



RTBU

PN TRAIN CREW UPDATE

18 November 2019

FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL PACIFIC NATIONAL TRAIN CREW

Mobile Phone Roll out and the use of MANDATORY APPS

RTBU Train Crew Members working for PN have recently been told that, aside from being given a mobile phone as a “tool of the trade”, they are going to be **forced to use** the ‘Driver App’ component, which includes ‘Loco On/Loco Off’.

The RTBU vehemently opposes ANYTHING that has the potential to distract Train Crew Members from doing their job safely - especially when they are being forced to be in this position.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Around twelve months ago, PN decided to trial the use of a work mobile phone with a small segment of Drivers in one part of its business.

After deeming this trial a success, Pacific National decided to roll the phones out across the rest of the business, and give phones to all Drivers in Intermodal, Bulk and Coal.

Consultation across the three driver workgroups was patchy at best, with PN deciding to use its own Management Business Groups and geographical locations instead of the usual method of using the Enterprise Agreements to notify their Employees.

This resulted in multiple closing dates for Consultation and general (and understandable) confusion from RTBU Members.

Disputes from Delegates in Intermodal were forthcoming due to the poor consultation and PN’s failure to properly answer questions during that period.

And then, very quietly, in October, Members in two Coal Depots received an email from a Manager saying that, from now on, the “Loco On/Loco Off” part of the Driver App was to become **MANDATORY**.

Once again, an RTBU Delegate put this into dispute.

Why? Because NOT ONCE DID PN at any stage - whether in a Memo's, email, Team Talk and Q/A session etc - consult or even mention that the use of any of the Apps would become MANDATORY.

Under pressure by NSW Coal RTBU Members, Pacific National was forced to back down and admit that they DID NOT consult on the mandatory use of anything and rescinded their decision.

Meanwhile, Allan Barden and Leanne Holmes from the RTBU National Office met with PN over another disturbing part of the mobile phone rollout.

In PN's haste to get its Employees to start using the phones, it overlooked (one can only assume!) the fact that its own Policies were inconsistent in relation to Train Crew having and using mobile phone technology in their workplaces. In fact, the policies were contradictory to the information that Pacific National were putting out to RTBU Train Crew Members during the Consultation period.

During this lengthy meeting, both the RTBU and PN, agreed that the policies were out of date and needed urgent review. PN was accepting of the changes put forward by the RTBU that had been raised by the Memberships. At the end of the meeting Pacific National was going back to Head Office to ensure the changes were written into the updates policies and committed to getting them back to the RTBU for review by Thursday the 7th of November. The RTBU are still waiting.

PLAYING THE "TRANSPARENCY" CARD

On Tuesday the 12 November, the RTBU National Office was notified that Pacific National was going to make the 'Driver App' mandatory for all Train Drivers across all divisions and Consultation was to begin on Wednesday 13 November.

Your RTBU Officials could not have been clearer in opposing this on behalf of every Train Crew Member in the country.

At the initial Consultation communications from Pacific National, it was clear that the 'Sign On/Sign Off' component did not have to be used (although, like the rest of the Apps, were strongly recommended) and that Drivers could continue to use the LMS kiosks in their Depots and IPS.

Asked if PN were going to renege on that commitment, we were told that the options of signing on and off would still be available to the Driver.

When pushed further, it became clear that the only mandatory component of using these Apps was the Loco On/Loco Off function.

WHY IS THERE SO MUCH CONCERN ABOUT THE LOCO ON/LOCO OFF APP?

All of these Apps have the potential to be detrimental to RTBU Train Crew Members. Whether that be Privacy and Tracking concerns, any damage, loss or theft of the phone, distraction from doing safety critical operations or fear of disciplinary action from accidental non-use of the Apps, and much more.

However, the Loco On/Loco Off App has particular significance, especially to the Drivers in the Intermodal Division. You may have seen on the PN memos/documents the use of the words “Footplate Time”.

During the last National Intermodal Enterprise Agreement negotiations, Pacific National spent many hours trying argue that your prescribed shift limit should begin and end on the Loco. Time before and after would be paid and hours credited BUT it would not be included in the prescribed limit. So that would be allocated sign on/sign off times, time in the Crew Car, time getting to Barracks etc.

Essentially, your prescribed shift limit would be based around “Footplate Time”.

Coincidence? We think not.

Now, PN have given assurances that the mandatory Loco On/Loco Off App won't be used to measure or change the shift limits prescribed in your current EAs.

We can only take their word on that, but until the next round of EA Negotiations kick off, there are protections that cover our Train Crew Members.

SO WHY ARE THEY MAKING THAT PARTICULAR APP MANDATORY?

Good question!

Currently they know exactly where their Loco's are, exactly where their trains are and where their crew cars are. And, through the magic of rosters, know where Train Crews are.

But, according to PN, it doesn't have the capacity to centralise that information.....?
So, essentially, they are forcing RTBU Train Crew Members to collect data for them through the mandatory use of this App.

WHY DOES PN NEED THIS DATA?

Well, according to PN this is to collate accurate and centralised data on train running which can be used to inform decisions including how PN can maximise time Train Crew spend on locomotives and minimising car travel.

The concern from Members is, what will happen in the future? Will this data be used in a detrimental manner? Will this data be used to argue different payment structure, such as 'footplate time "and "non-footplate time"?

WHY IS PN FORCING ME TO USE AN APP WHILE I'M CONDUCTING SAFE WORKING?

“Home Safely Everyday” is PN's mantra. That's why it is so concerning to see it try to force RTBU Train Crew Members to use this App instead of focusing on the safety critical job of driving a train.

Obviously, there are stringent laws for bus drivers, tram drivers and car drivers regarding the use of phones, all centered around safety. RTBU PN Train Crew Members should have the same protections.

PN will claim that the Drivers won't be using them whilst the Loco is in motion, but we are yet to see what disciplinary action will occur if the App isn't activated.

For example, if a Driver forgets to click on the Loco On/Loco Off App because they are focused on getting their train ready, will they be disciplined for not turning it on? Or will they be disciplined for turning it on late when the Loco is in motion?

SO, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Consultation has officially started, so RTBU Members are encouraged to ask as many questions covering EVERY scenario in this time (get everything in writing).

If you feel that PN is breaching any part of the Consultation Clauses in your respective EA's, put it in Dispute.

At this stage there are more questions than answers, and PN must be held accountable.

COMMUNICATIONS

Your RTBU Officials across affected Branches and the National Office have been in contact. An Intermodal, Coal and Bulk Delegate phone hook-up will be held on Monday 18 November. If you have any concerns you want raised, talk to your Organiser or Depot Delegate.

But, importantly, talk to PN. Management have made this decision and they should be able to answer your questions.

This decision by PN will affect every Driver covered by the following EAs:

- Pacific National Intermodal Train Crew Enterprise Agreement 2017
- Pacific National Bulk Rail NSW Enterprise Agreement 2018
- Pacific National Victorian Bulk Rail Enterprise Agreement 2017
- Pacific National Queensland Intermodal Train Crew Enterprise Agreement 2018
- Pacific National Queensland Mount Isa Rail Line Enterprise Agreement 2017; and
- Pacific National Queensland Coal Enterprise Agreement 2018

That is 1000's of RTBU Train Crew Members. And every single one of you should be inundating Pacific National about why this decision has been made? How will this affect me and my fellow Drivers?

RTBU Members need to stand together more than ever. PN must be told, by the collective, that they WILL NOT accept a mandatory anything, especially one that serves ZERO purpose except to the Company.

STAND UP. FIGHT BACK.