others. They could drape themselves in Australian Flags like has become fashionable for some pollies in the Senate. Our national anthem could be played on a ghetto blaster to provide mood music! You could bring along Premier Minns and Albo as well!”

Before Warnes could inspect thoroughly the contents of his bag, Babineau escaped his clutches. Hastily scampering to the union office entrance. Stunned by Babineau's abrupt exit, Warnes yelled out, “David, I was just about to ask you to come to the local pub, for a comradely, few beers with me and Alex our National Secretary?” Babineau blurted back as he neared the entrance, “Toby, are you trying to poison me?! Don't you know I have cultivated a highly sophisticated wine palate!”

Crisis Meeting at Transport for NSW Head Office

On 20/6/25 at 10am sharp, a top level conclave of ALP Godfathers and Big Bosses

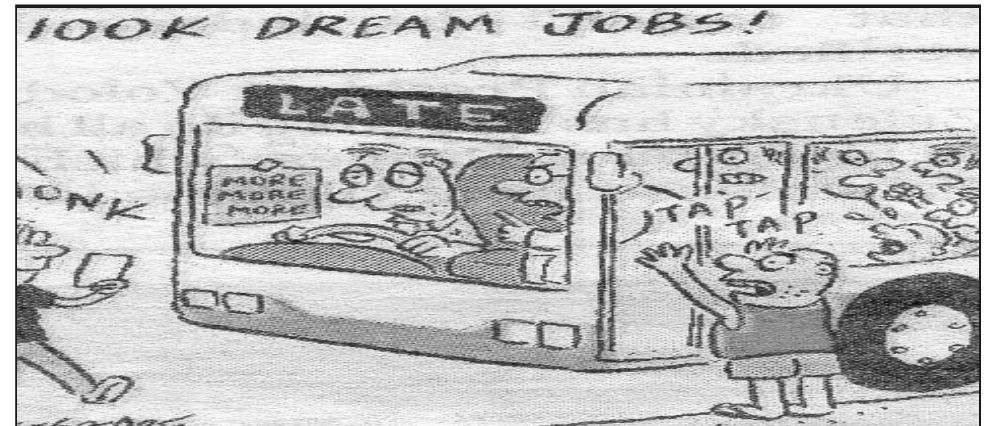
was held. Including Secretary of Transport for NSW Josh Murray, Rail Bosses such as the head of Sydney Trains Matthew Longland and the head of NSW Trains Roger Weeks, Mark Moray Secretary of Unions NSW, the CEO of Multinational Transport Company "Go Ahead" and other assorted transport company bosses together with Toby Warnes "unelected" RTBU NSW State Secretary, RTBU Bus Division Secretary David Babineau and even NSW ALP Premier his excellency Chris Minns.

After Premier Minns welcomed all the big bosses and union officials to the emergency conference over the Rail EBA, preceded by his giving ALP Sussex Street brother and Masonic Secret handshakes to relevant attendees, he motioned for Secretary Warnes to report on the looming crisis with the EBA and the DOO issue regarding the NIF (New Intercity Fleet).

Warnes addressed the gathering on an emerging crisis with the EBA, particularly the Loco Division members had been stirred up over the role of the EBA to introduce DOO via the back door. Associated with the introduction of NIF 10 car sets from October on Blue Mountains and Illawarra Line services. He confided to the assemblies of bosses, "I have recently received reports from my union reps of mounting anger in the Loco Division and train crews generally over the likelihood of a new DOO push with the EBA. A certain underground paper that gets around has stirred them up. We definitely have to back off with the DOO push with the EBA. A new version of the EBA document has to be drawn up minus the bribes for Drivers and Guards for DOO. You'll have to just take it on the chin. However the EBA's hidden agenda of workers "throat cutting for a pay rise will fit in nicely with Albo's new "Productivity Increase Drive" associated with Albo's gabfest with the ACTU and Employer representatives. Unfortunately we'll have to get the union elections which are coming up out of the way for a "big announcement" about job cuts affecting various Sydney Trains and NSW Trains jobs and grades. Just like under Alex's stewardship our ALP comrades in the AEC (Australian Electoral Commission) will ensure through "ballots adjustment" I'm formally elected as NSW Secretary. However, I need to avoid being too blatant in the ballot rorting which would be required if the "Big Announcement" goes ahead now." The Secretary of Transport for NSW suddenly interjected, "don't forget we are having our big announcement in late July concerning 950 job losses in my Department."

Warnes's bad news was met with the general displeasure and loud swearing and cursing of the Transport bosses and ALP Godfathers. Particularly the CEO of "Go Ahead" was particularly angered as he had been eyeing up the NSW Railways for some time for some juicy lucrative slices. However, the bosses soon calmed down and recognised the validity of Warnes's proposals.

SYDNEY BUSES NEWS



Leichhardt Depot News

Sparks: What is the latest with the rosters at the depot?

Leichhardt Driver1: With the rosters introduced in early Aug. there was a major change which has upset and angered many of us. The day shift rosters were removed and incorporated into the AM shift rosters. Now some AM shifts which used to finish at 3.30pm are now finishing at 5pm. This has turned upside down the lives of many AM drivers. As it affects their family child minding responsibilities and routines. The bosses are also keeping tightening up our running times.

Sparks: What is the situation with the renewal of Bus Region contracts?

LD1: As you may have heard Transit Systems which has the contract for Region 6 has had its contract renewed for only 2 years rather than the normal 5 years. We believe the Transit Systems bosses weren't very keen about renewing their contract, as a result of making a loss. So the Govt. had to bribe them to do so with the "forgetting" of millions of dollars in fines over cancelled bus runs. Leichhardt and Kingsgrove have the most cancelled runs. In the case of the Eastern Suburbs depots such as Waverley there has been some talk that John Holland which has the contract, doesn't want to renew it due to losses and would be replaced by Veolia. However all bus companies in Sydney are making losses. Important contributions to the losses and cancelled runs are poor bus maintenance as part of management corner cutting.

Sparks: What is the situation with management?

LD1: Recently we gained a new depot manager, but we also have gained a new general manager. In the meal room at the depot, there are notices which have been

put up inviting us to approach him to raise our concerns with the job. No one has taken up the invitation. We all consider it's just a PR exercise, and no action will be taken on our concerns and issues.

Sparks: What are the latest developments at the depot?

Leichhardt Driver2: As of late Aug. things have been relatively quiet for the past several months. The most significant recently was a management reshuffle in Mid Aug. We now have a new manager: We will have to see how things pan out with our new boss.

Sparks: What are your impressions of the new rosters introduced in early Aug?

Leichhardt Driver3: The one significant aspect I have noticed is that those on the scrap are now having to do a range of weird runs.

Kingsgrove Depot News

Sparks: What's the situation at the depot?

Kingsgrove Driver: In early August we have a worsening situation with the rosters. We are facing tighter running times. It's all push, push push! You have a 5 minutes layover break at one terminus and then 5-6 minutes at the next. We aren't getting adequate layover breaks. There has been a lot of anger amongst various drivers over roster issues leading to very heated arguments with the guy in charge of rosters. We are also facing cut backs to bus maintenance. I've noticed on many occasions mirrors not being adjusted properly, you have to put in some folded up paper to fix the mirror issue yourself amongst other issues. The bosses are completely ignoring the likelihood of bus accidents due to the tight running times they are imposing on us and the corner cutting on bus maintenance.

Sparks: What do you see as the reasons for these increased management attacks and worsening of the job?

KD: Definitely since the buses were sold off by the Government and we were privatised, there has been a considerable worsening of the job. According to what I have heard, Transit Systems which has the franchise for Region 6 is running at a loss for the franchise. Meanwhile, their contract/franchise for Region 6 has only been renewed for two years, rather than the five years as in the past. As a result of these factors management is engaging in all manner of corner cutting to boost profits and productivity to counter the loss.

Tempe Depot News

Sparks: What are the latest developments at the depot?

Tempe Driver: As of Aug. I have found the normal roster clerk is very accommodating

regarding assisting us with changes to our rosters. However when we have a replacement roster clerk we often face serious problems with getting changes. We are facing a continuing problem of inadequate layover breaks. Just this morning on one run I had only a 2 minutes layover break. The bosses are constantly trying to compress more work into our rosters.

Sparks: What are other issues you have with the rosters?

The biggest problem for me with the rosters is that the 5 hour maximum for one proportion of the roster occurring either in the first part of the day's roster or in second part has been extended to 5 hours 15 minutes. It was a trade off by the union officials as part of the EBA. I find the extra length too long and a struggle for me. However others who want more money, may have a different point of view I suppose.

Burwood Depot News

Sparks: What's the latest at the depot?

Burwood Driver: As of mid August we are continuing to face tight running times particularly with the 461 Monday to Friday. The problem has been exacerbated by the rainy weather we have been experiencing lately. Today I have been continually running late with my runs, eliminating layover breaks. The union is failing to take action to remedy the rosters and running times issues associated with management corner cutting. The roster guy doesn't seem to be able to do much to remedy the problems we are facing.

VICTORIAN BUS NEWS

Bus drivers at Dyson and CDC in Victoria strike for improved pay and safety

WSWS Report: 31/5/25 Transport Workers Union members from two Victorian bus companies, LC Dyson Buses (333 workers) and CDC Ballarat (314 workers), stopped work on Wednesday and Thursday as part of their campaign for improved pay and safety in the companies' proposed enterprise agreements. The union claimed the strike significantly disrupted one-third of the state's bus and charter services.

The workers are employed under separate agreements. In March, Dyson offered a pay rise that included a 9 percent year-one rise. It was rejected by drivers, who said it was inadequate and substandard. The last wage rise Dyson drivers received was for just 2.19 percent on January 1 and for CDC drivers it was only 1 percent in July last year.

Bus drivers at CDC in Victoria isolated as Transport Workers Union seeks to push through sell-out deal at Dysons.

WSWS Report: 14/6/25: The Transport Workers Union (TWU), representing members at Dysons Buses (333 workers) and CDC Ballarat (314 workers) gave notice this week that its members would strike for 48 hours starting June 16. The walkout was to impact CDC and Dysons services in regional Victoria and across Melbourne's west, north and north-east.

However, on Friday morning, the TWU announced it had reached an in-principle agreement with Dysons. Despite acknowledging that the company's offer "falls short of what we would have liked," the TWU called off the Dysons stoppage, isolating the CDC drivers and placing them under more pressure to accept a rotten deal.

The workers are employed under separate agreements. In March, Dysons offered a pay rise that included a 9 percent year-one rise. This was rejected by drivers, who said it was inadequate and substandard. The last wage rise for Dysons drivers was just 2.19 percent on January 1 and for CDC drivers it was only 1 percent in July 2024.

The "in-principle" union-management deal at Dysons contains a minimum 13 percent wage increase over three years for metropolitan drivers with a 9 percent increase occurring in the first year. This would then be followed by CPI or two percent rises, depending on which is higher, in subsequent years.

CDC bus drivers in Victoria to strike again over pay

WSWS Report 28/6/25: The Transport Workers Union (TWU) covering 314 bus drivers from CDC Victoria, which operates bus services in Melbourne, Ballarat and Geelong, has called a strike for July 1. This will be their third strike since voting to approve taking protected industrial action on May 20. They are seeking driver safety, improved working conditions and "fair" pay in a new enterprise agreement.

Their last pay increase in July, 2024 negotiated by the union was only 1 percent, well below the official inflation rate of 3.7 percent, a real pay cut. The drivers are determined to proceed with further industrial action to address their already low wages.

Three One Day Bus Strikes

WSWS Report by John Wilson, Martin Scott 7/7/25 More than 600 bus drivers in Melbourne and regional Victoria, employed by Comfort DelGro Victoria (CDC), have held three one-day strikes in recent weeks, in opposition to further real wage cuts and attacks on working conditions.

CDC Victoria is an Australian subsidiary of global transport company Comfort DelGro, which last year recorded revenue of SG\$4.48 billion (US\$3.5 billion) and operating profits of SG\$210.5 million (US\$165 million). At 18 percent, Australia is the company's third largest source of revenue, after Singapore and Britain.

Drivers have rejected CDC's offer of a nominal pay rise of just 7.5 percent over three years, and in the fourth year, a rise pegged to either the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in Melbourne, or Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) for regional drivers. This is far short of what is required to keep up with the soaring cost of living.

The latest CPI from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) puts inflation at 2.4 percent, just 0.1 percentage points lower than this wage offer. But official inflation figures vastly understate the real rise in living costs for working-class households, driven above all by the sky rocketing cost of housing. The March quarter Selected Living Cost Indexes, also from the ABS, showed that the cost of living for employee households rose 3.4 percent over the past year.

The Transport Workers Union (TWU), which covers the drivers, initially advanced a demand for 7 percent per annum pay rises in a three-year deal. This would still fall short of recouping the losses incurred under the previous union-management agreement, which saw nominal wages increase by 8.11 percent over three years, while CPI rose 14.9 percent.

The massive real wage cut in the previous agreement was jointly imposed by CDC and the TWU bureaucracy, through the use of a statistical trick. Twice-yearly wage increases were tied to the change in Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) across the state, as recorded by the ABS.

The WSWS explained at the time: "Linking wage growth to AWE has an insidious logic: Every sub-inflationary deal struck by management, government and the unions lowers the benchmark to which wages are pegged, further entrenching the suppression of pay."

The 2022 union-management deal also added clauses to the enterprise agreement allowing the company to introduce "on-road meal breaks," in which drivers are not able to return to their depot for meals. In many cases, this means parking up and eating behind the wheel of the bus, often with limited access to toilet facilities.

At the second strike, on June 16, one driver told WSWS reporters "everyone is unhappy" about the requirement to have meal breaks on the road, but he didn't know if the TWU was demanding that it be scrapped.

Other drivers said that at some places where they have their breaks, including Caroline Springs and Watergardens, in Melbourne's outer northwest, they have to choose between using the toilet or having lunch, because there is not enough time to do both.

Drivers also reported that many buses are in poor condition and increasingly unreliable, with a lot of them more than two decades old.

In addition, drivers are seeking to reverse the trend of casualisation. Currently, around 15 percent of the workforce is not permanently employed.

Bus drivers at CDC are angry about the continued attacks on their wages and conditions, and determined to fight. But the WSWS understands that the TWU has

now dropped its already inadequate pay claim to just 6 percent a year. This should be a stark warning to drivers that the union bureaucracy is working with management to prepare another sell-out compromise deal.

From the outset, the TWU bureaucracy has sought to limit the strike action. One driver told the WWS that while workers had called for an indefinite strike, union officials had insisted that they be restricted to sporadic 24-hour stoppages.

Moreover, the union leadership is seeking to isolate the striking workers. Facing similar attacks on wages and conditions, drivers at three major bus companies have voted in favour of strikes over recent months, with a fourth, Ventura, likely to follow suit. But the bureaucracy has prevented a statewide action.

The first strike, on May 28, involved some 1,300 workers, from CDC as well as Dysons, making it the largest bus drivers' strike in the state's history. But, just days before what would have been a second joint strike on June 16, Dysons announced that workers had voted by the narrowest of margins, just 51 percent in favour to accept a revised offer of a meagre 13 percent wage rise over three years.

While the TWU did not openly promote the Dysons offer ahead of the vote, the bureaucracy was quick to endorse it after the fact. Director of organising in Victoria and Tasmania Sam Lynch stated: "Although the Dysons agreement falls short of what we would have liked, members should be proud of the progress we made."

Underscoring that this was a promise to management that the TWU bureaucracy would do everything possible to ram through a similar rotten deal at CDC, Lynch continued: "We want to get this resolved as quickly as possible."

The third strike, on July 3, was slated to include more than 300 workers at Kinetic as well, and be held outside Victorian Trades Hall in the Melbourne CBD. But without explanation, the TWU leadership called off the Kinetic workers' action and relocated the CDC demonstration to one of the company's depots in the outer western suburbs.

A fourth strike, this time involving both Kinetic and CDC workers, has now been called for July 10, with rallies in Melbourne, Ballarat, Geelong and Mildura. This is clearly a response to the demands of drivers for joint action. But a bigger fight against the bus companies, in and of itself, is not the answer.

While the contracts, setting out how the Labor government funds the bus companies, shield the private operators from increases in the cost of fuel and other input costs, there are no similar measures to ensure wages match inflation. This means that profit margins are directly linked to how much the private operators can squeeze workers.

The reality is that Labor is in total agreement with the efforts of transport operators to drive down wages and conditions. Labor governments, state and federal, have spearheaded the attack on wages, imposing successive real wage cuts throughout the public sector.

The role of the Labor government is covered up by the TWU bureaucracy, for several reasons: To prevent exposing the role of the union apparatus in enforcing the cost-

cutting demands of business and government; and because the TWU, like all the unions, is not just a political and financial supporter of Labor and its governments, but an integral component of them, with leading bureaucrats serving on the party's main executive bodies.

To avoid another sell-out at the hands of the TWU bureaucracy, bus drivers in Victoria need a new perspective, and new organisations through which to fight for it.

New 24 Hours Bus Strike

On Thursday July 10, more than 1,500 Victorian bus drivers held a 24-hour strike, protesting against declining real wages and attacks on their rosters and other working conditions. Drivers from ComfortDelGro (CDC), taking their fourth strike since May, were joined by Kinetic workers, walking off the job for the first time in this dispute.

Workers rallied outside Victorian Trades Hall, in central Melbourne, before marching to the state Parliament House. Drivers also held demonstrations in the regional cities of Ballarat, Geelong and Mildura.

Drivers at both companies two of the four major bus lines contracted by the Victorian government have been offered derisory pay "rises": At Kinetic, a four-year deal with annual increases in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and at CDC, a total of 7.5 percent over the first three years, followed by an increase in line with either CPI or Average Weekly Earnings (AWE), depending on location.

Both companies' offers would mean bus drivers' real purchasing power would continue to fall. The CPI is a substantial underestimate of the rising cost of living experienced by the working class, driven above all by the skyrocketing cost of housing.

Moreover, these CPI-linked deals have only been instituted after the inflationary surge in 2021, which saw the CPI rise to almost 8 percent. As a result, the effect of the most recent union-brokered agreements was to lock in the massive real wage cuts drivers were hit with at that time.

While a representative of Kinetic told Bus News the previous agreement "established our drivers as the industry leaders in compensation," this only highlights the dire wages of bus drivers in general. Under the proposed agreement, Kinetic drivers would start on a base rate of \$39.03 per hour, while the average weekly ordinary time earnings for full-time adult workers is \$1975.80 equivalent to \$52 per hour.

The Transport Workers Union (TWU) has called for a three-year deal containing an 18 percent pay rise at Kinetic. At CDC, the TWU initially advanced a demand for 21 percent over three years, but has since reduced this to 18 percent.

As well as pay, drivers are opposing attacks on their conditions. One Kinetic driver told the WWS the company had offered to pay above CPI, but only on the condition that the drivers accept changes to the rostering system. He also noted that drivers

were frustrated that there was little opportunity to pick up overtime shifts, which was necessary because the base rate is not enough to live on.

The driver said that even the inadequate CPI-linked pay increases under the previous union-management enterprise agreement had come at a cost: The company demanded “productivity gains,” including that “time between runs has been significantly cut.” Workers also face six-hour split shifts with a long unpaid break in the middle.

In its proposed agreement, Kinetic is seeking to introduce new provisions relating to charter work, as the company moves to expand this side of its business. Under the proposed agreement, existing allowances, including overtime, would not apply to charter work done by full- and part-time drivers outside of their ordinary hours, and casual drivers performing charters would not receive their usual 30 percent loading. Instead, charter work would be paid an hourly wage just 10 percent higher than the regular rate.

Drivers at both companies should draw lessons from what happened at Dysons last month, another company contracted to provide public bus services for the Victorian government. Dysons workers were set to join those at CDC in a second strike on June 16, but at the eleventh hour the company announced that workers had voted by the narrowest of margins, just 51 percent in favour to accept a revised offer of a meagre 13 percent wage rise over three years.

TWU director of organising in Victoria and Tasmania, Sam Lynch, stated: “Although the Dysons agreement falls short of what we would have liked, members should be proud of the progress we made.”

This endorsement, along with the union’s readiness to unilaterally lower its wage demand at CDC, should be a stark warning for all drivers that the bureaucracy will not hesitate to push through a similar rotten deal.

To facilitate this, the TWU has sought to isolate drivers at the different companies as much as possible and minimise the effect of their industrial action. The joint Kinetic-CDC strike at Trades Hall was originally planned to take place on July 3, but the TWU cancelled the Kinetic strike in response to a revised offer from the company and relocated the CDC demonstrations to several of the company’s depots. It is no accident that both these major strikes were organised to fall during the school holidays, limiting their impact on company operations.

In a message sent to drivers the day before the strike, Kinetic Executive General Manager Graham Smith threatened “strike action won’t improve the offer it will reduce it.”

Kinetic is the largest bus operator in Australia. It is a multi-national bus and train company with operations in the United Kingdom, Singapore, Germany, Ireland and Norway, including 12,000 buses globally. Owned by Canadian pension fund OPTrust and London-listed Foresight Group, the company was last year estimated to be worth

\$4 billion as its owners sought to sell the company, with annual revenue of \$2.75 billion and earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) of over \$500 million.

Despite this, Smith cried poor, writing: “Strikes can work in some environments. But this isn’t one of them. The government isn’t stepping in with extra funding and is in significant debt, and we’re not holding anything back.”

At the rally, TWU National Secretary Michael Kaine sought to cover over the Labor government’s complicit role in the attack on bus drivers’ wages and conditions. He claimed the bus company contracts with the state government were “not a commercial contract [but] a community contract, it’s a contract to look after the people of Victoria B and they are breaching that trust by not treating you fairly.”

This is a fraud. Driving down labour costs, while simultaneously funneling vast sums into the coffers of private corporations is the very purpose of privatisation. The sell-off of Victoria’s public transport, introduced in Victoria by the Liberal-National government in the 1990s, but supported and renewed by every Labor government since, is no exception.

VICTORIAN RAILWAY NEWS

In this issue of Sparks we will discuss issues at V/Line. As in previous issues of Sparks names have been changed.

Sparks: Can you explain to us why the Acting CEO of V/Line had to front the Media?

Allison: The reason he fronted the media was due to trains being reduced in size during both AM and PM Peak periods, train delays and other issues.

Rastus: The reduction of trains in the peaks is an ongoing issue: A number of times Ballarat, Bendigo trains have been reduced to three car trains in lieu of six cars. The same thing happens on the Wyndham Peak Vale peak hours trains whereby the nine car Velocity train is reduced to six cars.

Roscoe: We feel sorry for the conductors who have to operate these services. They have to face the passengers and if they do not give a satisfactory answer, a complaint is made, the conductor has to face the Customer Service Officer.

Allison: Most times if a complaint is made, the conductor is interviewed by these goons from Human Resources, always them.

Ichabod: The acting CEO behaved like a spin doctor on a Melbourne radio station.

Forsyth: He used the excuse that the reason the Velocity trains were laid up was because they were being damaged by Kangaroos crossing the lines hitting the trains.

Archie: This may have happened to a few Velocities but the main reason for these

trains being out of service is because the early units are over twenty years old and they are due for a major overhaul.

Ichabod: The acting CEO should have FESSED UP on the radio and told the truth about why these units were out of service.

Allison: There are 400 Velocity carriages in service. Three trains divided in to three car trains consisting of two motors and an intermediate trailer car. The conductors are of the opinion that the company who services the units has not increased the employees who service the units.

Archie: There are 130 Velocity trains plus 21 Sprinter trains and a few passenger carriages. There are repair depots at Southern Cross, Ballarat and a small depot at both Geelong and Bendigo. The contractor who maintains these units has a factory at Dandenong, where heavy overhauls are carried out.

Allison: You can see why morale amongst staff is low.

Florence: As of June the trains are still operating. The rumour of a shut down beyond Eaglehawk has proven to be false.

Rastus: To operate Velocity trains to Swan Hill a fair amount of work will have to be undertaken. There are automatic crossing Coops needing to be installed, boom barriers replacing crossings with only flashing lights, and automatic signaling installed.

Roscoe: The situation with locomotives as of June: 25 N Class locomotives, V/Line will return two Y Class shunting locomotives, plus seven N Class locomotives.

Ichabod: The remaining 18 N Class locomotives and Y Class locomotives are to be leased to Victorian Freight operators.

Rastus: The terms of the lease are if the locomotives are only to be used within Victoria and these freight operators will have to obtain extra freight business within Victoria.

Sparks: What is the situation with Warrnambool, Albury and Bairnsdale services?

Allison: One word: CHAOS.

Ichabod: The Warrnambool line complaints have been aired a number of times on local radio stations. The main complaints are overcrowding, no buffet service and cancelled trains.

Rastus: The same with Albury as regards overcrowding. Despite buses being introduced from Seymour to Albury connecting with trains at Seymour, back up buses from Wangaratta and Benalla. There is still overcrowding at busy periods.

Forsyth: Despite the trains being fully booked, local passengers prefer the trains to the buses.

Roscoe: With the Albury trains, these trains are to be replaced by buses at certain periods over the next 12 months. ARTC who operate the line are upgrading the line to take Double Stock Container trains as part of the inland rail project. Overhead

bridges are being replaced with larger structures.

Sparks: What about Bairnsdale trains?

Allison: Bairnsdale trains as opposed to Traralgon trains are operated as six car trains of which two carriages are second.

Ichabod: Over the last few months three car trains have operated at certain times due to a shortage of Velocity trains.

Allison: These operate on Saturday nights, Sunday morning to Bairnsdale and return to Melbourne in the evening.

Forsyth: In one instance a few years ago a six car train had already been crowded at Southern Cross and was ready to depart. At the last minute staff were told to clear the rear unit and the train ran to Bairnsdale as a three car train. The conductor copped a fair amount of abuse. The rear unit was sent to Bendigo.

Sparks: Once again, we have run out of time. It seems V/Line management haven't the power of postage sticking.

Allison and Roscoe: In having the final say, the Acting CEO of V/Line should be awarded an Oscar for being a SPIN DOCTOR. As for Positive thinking, we wonder whether management has any thoughts about what the passengers and employees have to put up with due to reduced carriages.

In this issue of Sparks, we will discuss HUMAN RESOURCES. As in previous issues of Sparks, Drivers and Customer Service employees will discuss these issues. As in previous issues of Sparks names have been changed.

Sparks: In the last issue of Sparks mention was made of a new head of Human Resources being appointed.

Rastus: A new head has been appointed and changes have occurred.

Ichabod: One of the changes is that conductors have been informed in a round about way that they cannot apply for the position of Customer Service Officer. Only persons in Customer Service positions can apply.

Sparks: Why?

Clarence: Human Resources says conductors don't have Customer Service skills.

Jethro: This is rubbish. Conductors have the Customer Service skills by working on the trains.

Archie: It is the same with Authorised Officers. Conductors have applied for the positions, attended the interviews but get rejected. V/Line management prefers to recruit AO's from METRO TRAINS.

Forsyth: This is a breach of the EBA.

Ichabod: In the EBA career paths were negotiated for employees. The attitude of the Union is employees should not be confined to their original job. They should be given an opportunity to climb the ladder.

Rastus: The same had happened in the Driving Grade, Conductors and Station Staff and other grades have applied for Driver Positions and have been passed over.

Roscoe: Recently V/Line advertised for Drivers. A number of Male applicants applied but were told the positions were for female applicants only. The males who applied were informed that they would be interviewed at a later date.

Sparks: Has this happened?

Roscoe: One word "No".

Jethro: The same happened for vacancies in train control. A number of conductors applied. They were rejected. In Feedback they were told they had failed the "Psychometric Test."

Rastus: We remember an incident 15 years ago where via the Back Door the husband of an HR Consultant was appointed to a Train Controller position. There was a fair amount of ill feeling over this appointment. Refer to Sparks issue 134.

Ichabod: Years ago when advertising in the internal appointments job applications, the positions for Authorised Officers and Conductor Service Managers, the application stated, this was a career path for conductors.

Forsyth: The problem is: How can Conductors upgrade their skills when they are working voluntarily shifts. With the present rosters it is impossible.

Archie: Years ago a position for a trainer was advertised. A conductor applied and was rejected. Human Resources said the conductor had no training experience. The conductor was able to do a training course. Another position became vacant. The conductor applied and was unsuccessful.

Ichabod: You can see why morale at V/Line is low.

Deidre: The union is going to take V/Line to Fair Work Australia over this issue.

Sparks: What is the issue with Customer Service Complaints?

Ichabod: Passenger complaints are now referred to Customer Service Managers. These managers were originally Conductor Service Managers.

Archie: Some of these complaints are trivial but Human Resources made a big issue over the complaints.

Rastus: In one issue a conductor on a train in the Eastern Region asked a passenger to move from the Driver's Door of a Velocity Train. When those trains are in operation the light above the Door is illuminated telling passengers to keep clear.

Sparks: What happened?

Rastus: The person complained, the conductor was interviewed and Human Resources threatened the conductor with dismissal. The driver supported the conductor but Human Resources did not want to know.

Roscoe: We drivers think this person was a stooge for Head Office. There has been a fair number of complaints occurring with V/Line.

Archie: It seems certain conductors are being targeted.

Jethro: You are correct. This sort of complaint is occurring regularly and the same

What is Democratic Unionism?

Democratic Unionism means grass roots controlled unionism, not control by officials. It also means that workers in one industry should be in one union so as to remove artificial divisions that can cause disunity. Such a union should be fully organised and controlled by the membership.

To achieve this we believe a union should be organised along the following lines:

That no person employed by the union should earn more than the average income of the membership.

1. The Spokespeople should have no executive power - all decisions should be made by the union membership in the course of mass meetings.

2. The Spokespeople have no executive power - all decisions should be made by the union membership in mass meetings.

3. Spokespeople are only to act as delegates elected by the membership to carry out decisions made by the membership in mass meetings.

4. That a mechanism is instituted for the instant recall of spokespeople/delegates who break the above rules.

5. That all positions within the union be held on a limited tenure, the duration of which will be decided by the membership.

6. That a programme of decentralised decision making be implemented within the union structure, so that we won't need full time officials.

7. All loss of earnings incurred by elected delegates who miss work as a result of carrying out union duties will be reimbursed by the union to the extent of the lost wages.

Only in this way will we see the creation of a democratic, united, fighting organisation which can stand up for the rights of workers and their families against unhelpful union officials, bosses, political parties and governments.

conductors are being targeted regularly.

Roscoe: With the drivers they are making big issues over trivial issues. We are of the same opinion as the conductors.

Diedre: In some instances, managers are saying they will support the conductors but it is not happening. In other words these managers are two faced. They all tell the conductors they will help them with the complaint but in reality they are liars.

Rastus: Drivers have voiced the same complaints.

Roscoe: Managers and customer service managers should have the guts to stand up to Human Resources.

Sparks: Once again we have run out of space.

Rastus and Roscoe: In having the final say, if you have to front Human Resources on these issues you may have to sneak a tape recorder into the meeting, enough said.

