



# Korean Public Service and Transport Workers' Union

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File Ref.: KPTU-POL-2019-627

Date: 2019 July 26

To: Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU), Australia  
RTBU South Australian Branch

**Subject: Korean Rail and Metro Workers Support RTBU's fight to save Our Public Transport!**

Dear RTBU Comrades,

On behalf of the 230 thousand members of the Korean Public Service and Transport Workers' Union (KPTU) and particularly our Rail and Metro Unions Council (KRMU), we write to express our solidarity for your fight to keep Adelaide train and tram services in public hands.

We know well that privatisation means reduction of rights for workers and cuts in services for the public. For this reason we have fought for two decades against privatisation and outsourcing of our train and metro services in South Korea. As a result of this fight, we have been able to keep the long distance rail in public hands and are now fighting for integration of the fragmented high speed rail and of infrastructure and operations.

In metro we are now facing the expansion of privately operated lines through PPPs. KPTU has been organising workers in these lines with the long term goal of achieving remunicipalisation.

Given the negative experience of privatisation globally, we were deeply concerned to hear that that the South Australian government has announced plans to release tenders to contract for Adelaide train and trams services.

While the government says it will continue to own rail assets and control pricing, we know from experience that this is not enough to protect working conditions and safe and accessible transport for the public.

In South Korea, metro lines run by private operates are known for poor conditions and safety risks. For example, until recently operation of the Seoul Metro Line 9 was contracted out two separate operating companies, one Korean and one a joint venture of the two French companies RATP Dev and Transdev. The Seoul City government maintained control of Line 9 rolling stock and infrastructure and regulated fares. Thus, the private operators sought to make money by cutting back on staffing and safety improvements. As a result workers have faced long work hours and insufficient rest, leading to fatigue on the job. Many stations are staffed by only one person, making it impossible to respond to emergencies and trains are too short, leading to dangerous overcrowding.

Due to the struggle of KPTU members and a coalition of civil society organisations in response to these horrible conditions, the Seoul City government cancelled Transdev and RATP Dev's operating contract in the beginning of 2018. The Korean operator has also given up operation, moving the Line 9 towards full remunicipalisation.

We know that when workers and passengers come together it is possible to defend our public transport.

Once again KPTU and our rail and metro affiliates fully support the struggle of RTBU to defend public transport in Adelaide and promise our continued solidarity as your campaign goes forward.

In solidarity,



Junsik Choi  
President  
Korean Public Service and Transport Workers' Union



Sangsu Jo  
Chair  
Korean Rail and Metro Unions Council