



# FOOTPLATE

## NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH / LOCOMOTIVE DIVISION

ISSUE 5: MARCH 2020

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### SYDNEY AND NSW TRAINS CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

On Wednesday afternoon, Sydney Trains called an emergency peak unions meeting to discuss the impacts of COVID-19 (coronavirus) on staff and commuters as well as the steps they are taking to minimise the risk of the virus on members.

At this stage, Sydney Trains have informed the union that normal precautions should be taken and no additional PPE is required. Their advice is that good hygiene is still the best defence against infection from the virus.

However, members ought to be aware that coronavirus is spread through droplets and that it can settle on surfaces and remain for up to 2-3 days in the right conditions. Sydney Trains have advised that alcoholic wipes will be available in every workplace to clean frequently touched surfaces.

In terms of leave, Sydney Trains was still awaiting advice from the Department of Premier and Cabinet on whether it will be offering special leave for those who have to be off work because of coronavirus. However, managers have been instructed to direct people to self-isolate:

- i. If you have returned from mainland China, South Korea, or Iran; and
- ii. If you have been close contact with someone who has coronavirus.

#### **Update - Leave Arrangements Announced**

As of this morning, the NSW Government has implemented a new policy that states that if you do need to self-isolate, and you are unable to perform your duties from home, you will be granted up to 20 days of special leave. After you have exhausted the 20 days, you will have to access your accrued leave entitlements.

This special leave entitlement extends to caring for sick family members and during periods where schools or day care facilities are shut down due to the virus, or when there are major transport disruptions which prevent you from attending work.

At time of writing the detail on how the leave is to be applied for and approved had not been received and members should contact their local managers for clarity on the process.

There has still been no action taken by NSW Trains to consult with the union about what it intends to do to minimise the risk of coronavirus on its staff. The union continues to call on NSW Trains to do the right thing in such an uncertain time.

For more information, Transport has and will continually update its frequently asked questions. You can access the FAQs at:

[https://www.stayinformed.com.au/novel-coronavirus-status-update/news\\_feed/coronavirus-qa](https://www.stayinformed.com.au/novel-coronavirus-status-update/news_feed/coronavirus-qa)

OR

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/alerts/Pages/coronavirus-faqs.aspx>

If you have any concerns about the above, please contact your organiser or call or email the office on (02) 9264 3400 or [nswloco@rtbu-nsw.asn.au](mailto:nswloco@rtbu-nsw.asn.au).

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