Dear Member

Crewing Options for Spirit of the Outback

On the 2 July 2014 the RTBU met with Queensland Rail to discuss crewing options for the Spirit of the Outback as of 1 July 2015.

The RTBU was surprised that the AFULEQ had not been invited to the meeting and asked management why?

Mr Duncan, on behalf of Queensland Rail, stated that he wished to meet the Unions separately so as to understand their position without any impediments. The RTBU has no problem with expressing our thoughts or options no matter who was in the meeting and thought the matter should have been discussed with both Unions at the one meeting.

Queensland Rail advised that they were considering the following options:

1. Relay running
2. Self-drive vehicle to Emerald
3. Fly to Emerald
4. Temporary transfer to Emerald — timeframe to be decided
5. Third Party Operator

Mr Duncan said, though no decision had been determined, he was considering options 1 or 5.

The RTBU questioned Queensland Rail over the relay working option and it would seem that they propose to call EOI’s to start with then extend the tuition to the entire Bundaberg depot so it would become part of the Master Roster.

The RTBU stressed that the Traincrew Agreement would not facilitate relay work without agreement of the parties as well as the Rail Regulator, who would be required to approve the variation to the substantial change it (QR) proposed to the nature of Queensland Rail’s operations as per the Rail Safety Act.

The RTBU asked what had happened to the positions called for Emerald and Rockhampton earlier this year, Queensland Rail advised Drivers had applied for the positions at Emerald as they were not diesel qualified, so they were not considered, and there had only been one application for Rockhampton. As members would be aware Rockhampton had been called for infrastructure work only not Traveltrain services.

The RTBU advised that due to the time-frame Queensland Rail had obligations and means under the Traincrew Agreement to call for Drivers, Trainee Drivers then external applicants for the positions and requested that Queensland Rail utilise these provisions to staff at Emerald.

The RTBU was concerned to learn that 2 Drivers had applied for Emerald but had not been deemed suitable because they did not hold Diesel qualifications, we would consider that a breach of the Traincrew Agreement.
An RTBU member has provided this Union with a copy of an AFULE newsletter on this issue containing false statements about the RTBU’s position. I would advise members to read RTBU material to find out this Union’s position or talk to the local RTBU delegates.

Members will be kept informed.

Unity is Strength

Shayne Kummerfeld
Locomotive Division Organiser