



AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL 113

812 WILSON AVENUE, DOWNSVIEW, ONTARIO M3K 1E5 • TEL.: (416) 398-5113 FAX: (416) 398-4978



MARVIN ALFRED
President/Business Agent

ANGIE CLARK
Executive Vice-President

SCOTT GORDON
Assistant Business Agent
Maintenance

MAX MATHARU
Secretary-Treasurer

FRANK MALTA
Assistant Business Agent
Transportation

All correspondence should be addressed to the Secretary-Treasurer

BRIEFING NOTE:

To: TTC Board of Commissioners
Toronto Transit Commission
1900 Yonge Street, 7th Floor, Toronto

cc: Frank Malta, Assistant Business Agent – Transportation
Scott Gordon, Assistant Business Agent – Maintenance
Gregory Percy, Interim CEO

From: Marvin Alfred, President, ATU Local 113

Re: Incidents of hydraulic fluid leaks

Date: December 2, 2024

For the past several years the frequency of hydraulic fluid leaks from work cars has been increasing. Serious incidents were concealed by TTC management and, if they were made public, their severity was downplayed. In April, Local 113 wrote to the TTC Board sharing details of some of the most recent serious incidents. In May, a leaking car was so badly mismanaged by TTC that a large portion of Line 2 was closed for most of the day.

At this week's meeting the TTC Board will consider a technical analysis by Hatch and peer review by the American Public Transit Association. They were asked to comment on the relatively high frequency of hydraulic leaks and if they "were evidence of a willful act." The fact that Hatch found "no evidence of a nefarious or deliberate act" raises concerns that their report is not sufficiently comprehensive. These leaks are the direct result of deliberate decisions. And the issues continue. There was another hydraulic fluid leak on October 22, 2024, around Warden Station at 4:13am.

When this last came to the TTC Board, management implied that workers could be to blame and raised questions of sabotage. The fact is that for CEO Andy Byford's plans to replace the work car fleet were canceled by his successor. Having decided to keep the old fleet TTC failed to invest the necessary time and expertise into maintenance. The regular breakdowns are outcome of TTC's policies of:

- Putting cost savings above all other considerations,
- Centralizing control so that maintenance decisions are made by people who are unfamiliar with the work,
- Keeping important information concealed from the public and the TTC Board, and
- Failing to hold people accountable for their decisions.

Local 113 spoke with members who have direct experience with the work car fleet. This is what

we heard:

- The Hatch report is consistent with our members' position, that the cars are old and poorly maintained and also lack updated drawings and procedures. All we have to guide maintenance are hand-me-down notes from forty years ago.
- TTC Workers have the ability to better maintain the vehicles. For hydraulic hoses on work cars, specifically, our mechanics looked at them and made recommendations that were not acted on.
- The work that is recommended by our members, the skilled tradespeople, is put off if it costs overtime.
- Our machinists could be authorized to make parts, but their hands are tied by corporate policy. TTC refuses to let someone cut a part and weld on another because of liability issues.
- Work car issues are linked to TTC's track maintenance problems:
 - First, unreliable work cars are causing our track workers to be less productive than they could be.
 - Second, the work cars are so vital to track maintenance that TTC is reluctant to remove them from service for proper maintenance.
 - Because maintenance takes so long, and they don't have backup work cars, they end up doing a band-aid solution to get the car back out right away.
- Subway closures are all planned for the year. If the work car is out of service, it can throw the whole year off. So, work car maintenance cycles need to be planned into the track repair plans.

The work cars are only the latest example of the impact of TTC's policies of centralized control, secrecy, lack of accountability and indifference to state-of-good-repair. These maintenance issues quickly become service and safety issues. The catastrophic breakdown of the Scarborough RT is the most obvious. The public is also familiar with the slow orders on the subway system caused by a failure to manage and invest in system maintenance.

Today, management will tell you that the only solution is to spend more money. That is absolutely not true. Better management of existing resources should also be the top priority.

The former CEO attempted to allude that the issues may have been the result of sabotage. ATU Local 113 took offense and is now vindicated by this report and other information that identifies some of the vast issues in the TTC. Local 113 has maintained that the TTC prioritizes savings over safety. We hope with the list of worker-identified issues, the TTC will be willing to authentically take the steps to repair its safety reputation.

Sincerely,



Marvin Alfred
President/Business Agent

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