

WORKSHOP B3

DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR TRAMWAY CARRIAGE REGULATIONS

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Introduction

This workshop topic was selected following the recent promulgation of the New Zealand Tramway Carriage Regulations 1979. Although assumed to have been developed to cover the Kelburn cattle line, they also apply to the three operating New Zealand tramway museums. It was noted that there had been no consultation between N.Z. government officers and the museums prior to the publication of the revised regulations.

Discussion

The workshop recognised that New Zealand COTMA museums were already bound by the new regulations and that it would be necessary to seek specific exemptions from some parts of the regulations in order that museum cars in New Zealand could continue to be operated without jeopardy to their historical authenticity. MOTAT advised that it had previously sought such exemptions under the old regulations and they had been granted.

A diversity of circumstances governed the operations of the Australian tramway museums depending on differing State Acts and Regulations. NSW Tramway Regulations had been repealed following closure of the Sydney street tramway system. No regulations covered operations in S.A., since the AETM had been outside the area proclaimed in the old Municipal Tramways Trust Act, and the new State Transport Authority Act, while empowering the STA to operate tramways anywhere in S.A., did not grant exclusivity over tramway operations. In Victoria, the BTPS had been advised by the Victorian Department of Labour and Industry that its operations were still covered by the SEC Tramways Act. In Brisbane, the BTMS had arranged for both motormen and cars to be certified for operation by the Machinery Department, an arrangement which had been a prerequisite for its liability insurance cover. Cars were to be reinspected every 6 - 12 months. There was currently no charge for these inspections.

It was noted that while transport authorities had generally been responsible for all aspects of their operations, museum operations could fall across the regulatory responsibilities of several government departments. Electricity authorities might seek to control electrical distribution and electrical components of cars, while Departments of Labour and Industry/Machinery/Industrial Relations might seek to control mechanical, braking and pressure vessel aspects of operation. Even within a single department, several different Acts and sets of Regulations could be involved. Delegates' own experiences also showed there could be wide divergences between individual inspectors in their interpretation and implementation of regulations.

Differences between transport authority standards and those of other regulating bodies were also noted. Two examples were quoted from the railway preservation field of steam equipment considered by transport authorities as of acceptable standard being immediately condemned by the responsible Labour and Industry/Machinery department after transfer to museum ownership.

Delegates recognised that no matter what the status of local regulations,

if one museum suffered a serious accident, there would be an immediate impact on the operations of all the other museums. United States experience was quoted to show that serious museum accidents were possible, and that some museums were less "professional" in their approach to their responsibilities than were the majority of museums. The operations of the less "professional" minority gave rise to serious concern among the remainder of operators. It was agreed that all COTMA museums were obliged to maintain adequate standards.

It was accepted that COTMA museums would not be in a position to accept a standard set of tramway carriage regulations, neither was COTMA in any position to enforce such regulations even if they were adopted. However, it was agreed that it would be helpful to all museums if COTMA could sponsor the development of a set of minimum guidelines onto which museums could build to meet local circumstances and legislative requirements. Such guidelines could prove useful if those states not already having regulations governing museum tramway operations were to consider introducing such legislation.

Conclusions

It was agreed that copies of the N.Z. Tramway Carriage Regulations 1979 be provided to all COTMA museums for their information and consideration. (THS subsequently agreed to arrange this).

It was agreed that one person be sought to draft a set of minimum tramway carriage guidelines using the recent N.Z. regulations as a basis, and that each museum nominate a corresponding member to help with the task. (Mr A.J. Griffin subsequently offered to undertake responsibility for drafting a set of guidelines).