



PACIFIC NATIONAL

MEMBER UPDATE

Monday 11 January 2021

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the RTBU Members and families out there, let's all hope that 2021 is a tiny bit kinder to everyone.

And a reminder to please reach out if you're not OK, or if you need some help dealing with someone in your life who is not OK.

Covid 19 Update

As Essential Workers, RTBU Members are all well aware of how to live and work with COVID-19 and the new safety protocols. Members have shown their mettle last year - enduring hard lockdowns (at home and in Barracks), mandatory testing, not being able to see family and friends due to border crossings etc. As a result of Members' discipline and commitment to safety, there still has not been a single case of COVID-19 in Pacific National workforce – or at any other Australian rail operator.

On 1 January, however, the Victorian Government imposed a hard border restriction on people entering the state from NSW for the first time. In the flurry to hastily close the border, the needs of returning Train Crew were unintentionally overlooked. This meant that Victorian Drivers (coming back into VIC from NSW) would have to quarantine at home, unless they were at work. MFT Drivers would therefore be in a perpetual cycle of either working or at home in lockdown. This was clearly unfair and unworkable.

MFT Delegates Mick Simms and Matt Fenn immediately jumped in to get the situation addressed. They were supported by the Members at MFT, and by the RTBU National Office. The RTBU Team and PN Management held urgent discussions with the Victorian Premier's Office, the Office of the Minister for Ports and Freight, and the Victorian Department of Health.

At a meeting on 6 January, it was agreed that the mandatory self-quarantine period will not apply to Freight Drivers, and the requirements during mandatory testing will be reviewed.

This is a great relief for both the Drivers at MFT and for PN, with trains now back running to schedule.

Full credit must go to Delegate Mick Simms and the team at MFT who put the mental health of Members first. We also acknowledge the swift reaction of PN as well - it was refreshing for us to be working together for a change. And surprise surprise, it works!

PNI TRAIN CREW 2021 EA UPDATE

Due to the Christmas/New Year break, the joint legal review of the EA (which is mainly FWC compliance and administration changes) is still underway.

Once that is complete, the Members will have time to review the new document, and then the voting period will commence.

The offer negotiated on behalf of the Members included:

- A two year Agreement
- 2.5% wage increase per year
- \$500 per member per year (first upon ratification, then on the first anniversary of the Agreement)
- No loss to Wages or Conditions

More information to follow. And don't forget, when the time comes, make sure you vote!

CLAUSE 3.9 DISCUSSIONS

Unfortunately, the RTBU Negotiating Team and Pacific National are not really much closer to some form of resolution in the interpretation of Clause 3.9.

However, in good faith, the RTBU Negotiating Team will meet with PN to try once more. Beyond that, it seems that Arbitration is on the cards.

IT'S OK NOT TO BE OK

As mentioned earlier, please reach out to someone if you aren't coping. Last year was incredibly challenging for us normal people, let alone the pressures of being an Essential Worker.

And unfortunately, 2021 is not getting off to a flash start either. A problem shared, is a problem halved. So, make sure you talk to someone if you aren't feeling OK, or if you are looking after someone who's not OK. The RTBU Family is here to support you - shoulder to shoulder.

DELEGATES - LOVE THEM OR LOSE THEM

For anyone who has been a Workplace Delegate, you will know the feeling. You love the job but didn't realise it was so full-time (and full-on). You love getting a victory for the Members but feel quite alone. You love a blue with the Boss, but the after-hour and weekend phone calls take up time away from your family.

Being a Workplace Delegate is quite the paradox. And its voluntary!!! Delegates love all of the challenges. But we are all human. And we all have our breaking points.

So - what can we do to show our awesome RTBU Delegates that they are doing a good job?

A simple thank you goes a long way.

And knowing the Depot has your back.

Because the more support the Delegate has, the more support you, as RTBU Members, have.

Finally, if you're interested in being involved, put your hand up. Many hands make light work. Plus, bosses hate organised workplaces!!

So, to all the hardworking Workplace Delegates out there ...

THANK YOU!!!

SOLIDARITY. UNITY. STRENGTH