
From: Tramways Union tramwaysunion@tradeshall.org.nz

Sent: Tuesday, 7 February 2023 1:29 pm

To: Micheal.Wood@parliament.govt.nz

Cc: Daran Ponter - Chair <Daran.Ponter@gw.govt.nz>; Richard Wagstaff <richardw@nzctu.org.nz>

Subject: Overseas Bus Drivers Hired In Breach Of Current / Existing Employment Agreements

Good afternoon Minister,

I am writing to express our serious concerns relating to the hiring by Go Bus Transport Limited of overseas bus drivers who are being employed in Wellington in breach of the existing terms and of conditions of employment at Wellington City Transport and Cityline NZ Limited.

Go Bus Transport is wholly owned by Australian company Kinetic and operates urban bus services throughout New Zealand under the brand Go Bus. Kinetic have recently purchased Wellington City Transport Limited & Cityline NZ limited which operate a significant number of urban bus services in the Wellington region. Recent changes to immigration laws have meant overseas bus drivers can now be hired in a process that in theory will enable operators such as Go Bus to help address the nationwide shortage of bus drivers. I am confident that in freeing up this immigration process you did not envisage that operators would use overseas employees to undermine current terms and conditions of existing employees, but this is precisely what is happening.

Currently at least eight Phillipino bus drivers have been engaged by Go Bus Limited to work as bus drivers for Citiline NZ Limited (which currently as no vacancies) on an Individual Flat Rate Employment Agreement paying \$28.00 per hour. The Individual Employment Agreements are inferior to the current terms and conditions of our collective agreement at Cityline NZ Limited

The Company has been evasive about these employees, and I believe it is their intention to use these employees to undermine the existing terms and conditions of employment . If that is indeed the case it does not bode well for public transport in Wellington. The Tramways Union seeks an assurance from both yourself and the GWRC, the local authority managing the regions public transport contracts, that steps will be taken to ensure migrant employees have the same opportunity as current employees to join the Union and enjoy the better terms and conditions of employment contained in our current collective agreement. Anything less is unacceptable.

Kind regards

Kevin O'Sullivan

Kevin O'Sullivan | Secretary

NZ Tramways & Public Passenger Transport Employees Union Wellington Branch [Inc.]

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Ubi concordia, ibi victoria

By email

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10 February 2023

Hon Michael Wood
Minister of Transport
Minister of Immigration
Parliament Buildings
Wellington

Kevin O'Sullivan
Secretary, NZ Tramways &
Public Passenger Transport
Employees Union
Wellington Branch

Richard Wagstaff
President, NZ Council of Trade
Unions
RedShield House
Wellington

Tēnā koutou Minister Wood, Kevin, and Richard

**RE: Overseas bus drivers hired in breach of current / existing
employment agreements**

Kevin, thank you for contacting us on 7 February 2023 with these concerns about the hiring of overseas bus drivers by Go Bus Transport Limited (Kinetic). We take these concerns very seriously, and have discussed the questions you have raised with the operator in question so that we can provide you all with the following response.

As you know, it is important to us to make sure overseas drivers are appropriately supported as they arrive in New Zealand and begin their employment in their new environment. We are in constant contact with our operators, and are confident that their approach to hiring overseas drivers does not undermine the ability of these new drivers to benefit from the opportunities of their employment agreements, and does not undermine the current terms and conditions of existing employees.

At the same time, we would also emphasise that employment agreements between drivers and operators do not involve Metlink or Waka Kotahi. Kevin, we therefore encourage you to engage directly with the bus operator, and they are happy to engage in discussion, if you would like further information about the specific agreements under which overseas drivers are being employed by Kinetic.

Let us know if we can provide additional information—we welcome further discussion.

Ngā mihi



Daran Ponter
Chair
Greater Wellington Regional Council



Thomas Nash
Transport Committee Chair
Greater Wellington Regional Council

CC:
All Councillors, Greater Wellington Regional Council