



Rail, Tram and Bus Union

MEDIA RELEASE

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Rail safety standards must be maintained

The Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian's support of the current NSW fatigue and drug testing standards for the new Rail Safety National Law must include a firm commitment to maintain current prescribed hours of work and rest for drivers, according to the Rail, Tram and Bus Union.

RTBU NSW Locomotive Divisional Secretary, Robert Hayden said the union was pleased to see the NSW government reaffirm its commitment to fatigue management and drug and alcohol testing requirements for drivers but it was not yet clear whether maximum shift lengths would be protected.

"The Minister's announcement is a positive sign that the state government continues to understand the importance of maintaining existing protections for rail workers.

"It is a credit to NSW train drivers who have fought hard to ensure NSW's strong rail safety laws are maintained.

"However, we are still waiting for confirmation that new national laws will not see maximum shift lengths scrapped in line with less stringent regulations in other states.

"The maximum shift lengths currently in force in NSW came directly out of recommendations made by the inquiries into the Glenbrook and Waterfall train disasters.

"Drivers are very concerned about any new laws that would see safety in NSW go backwards."

Mr Hayden said these matters would be the subject of discussion at a meeting in South Australia with state and federal transport ministers, which will decide the final design of the new laws.

"We welcome a consistent, national approach to safety in Australia but a nationwide shift protocol should be pitched at the highest possible safety standard.

"Drivers would be horrified to see the excellent standards that NSW has set for rail safety watered down in the establishment of the National Rail Safety Regulator.

"We urge the Minister to ensure her commitment to NSW's fatigue management requirements includes maintaining current prescribed hours of work and rest for drivers.

"These are crucial regulations that keep our drivers and passengers safe."