



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

www.cotma.org.au

News Update – March 2013

From the Chairman

Sydney Tramway Museum has commenced to plan the 2014 COTMA Conference. It is planned to hold the conference during the second week of October, the weekend after the NSW Labor Day weekend. Hotels and possible conference venues are being identified. Preliminary planning is being done for the Partner's tour and trips during the Conference. A Post Conference tour will be included.

I understand David Critchley is heading the sub-committee at STM for the 2014 COTMA Conference. I would like to wish them all good luck in their pursuit in organising a well-run, enjoyable Conference. It is a very satisfying experience getting things to go well, whether it's done by one person alone; but preferably as a group.

Have a bit of a think about the conference. Are there any things you can think of, positive or negative, about the conference you can pass back to me, so I can then pass them onto the organising committee at STMR? During my two years of organising I often wondered; have I missed something?

In Oct 2011, I asked for volunteers to assist me in preparing a Code of Practice for the Maintenance of Electric Tramcars. This work would form part of the work being undertaken by ATHRA in preparing Codes for the maintenance of boilers and rollingstock. So far a couple of people have nominated to assist. I would like to start work on this document shortly and ask you again if there are any people strongly involved in the maintenance side of tramcars who would like to assist me. Can you please contact me at ian.stkilda@gmail.com.

From the Executive Officers

Since the Conference in Adelaide we have had to deal with a major change at VicTrack in Melbourne with the departure of Mike Ryan after many years in the Heritage role. The vacuum of communications and actions has been considerable; until earlier this year when Public Transport Victoria (PTV), formerly DOT, started to approach us and some of the COTMA groups directly. The Executive decided to bring forward its planned 2013 meeting to February and held it in Melbourne with Mr. Adrian Ponton, Registrar Tourist and Heritage Railways PTV.

We had a very constructive meeting with Adrian to find out the lay of the land and what was going on with the Victorian Government side and for us to fully introduce ourselves and express our concerns, plans and situations with him directly. One major item to come out of the discussions which we need to make quiet clear, is that at this point in time, material and Trams would only be released to Victorian groups. Naturally this is ongoing work in progress with PTV. This effectively repeats the situation that was the case until some eight years ago, when COTMA was successfully able to reverse a similar situation.

The Committee addressed all the items referred to it at the conference plus those brought to its attention since.

A DC Voltmeter - Can Anyone help?

Noel Blackmore from PETS has contacted Chairman Ian Seymour about hopefully obtaining a 0-700 volt DC Voltmeter for their sub-station. He would like to get an ancient looking model rather than something new. They do look better!

If any group has one they can spare please contact Noel noelj@beagle.com.au

Website

The COTMA Website is having a couple of technical issues at the moment and our Webmaster is working on them. Hopefully soon some more files will be added to the Technical Library Section, information courtesy of Glen Dyer of the Brisbane Tramway Museum.

Christchurch City Tramway News

In late November 2012, the Christchurch City Council voted unanimously to proceed with the repairs to the city's heritage tramway. All going well, the tram service should be running again late this year. One of the larger jobs is to install many new overhead support poles, the buildings that the overhead was once attached to, having been demolished. At this time, no formal decision has been made about the tramway extension that was nearing completion just prior to the first earthquake. However, the point work for the extension will be installed as part of the repair work.

Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission

As previously reported in the COTMA News Update, the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) has commenced and is currently asking registered charities to provide details of the organisation and Committee Members. Unfortunately this is another Regulator that we will have to report financial and other details too. Organisations already recognised or endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as charities will automatically be registered with the ACNC. More information can be viewed on the web-site: <http://www.acnc.gov.au/>

National Rail Safety Regulator

The National Rail Safety Regulator came into being on 20 Jan 2013 in SA, NSW, Tas and the NT. Qld and Victoria will join later this year and WA most likely early 2014. Victorian tramways will remain with the State Regulator but with revised State Legislation. The transitional dates of two years for existing rail operators and three years for new rail operators will commence from the time the State joins the National Regulator.

Retirement of Leyon Parker

Leyon Parker of the Hobart City Council who along with the late Darleen Haigh and Tony Colman has made possible the reconstruction and restoration to an operable condition of two Hobart trams; advised that he was retiring from the Hobart City Council during Feb. 2013. The COTMA Executive thanks Leyon for his support of COTMA over the recent years and wishes him the best in his retirement.

Australian Rail Health Standards

The Australian National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers took effect on 20 January 2013. The NTC website provides information about the changes and also provides forms that can be customised for each organisation. These can be accessed from the NTC web site at <http://ntc.gov.au/viewpage.aspx?Areald=35&DocumentId=1669>

The provision of these forms by the NTC was made following representation from a number of members of the heritage tramway sector. COTMA thanks the NTC for this work.

Ex Lisbon Tramcars to the Whangarei Steam and Model Club

As Members may be aware, COTMA Member organisation, the “Heritage Trams for Henderson Society”, who owned two ex-Lisbon tramcars have transferred these tramcars to the Whangarei Steam and Model Club (Inc.), see <http://www.steamnorth.org.nz/> The COTMA Executive has agreed to them becoming an Affiliate Member. We welcome them aboard. Details will be added to the COTMA website shortly.

These two tramcars (520 and 526) were acquired by Dave Harre of Auckland some years ago for a tramway project in Henderson auspiced by the City of Waitakere, but this project has since fallen through. The availability of the tramcars was announced at the 2012 Adelaide Conference. Dave Harre was instrumental in the restoration of Wanganui Boon Tram No. 12. COTMA through the Victorian Government and VicTrack made possible the supply of electrical and mechanical equipment to the Tramways Wanganui Trust to enable No. 12 to be operational again. We understand that the construction of a short length of track has been commenced. Our NZ COTMA Technical gurus have been providing advice to the Trust as well.

What happens if? – Incidents on other Tramways, Medicals and Competency.

The Executive discussed these matters at its February meeting. The Executive agreed that COTMA is not a “clearing house” for information about an individual’s medicals or qualifications or incident management and notification. It is a matter for individual Museum members and their workers. COTMA however, can provide general advice.

If say; a worker is employed by a major rail organisation and the tramway museum uses that organisation’s medical for its purposes, then there is a clear responsibility between the member or worker and the Tramway Museum, for the worker to advise of any change in their medical status if a review of their medical is done elsewhere. It is possible that a person may not be fit for duty on a large railway undertaking heavy work, but could be fit to do work at a smaller Museum, where duties can be lighter. The person’s rail safety medical doctor should be requested for advice in this case. The same case applies if a Museum requires its workers (eg drivers) to hold a Driving Licence and they lose their licence for one reason or another.

In relation to incident notification between individual tramway Museums; for example, the worker’s home or main Museum is the Sky Tramways, but also volunteers for the Ground Tramway Museum, and is involved in an incident at the latter, what should the advice be between the two organisations be? Ground Tramway Museum considers that it would suspend the worker from driving there again due to his or her actions, then the Ground Tramway Museum should advise Sky Tramways accordingly, of the event and the reasons why they have suspended the person. Sky Tramways would then consider the situation and make their own decision.

In the case where a tram driver would like to drive for another tramway museum on say a regular basis, the “home” museum should advise the new museum of the person’s competency and training and what type of tram the person competent for. The new museum would need to train the person in their own systems (paperwork etc.), the track (route knowledge) and tramcars which are likely different to that of the home museum’s. The new museum takes on the person’s prior learning and skills if they wish, trains them further as needed and then assesses them for their own situation and tramcars and methods of working. There needs to be an appropriate record kept of the training and assessment. The person’s medical exam needs to be checked to see if it is appropriate for the situation as well; that is, a Cat 1 Medical or Cat 2 Medical in the case of Australian rail operations.

Social Media – “The Good and The Bad”

Keeping up with the changes in Regulations, not just the Rail Safety Regulator is a major task for Railways as well as methods of communications and their implications. The impact of Social

Media on a railway or a sector's operations can be massive if not managed. An incident in France a couple of years ago with a steam locomotive and the scalding of a number of people highlighted the need to control this medium. The social media "explosion" afterwards became difficult to control or keep informed - saying it was the end of steam in France. It was made worse by the failure to advise people on the appropriate website what had happened and ongoing progress. It shows the need to ensure that you respond promptly to the situation and advise the public (and the enthusiast industry social networks) of the correct situation.

A similar situation recently occurred with an Australian Tramway Museum where the "enthusiast" press had the organisation scrapping a tramcar after it was involved in an incident. It is important that the correct message is gotten out to the "media" before the rumour becomes a fact and it is almost impossible to correct it. How you get this out to the Media needs to be considered quickly and decisively. By the way, the organisation is not scrapping the tramcar, but repairing it.

APTA – ModernStreetcar.org

Many of our members are interested in what is happening around the world in relation to current tramway operations and associated documentation. John Smatlak, a consultant and worker for the Orange Empire Railway Museum has been working with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Streetcar Subcommittee to produce a Modern Streetcar Vehicle Guideline. The latest draft can be downloaded from the project website: <http://www.modernstreetcar.org/>. The document is well worth having a look at and includes a lot of information about North American and European and other tramway developments.

FRONZ Newsletter

While well known by our New Zealand members, the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand (FRONZ) – www.fronz.org.nz produces an excellent monthly Journal. The February 2013 issue has some excellent articles and information on Conflicts of Interest, an Australian Tourism E-Kit and Corporate Management processes for not for profit boards – all good reading if you are involved in the management of volunteer or not for profit bodies. For the general link to the FRONZ Information page see - <http://www.fronz.org.nz/information.html>

Code of Practice

Next News Update – July 2012. (All links working at time of publication)