



QUEENSLAND BRANCH

Queensland Rail Circular

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Dear Member

VER Programme in QR

The RTBU has now received official correspondence from QR regarding their decision on how the voluntary early retirement programme will work. In essence, it outlines the groups excluded from the process along with the time frames they have outlined for various steps.

It came as no surprise to QR that the RTBU strongly opposes any job losses in QR, especially in the current climate, where many thousands of public servants are on the dole queue. In particular, the RTBU would oppose any circumstance where contractors replaced permanent workers.

The Campbell Newman LNP Government has directed QR to reduce its workforce by at least 545 full time employees. QR proposes to achieve this by:

- Reducing the number of Executive Managers, General Managers, and other contract manager roles
- Continuing its recruitment freeze on non-critical frontline roles
- Natural attrition
- Reducing the number of contractors and consultants, and
- Subject to consultation, implementing a VER process

Following receipt of the first draft of the process, the RTBU put strongly that people who are currently designated Health Restricted Employees (HRE) and Employees in Transition (EiT) should be able to express interest in VER as has been the case previously. QR have now incorporated this into their proposal and people who are designated as HRE's or EiT's in non-critical roles will now be able to apply.

Final decisions on which expressions of interest will be accepted are in the hands of QR. Nonetheless, the RTBU will be vigilant in holding QR to its word that the employees remaining will be safe and that where there are reductions in staff numbers those who remain do not suffer unreasonable work intensification.

The RTBU is strongly of the view that this is a political exercise foisted upon QR by the State Government. The organisation has been top heavy for some time with management ranks swelling in some areas. For the rest of QR though we are concerned that job reductions could have adverse effects if unchallenged. That is why we will be closely scrutinising the areas that are affected to ensure members are not the losers in this process. Ultimately, QR should be able to be run without an arbitrary number of people being required to be sacrificed to suit the Newman Government's political agenda.

It is important to note that the VER scheme is entirely voluntary. No-one should feel compelled to leave the organisation and anyone considering such a move should seek financial advice before making such a crucial decision. No forced redundancies and no forced relocations were commitments hard fought for and won over many years. You have every right to a safe and secure job.

The timeframes for the various stages of the process are listed below as are the areas excluded from the process:

Timeframes:

- 2 October to 15 October 2012 – Expressions of Interest can be submitted for VER
- 16 October to 29 October 2012 – QR will consider Expressions of Interest
- 20 October to 31 December 2012 – VER's will take place and the scheme will close.

Exclusions:

Function	Areas/roles excluded from VR Scheme
Across all of Queensland Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Casual employees • Contractors and Consultants • Employees on fixed-term contracts
Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network Controllers, Electric Control Operators • Signal Electricians, Substation Electricians, Plant Electricians, Protection Officers, Traction Linespersons, Telecommunications Technicians, Plant Fitters, Cable Joiners, Systems Maintainers, Operational Systems • Civil Engineers, Power Systems Engineers, Overhead Traction Engineers, Signal Engineers • Track workers, Structures workers • Plant Maintainers
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traincrew (except North Queensland), Rosters Officers, Schedulers • Network Controllers • Suburban Rail Shunters
Customer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station Staff • Transit Officers • Queensland Rail Travel On-board Services Staff • Kuranda Scenic Railway On-board Services Staff

NOTE: All administration roles within these functions are 'in scope' for the purposes of eligibility to express an interest in VR. Those on Enhanced Remuneration Packages and Award Contracts are taken to be included 'in scope'.

Unity is Strength



Bruce Mackie
RTBU President (Qld Branch)