

BLACKTOWN Advocate

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PHONE 9671 6777

NEWS

Leaked plan sends union off the rails

REBECCA WOOLLEY
state parliament

JOBs at Blacktown station could be slashed, workers moved to other stations and some jobs be downgraded, under proposed State Government reforms.

Rail Prams and Bus Union organiser Phillip Kessey said the moves mainly affected ticket sellers but were part of a larger plan to cut more than 300 CityRail jobs which could impact on passenger safety and service.

Under a CityRail shake-up, 58 stations across the network could become automated with commuters expected to buy their tickets at machines.

Numerous station master positions will be abolished while some staff will be re-trained in other areas.

According to leaked documents obtained by the Opposition, senior managers are tipped to get pay rises.

"These job cuts will affect people's safety and service," Mr Kessey said. "Costs could be saved in senior management of RailCorp, there are 18 customer services managers who receive \$130,000 (a year).

"In addition to this, there are five general managers replacing one on \$180,000 each and they want to cut frontline services from the community."

Opposition leader Barry O'Farrell said the worst affected would be pensioners, parents with prams and commuters with a disability.

The union has started a campaign and



All change: New staffing levels are coming to CityRail at Blacktown.

will distribute postcards to passengers at stations across the network calling on Premier Nathan Rees to reconsider the changes.

"Dear Premier," the postcard reads. "I am concerned that your government is intending to cut station staff from my local station. "This will severely impact on the services you provide to taxpayers.

"At a time when more and more people are using public transport, I expect more and improved services and increased safety, not cuts."

Commuters can write to Mr Rees at Level 40 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrar Place, Sydney, NSW 2000 or email at theprimer@www.nsw.gov.au.

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Fairfax Community Newspapers

Union fears 'razor gangs' will cut jobs

By Jessica Mahar, State Parliament

RAILCORP "razor gangs" were assessing stations across western Sydney in an attempt to see which staffing positions could be cut, the union said. The audit teams have been to Seven Hills, Doonside, Blacktown, Toongabbie, Mount Druitt, Quakers Hill, Schofields and Riverstone to assess staff numbers.

Rail, Tram and Bus Union lead organiser Phillip Kessey said the union would fight the proposed cuts to station managers, station staff and opening hours. "These job cuts will affect people's safety and the service," he said.

The Opposition said leaked documents proved the NSW Government planned to axe 600 staff and 58 stationmaster positions across the network.

A RailCorp spokeswoman said the organisation was working to implement a more flexible station staffing model.

She said the reviews would not result in job losses, although some positions would change. "Only when the consultation is completed will a decision be made on staffing levels at each station," she said.

"The aim of RailCorp's station staff review, agreed to by the union as part of the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement, is to align staffing levels with commuter passenger movements at CityRail stations.

"To achieve this we're reviewing the number and mix of staff positions allocated to stations at different times of the day."