



Rail, Tram and Bus Union

PRESS RELEASE

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National Regulator Must Put Rail Safety First

Progress on the establishment of a National Rail Safety Regulator is on track, but important issues remain unresolved - according to the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU).

RTBU National Secretary Allan Barden today said the State, Territory and Federal Ministers - who met in Melbourne today - were getting the message on rail safety.

“The RTBU welcomes the communiqué released by the Australian Transport Council in Melbourne today.

“It’s good to see Federal Transport Minister Anthony Albanese and his State and Territory counterparts working together cooperatively, and prepared to consult with both the industry and workers on the development of the new regulator.

“There is nothing more important to rail workers than safety. That’s why we’re determined to see the best standards in safety applied across the country.”

Mr Barden said a key issue for rail workers would be fatigue management.

“The proposed regulations for fatigue management, for example, provide for ‘flexibility’ to allow employers to determine what is a ‘safe’ shift.

“Forcing rail workers to work longer hours however, with less rest, is not an effective way to manage fatigue.

“We strongly believe that a prescriptive approach to setting maximum hours, and minimum breaks, is needed across the country.

“Rail workers will continue lobbying politicians at State, Territory and Federal level to make sure the new regulations put rail safety first.”

More information about the proposed national rail safety laws is available at www.putrailsafetyfirst.com.au.

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