

30 April 2026

National Transport Commission  
Rail Safety National Law Review

Submitted via the portal

Re: Support for the RTBU and AMWU submissions – Rail Safety National Law Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) welcomes the National Transport Commission's review of the Rail Safety National Law (RSNL) and provides this letter in support of the submissions lodged by the Australian Rail, Tram and Bus Industry Union (RTBU) and the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union (AMWU), following the approval of an extension for their submission.

The ACTU endorses the submissions by the AMWU and RTBU and their central proposition: the call for reforms that strengthen safety outcomes through clearer duties, greater transparency, effective regulatory oversight, and genuine worker consultation.

In particular, the ACTU supports the emphasis on:

- embedding meaningful consultation with workers and their unions as a core feature of the RSNL;
- improving transparency and information-sharing to enable collective learning from safety incidents;
- ensuring interoperability reforms enhance safety and consistency across the national network, rather than prioritising efficiency outcomes at the expense of workers or communities; and
- aligning the RSNL more closely with established principles under work health and safety laws, including recognition of the critical role played by worker representatives.

Rail workers' knowledge and experience are essential to achieving lasting improvements in rail safety. The ACTU maintains that a tripartite, worker-centred approach – involving workers and their representatives, industry and governments – is fundamental to delivering a safer, more resilient national rail system.

The ACTU urges the Commission to act on these submissions and deliver a stronger RSNL that improves safety, accountability and consultation.

Yours sincerely,

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Liam O'Brien  
Assistant Secretary