

COVID-19 UPDATE

Extended shutdown of Puffing Billy Railway

AUGUST 4 2020

As we grapple with the declared State of Disaster in Victoria and further necessary announcements made by the Premier surrounding mandatory business closures, I want to firstly reach out and encourage us all to support each other and don't be shy about making use of the Employee Assistance Program, as and when you need.

This is a free service that is available and welcome to all, particularly as this health crisis deepens and takes with it a physical and mental toll.

In an update on the operational impact new state restrictions have had on the Railway, it will come as no surprise that we must prolong our return to on-site operations and with it the eventual reopening to the public. Originally, we were to cease on-site operations from July 23 to August 7 inclusive, however, this is looking more towards the end of September at this stage.

Of course, this timeline is ever-changing and, like many other organisations, we are continuing to work through these changes with nothing but the health and safety of visitors, volunteers, staff and the community in mind. I will update you on all matters, both when they change and as they are decided upon.

This means staff that are unable to work from home will be directed not to attend or perform work. This direction is essential to comply with the State Government's directive that all non-essential businesses close to curtail the spread of COVID-19. This will apply to outdoor workers, some of the workshops and cleaners.

Those staff impacted will be contacted by their Branch Manager as soon as possible. You will also receive a formal letter informing you on potential deployment options to assist other Government Departments dealing with the influx of COVID-19 activities.

Workers access to PBR sites will be prohibited, except for a limited number that may be required to do so to address an emergency such as ICT Outages, faults, building damage, or level crossings, etc. This exception to attend to emergencies will require a permit to do so under the new system. Management are currently investigating the permit process and will inform you and manage any applications accordingly.

As we continue to closely monitor updates provided by the relevant authorities, I urge you to stay up-to-date by visiting www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

The COVID-19 pandemic is putting new and unforeseen pressures on all of us, so I want to thank you again for your understanding, patience, and resilience during this time. Please take care and keep safe.

With Kind Regards,



Steve O'Brien
CEO
Puffing Billy Railway



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