

SESSION: ACQUIRING TRAM PARTS FROM CALCUTTA**LINDSAY RICHARDSON - PERTH ELECTRIC TRAMWAY SOCIETY**

Lindsay commenced by explaining that this was the story of an unsuccessful attempt to acquire equipment.

In 1981 the Perth Electric Tramway Society was formed and was faced with the task of obtaining electrical and mechanical equipment for the tramcar bodies which had been acquired.

In 1984 Ric Francis suggested Calcutta as a possible source so he and Lindsay visited the city in 1985. They discovered an incredibly run-down system operating two styles of bogie/articulated trams and single truck cars with trailers.

A meeting with the traffic superintendent resulted in a tour of the system and the workshops where a considerable stock of spare, scrap 21E truck frames, airbrakes and other components were observed. They were advised that to acquire such equipment they would require an export permit from the Department of Supply and obtained the necessary forms.

Upon returning to Australia a letter was sent to the General Manager of the system requesting equipment. Despite several follow-up letters in 1986-88 no response was ever received.

Lindsay mentioned that he had subsequently been advised that a better process might be to first contact the Indian High Commissioner in Australia before visiting/contacting the operator.

John Shanks (THS) noted that the film of trip which was screened during the session showed Dick Kerr controllers of the type needed in Launceston.

Lindsay Richardson reported that PETS eventually obtained equipment from Kagoshima in Japan where the sister city relationship with Perth was a factor in their success. Dr. John Radcliffe (AETM) confirmed that they had obtained trucks from Nagasaki in Japan and John Shanks (THS) commented on their experiences where the fact that the person was a tram enthusiast was a key factor.

Howard Clarke (STM) made several comments:

- another member suggested to him that Sydney had sold motors to Calcutta in 1961.
- Whilst they had been successful in obtaining the PCC car from San Francisco, when they tried to obtain the promised spare B3 trucks they were thwarted by lobbying from local enthusiasts.
- he found that European operators (Berlin, Brussels and Italy) were very efficient and professional in dealing with requests for cars and equipment by comparison with other situations described in the workshop.

John Phillips (BTM) described the more recent "exchange" of tramway publicity between the Calcutta and Melbourne tramway systems instigated by a South Melbourne tram conductor.