



Newsline

2006 new year edition



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Phil Altieri

Assistant Secretary, Tram & Bus Division



Tram Priority Program

With one of the largest tram networks in the world, trams play a vital role in Melbourne's transport network. For over a century, thousands of Melbournians have relied on trams to take them to and from work and school, to the shops and on visits to family and friends.

With improved travel times and reliability, the Tram Priority Program is set to convert many more Melbournians to the benefits of tram travel and ensure that Trams continue to offer a viable alternative to the car for many inner-city trips.

The \$30M, 2-year Tram Priority Program will be delivered by VicRoads in partnership with the Department of Infrastructure and Yarra Trams. They will be reviewing traffic management, tram operations and ways to improve technology to achieve the aims of the program. In addition, road rules will be reviewed to help motorists when driving with Trams. The RTBU Tram & Bus Division is heavily involved in this program; as a member of the Victorian Road based public transport advisory Council, ensuring our members interests are protected.

The Tram Priority Program will focus on the busiest parts of Melbourne's tram network. This includes:

- all major tram routes through the CBD (Swanston, Elizabeth, William, Bourke, Collins and Flinders Streets)
- major approaches to the CBD, including the boulevards of Flemington Road, Royal Parade, Victoria Parade, and St Kilda Road; and tram services through many of Melbourne's famous strip shopping centres including Sydney Road, High Street (Northcote), Brunswick Street, Smith street, Bridge Road and Clarendon Street

By improving the sections that carry the most passengers and are the source of the greatest delays, a better service will result for tram users along entire routes.

- Our Tram drivers will experience smoother runs with reduced incidents, relieving some of those frustrations in dealing with motorists.
- Tram passengers will notice shorter, more reliable travel times and fewer delays caused by incidents affecting tram operations

- Motorists will be better informed about how to drive with trams and will have more incentive to choose tram travel over their vehicle for more trips.

- The image of strip shopping centres will be improved, with freer movement of trams

As well as on-road initiatives to improve tram travel times, other activities will be happening behind the scenes. Much of this will apply to the whole tram network and includes:

- linking the VicRoads traffic management centre and the Yarra Trams control centre which is fully manned by R.T.B.U. members, establishing new operating protocols to create the best possible incident management and tram operating conditions.
- reviewing motorists responsibilities when driving with trams and developing new ways to ensure motorists act safely around trams and clear indications of when they can and cannot drive on tram tracks.
- improving technology for providing tram priority and "T" lights at intersections and working towards a clever system that helps trams make up lost time - the later the tram, the greater the priority.

A wide range of projects have been implemented as part of this program, with more to come. A number of traffic treatments have been introduced including intersection signal treatments, fast loading platform stops and traffic separation bars. Also the VicRoads and Yarra Trams control centers have been connected.

The Sydney Road tram service (Route 19) was the first to see a change in the scheduled tram trip time as a result of over two dozen intersection treatments. A trial of the new timetable was introduced in August 2006.

The RTBU Tram & Bus Division will continue to be heavily involved in this program to improve our growing tram system.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the Delegates for their hard work during the year and wish all RTBU members and their families a safe and Happy Christmas.

Lou Di Gregorio

Branch Assistant Secretary
Secretary, Tram & Bus Division



Howard Government attacks on workers and families living standards

On the 10th October, 2005, I completed 40 years service in Public Transport in the Tram & Bus Division. During that time I have seen so many different Governments and some of them nasty towards working class people. The Tramway workers have been through many battles and we have won most of them.

We had the battles of the 1940's when the Tramway Union, the first Union, won the right to get equal pay for the working woman.

In the 1950's we had the battle of the working hours and penalty rates and we won this battle as well.

In the 1960's we had the Bolte Liberal Government trying to dismantle the Tramways system in this city. We combined with the Tramway Board and took the Government on and won that battle that is why we are still here today.

In the 1970's we had the Lonie Report who recommend to shut down the Tram System after hours from 6pm onwards and also weekends and we won that battle as well.

In the 1990's we had the Kennett Government who set themselves up to destroy Public Transport and the Union. After a long battle with him, he is now gone and we are still here.

All these past battles were fought straight up front. In the year 2005, we now have the Howard Government's new industrial reform which is fought all on dishonesty. Howard is the only Prime Minister in history who has not honestly told the people what he wants to do but at the same time he is trying to cut the wage of every worker in this country and take away all the hard fought conditions. Mr Howard expects the Tramway workers to work on Sundays, Christmas day and Easter on ordinary rates while everyone else enjoys the celebration. Mr Howard dishonestly tells people all the conditions are protected by law but there's no law to protect people's jobs. Unfair Dismissal Laws have been taken out which means an Employer can dismiss the worker and re-employ another person at a different and lower rate of pay. Our choices now are either you accept a cut in your pay or you have no job.

The Tramway Union **united** with the membership have fought with every Government that has tried to take our conditions away from us and we have kept most of them. The battle with Mr. Howard has not yet begun but I am pretty sure that with **united** membership we will win and see the end of John Howard's reign.

All our members are employed by Yarra Trams and they are subsidised by the State Government so we need to show Yarra Trams that we have a **unity** and no one will take conditions away from our members. We will work closely with Yarra Trams to make sure the Tram business will be moving forward and whatever benefits to Yarra Trams will be shared among our members.

There is a great future for our members in Public Transport. We have seen in the last few years our Tram system expand, we have modernised our fleet and we will continue to work with the Government and Yarra Trams to make sure there will be further extensions in the future and modernize the rest of the fleet.

Recently, I attended an International Transport Conference in Rome, and there were 2000 Delegates from all over the world to talk about the future of Public Transport over the next 30 years. I listened to all the experts around the world and in my view, there is a great future in Public Transport. Every Government globally is spending millions of dollars in Public Transport and the light rail is a growing industry. Many European cities are bringing in new systems even the United States who for many years has spent all resources into freeways, are now turning to Public Transport. They are concentrating on improving the environment of their cities over the next 20 years and the U.S. Government are spending close to 30 billion dollars over the next 20 years in Public Transport

So based on what's happening world-wide, our people should feel very confident about the future.

Howard can bring in as many laws as he wants but at the end of the day, the only law that will exist will be at the workplace. So with **unity** that we always have had, we will beat any attacks to the working class people and we will always be looking towards a great future.

Season's Greetings

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members for their support they have given this Union and myself. I will continue to work closely with members to protect our future.

On behalf of T&B Assistant Secretary, Phil Altieri, T&B President, Doug Brady, T&B PA, Louise Ray and the Tram and Bus Division Executive and myself, we wish all our members and their families the compliment of the season and a safe and prosperous New Year.

Doug Brady

President, Tram & Bus Division



New Delegates

Twelve months ago, Elections were held for Depot Delegates and a number of new Delegates were elected. The Union arranged for them to attend a Delegates course organised by the A.C.T.U. to help and assist them with information on how the Delegates role works in the workplace and within the Union.

To their credit these Delegates have represented their members with enthusiasm, endeavor and commitment.

Being a new Delegate is quite difficult as there are many issues they must learn to deal with. The Union Officials have helped them with information and assistance throughout the year.

With the new industrial legislation and Commonwealth Games over the next twelve months, life will prove to be very interesting!! It is important that the members maintain unity and support their Delegates and the Union.

Lou, Phil and myself would like to thank all the Delegates and members for their support and assistance and most importantly UNITY throughout the year.

I would like to wish all the members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, may it be kind to us all.



RTBU Services

members. Call: Toll Free 1800 033 645

Country Legal Services for RTBU members

Ballarat

Ronald Saines & Co
104 Lydiard St, Sth Ballarat.
Telephone: (03) 5332 1584
or contact
Ballarat Trades & Labour Council
26 Camp St Ballarat
Telephone: (03) 5332 3666
Fax: (03) 5333 5602

Bendigo

Peterson Westbrook and Cameron
121 McCrae St Bendigo 3550
Telephone: (03) 5443 9499
Fax: (03) 5443 9339

Morwell

Slater & Gordon Solicitors
37 Elgin Street, Morwell.
Telephone: (03) 5136 3700
Fax: (03) 5133 7252

Traralgon

Slater & Gordon Solicitors
11 Kay Street, Traralgon
Telephone: (03) 5171 1500
Fax: (03) 5174 8367

FINANCIAL ADVISERS

ACTU MEMBER CONNECT

1300 362 223
(Cost of a local call)

Members of the RTBU are entitled to all the benefits provided for them by ACTU Member Connect. They use the combined purchasing power of approximately 2.4 million union members to provide value added benefits and services for union members.

HOUSING LOANS

Melbourne Credit Union
Freecall 1800 808 908
(see advertisement on back page for further details)

Super Members' Home Loans by Members Equity
(see advertisement for further details)

Transcomm
Phone: 9629 4484

COMPUTERS FOR MEMBERS

Virtual Communities
(see advertisement for further details)

GENERAL INSURANCE

ACTU INSURANCE BROKING

ACTU Insurance Broking offers a range of personal insurance products through a joint venture between the ACTU and Heath Fielding Australia Pty. Ltd. These products such as house, contents, vehicle, boat and caravan, offer real savings and benefits for members.

ACTU Insurance Broking already offer a very competitive income protection insurance to protect members against loss of income due to injury or sickness.

If you have any queries or would like further information call the ACTU Trust help line on 1300 362 223

UNION ASSIST

Union Assist provides WorkCover Conciliation Support for Union Members.

If you need help with WorkCover, contact Union Assist at the following locations:

Victorian Trades Hall Council
Phone: 9639 6144

Geelong Trades Hall
Phone: 03 5221 9876

Bendigo Trades Hall
Phone: 03 5441 5812

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Union Health Centre

Ground Floor ACTU House
393 Swanston Street, Melbourne
3000

Tel: (03) 9662 3322

Union Health offers discounts of up to 25% on Medical, Optical and Dental Service for RTBU members.

Medical

Bulk Billing for services available.

Optical

25% discount on glasses, contact lenses, sunglasses and safety glasses.

Optometrical bulk billed eye examinations, and VDU screenings available.

Dental

Comprehensive range of services including Orthodontics at 25% discount on current dental fee charges in metropolitan Melbourne for RTBU members and their dependants.

HOLIDAY AND TRAVEL SERVICES

Lightkeepers Inn

64 - 66 Great Ocean Road
Airey's Inlet 3221
Phone: (03) 5289 6666
Fax: (03) 52 896806

Stay at your own luxury Motel. Trade unions own this motel at Airey's Inlet on Victoria's spectacular Great Ocean Road.

15% discount for RTBU members

"NEW GENERATION" HOLIDAY PARK JERVIS BAY TERRITORY (SOUTH COAST N.S.W.) SUSSEX INLET

Situated in a peaceful atmosphere by the sea. Ultra modern, self-contained units, caravan and camping grounds, fishing, Tennis, and B.B.Q. A very reasonable priced holiday in top quality accommodation, in a beautiful setting.

INQUIRIES & BOOKINGS

Write to:

The Secretary
Rail, Tram & Bus Union
N.S.W. Branch
333 Sussex Street
Sydney N.S.W. 2000
or (Tel) 02 9264 2511

And ask for Sussex Inlet Bookings

"YAMBACOOCHIE" Members' Holiday Units in Queensland

Situated on beautiful Bribie Island, with uninterrupted views of the blue waters of Pumicestone Passage, are holiday units purchased recently by the Rail, Tram and Bus Union, (Queensland Branch), for the benefit of members and their families. The units are named "Yambacoochie" which means "resting place by quite waters."

Bribie Island is situated 65 kms north of Brisbane near Caboolture and is accessible by road over the bridge from the mainland. Bribie Island offers a variety of excellent recreational activities including fishing, boating, swimming and sailing. Restaurants and clubs are within close proximity to the units.

It is intended that financial members will enjoy the benefits of these units for a flat weekly rate applicable all year round, with no inflated prices during peak periods.

Enquiries in relation to bookings for "Yambacoochie" should be directed to the Queensland Branch of the Rail, Tram and Bus Union. Telephone: (07) 3839 4988.

A brief history of Southern Cross Station

The Southern Cross Station has been synonymous with rail transport in Victoria for almost 150 years. Originally known as Batman's Hill Station before being renamed Spencer Street, the new Southern Cross Station is the realisation of plans to build a grand station at the site for over 100 years.

- 1856 Batman's Hill selected as the site for a station
- 1859 Station begins operation with services to Williamstown and Sunbury. It is named Batman's Hill Railway Station
- 1862 The first of 32 passenger locomotives acquired
- 1891 Viaduct opens linking Spencer Street and Flinders Street Stations
- 1893 Railway Administrative Building completed - Melbourne's largest office building at that time
- 1915 Viaduct duplicated
- 1924 Construction of new suburban platforms
- 1963 Opening of old station building
- 1964 Reconstruction of the goods yard
- 1975 Pedestrian subway extended under Spencer Street
- 1981 The Melbourne Underground Rail Loop brought into operation
- 2000 Announcement to redevelop Spencer Street Station
- 2002 Start of redevelopment
- 2004 Closure and demolition of the old station
- 2005 Spencer Street Station becomes Southern Cross Station

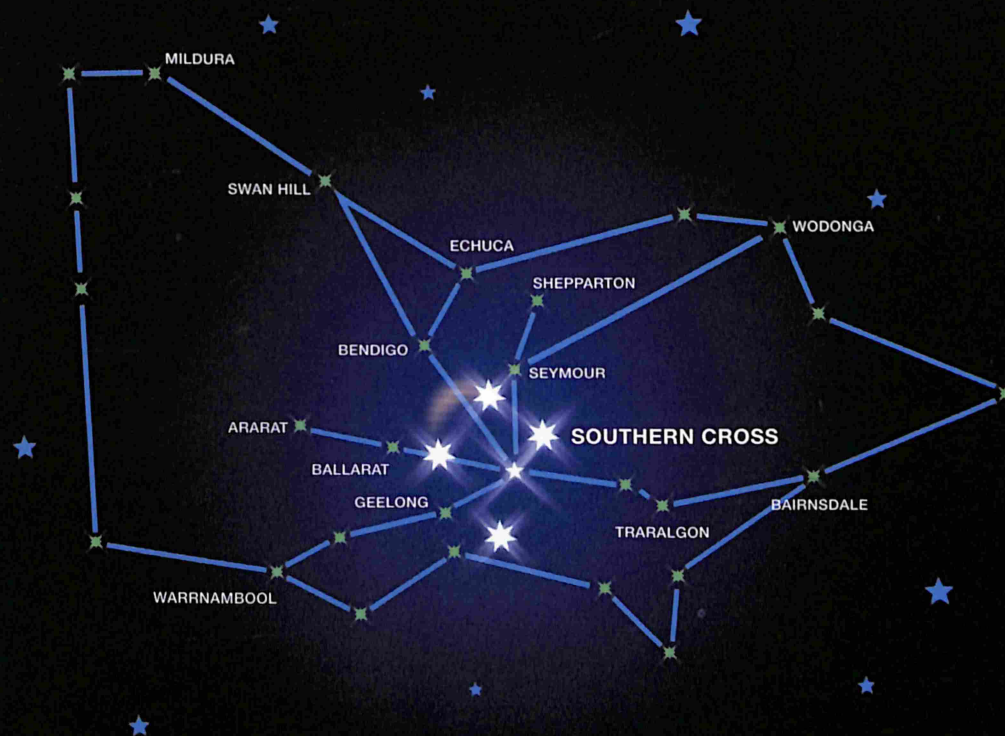


Southern Cross Station Authority



For more information on the new Southern Cross Station and services available
phone 131 638 or go to www.rvr.com.au

Spencer Street Station is now called Southern Cross Station.



Information for public transport staff

Our newest public transport star

The brightest star in Victoria's transport system is rising. Southern Cross Station on Spencer Street will boast world class facilities and is modern, safe and easier to use. The station now has a new name to reflect its new look and special significance to Victoria.

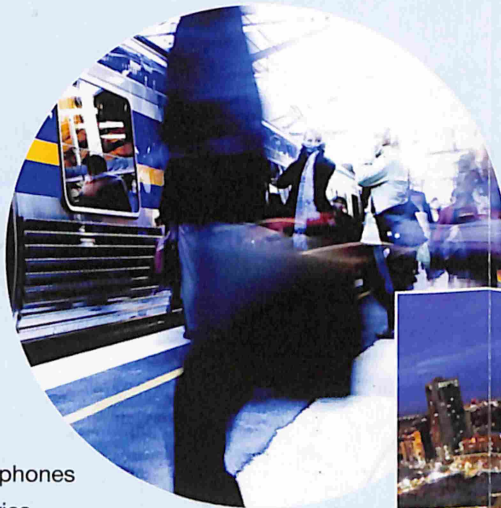
Southern Cross Station will provide:

- A light filled and wide open design
- Innovative wave shaped roof covering
- 120 passenger information screens with real time train arrival and departure information
- Comfortable waiting areas
- Complete passenger security
- Secure, sheltered carparks for 800 vehicles
- Platform access to both the Bourke Street Bridge and Collins Street extension
- Public facilities including internet services and telephones
- New retail outlets including coffee shops and eateries.

The \$350 million transformation of Spencer Street Station into the new Southern Cross Station is being delivered as a public private partnership between the Victorian Government and the Civic Nexus consortium.

Recent milestones

- A new escalator, lift and stair link opened between suburban and country platforms
- Platforms 9/10 and 3/4 are completed to their final configuration
- Spectacular wave roof is structurally complete. This means that all areas under the wavy roof are now weather protected!
- Collins Street entrance to the station reopened after having its glass façade installed and trams returned to Collins St extension.

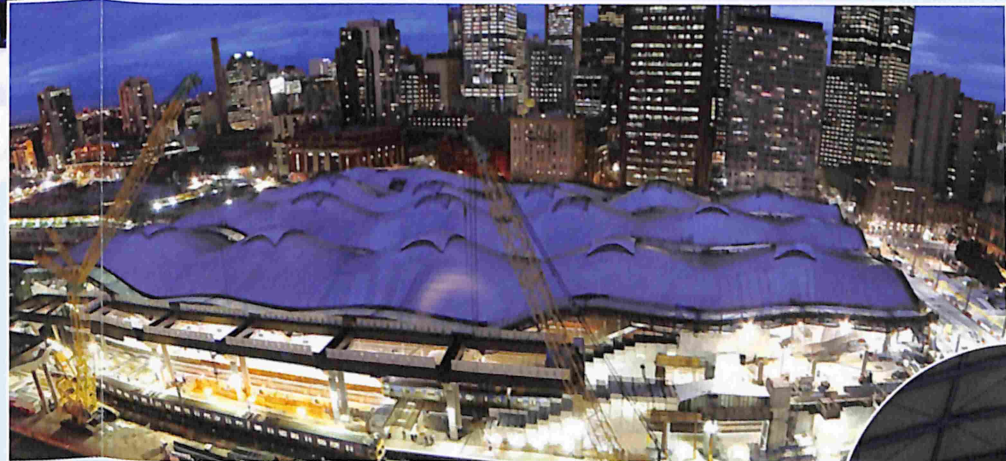


What next?

The transport interchange is progressing well with ongoing changes taking place as the project reaches its conclusion.

Upcoming milestones

- Grand station entrance on the corner of Collins and Spencer Streets
- A new revamped Bourke Street entrance to the station
- Spencer Street concourse bluestone paving and glass façade
- Station platform upgrades including lift, stair and escalator access
- Station signage, including new plasma passenger information screens
- Completion of the orange POD office accommodation at the station.



Fast facts

Did you know that:

- Southern Cross Station now has entrances onto Collins Street and Bourke Street, as well as Spencer Street
- The constellation Southern Cross has been used as an important historical navigation aid for travellers
- At 37,000 square metres the Southern Cross Station wave roof is the size of two grassed areas of the MCG, 140 tennis courts or five rugby fields
- The station has been built to cater for around 35 million passengers in the year 2021, an increase from the 15 million annual users in 2005.

