

Tramcar Cleaning

Presenter: Ron White
Session Chair: Peter Hyde
Session Secretary: Morris Moller

For some twenty-five years, I made it my responsibility to organise and mostly do some of the cleaning at our tramway museum. This included display areas, street furniture, working floors as well as keeping the trams and buses clean. There was some cleaning work done by other members but I legitimately felt that I was doing most of it myself, and not keeping up with it.

Then something triggered my giving it away. Rolling stock reports in our Committee Meetings rarely, if ever, mentioned the fact that routine car cleaning had taken place, so I wondered whether the work had ever been valued.

Fortunately I found another member to take on the responsibility, and after a break from it. I now assist him to some extent. I know that he finds it a struggle to keep up with and we have discussed the formation of a team to cover the work.

The questions I pose today I hope will take a searching look at attitudes and practices in what I think is an important part of our museum operations.

I feel that well-presented, clean cars make a good impression on our visitors, and indeed, contribute to the safety of our operations. The regular cleaning of our vehicles should also contribute to their longevity which may determine the cleaning methods we use.

From my experience, I would say this requires a team of people who communicate with each other what they have done. Alternatively an effective record system could enable any person to do useful work on a casual basis.

At our museum, we have discussed having a cleaning dock but have not felt strongly enough about it to proceed. Some cleaning jobs are better done indoors whilst others may be done better outdoors.

I would hope that our deliberations today, the task of car cleaning may enjoy a higher status with adequate provision of materials and manpower support than may have existed in the past.

There will be varying answers to these questions according to the circumstances of each museum, and experience and opinions of the people involved in the discussions.

Restoration and cleanliness should be good so as to make an impression to the public.

A question sheet was handed out.

Question Sheet—Handout

Introduced Discussion — Tramcar Cleaning

A Organisation

1. Is tramcar cleaning regarded as part of the regular maintenance program?
2. What status does this work enjoy?
3. Is there a person or team who make this their responsibility?
4. Is there a special cleaning area? What are its features?
5. If not a special area, where are the cars worked on?
6. Is a planned cleaning program followed?
7. Is cleaning on an “as needs” basis good enough?
8. How fastidious do we need to be? Or, can we afford to be?
9. Are records kept? Is there any point in keeping these cleaning records?

B Methods

What methods, equipment and materials are used for the following cleaning tasks? How often are they done?

1. All-over washing of exterior.
2. Window cleaning inside and out
3. Floor cleaning—smooth and slatted. Dusting of seats.
4. Ceilings and bulkheads.

	Equipment	Methods/Materials	Frequency
All-over wash exterior			
Window cleaning			
Floors Seats			
Bulkheads Ceilings			

Comments

John Bullen: floors and windows washed after 30 trips.

Keith Stoddan: removing cobwebs, mud from floors and window washing.

Bob Marchant: has a regular cleaner on Saturdays, window cleaning is important. Praise to the member for a job well done.

Terry Verney: tram runs for six weeks, Wednesday to Saturday. Swept out and windows cleaned.

Kaye Morgan: cleaning is important. Trams cleaned every Tuesday.

Suggestion made for a universal cleaning plan.

Bill Kingsley: at Ballarat operational trams cleaned frequently, others not cleaned. The SPER: Euchywash, makes trams cleaner and smell nicer.

Jim McCrum: PTU trams washed inside and outside every day. Roofs washed every three months. Do not use ammonia cleaners because of the smell. Do not use household detergents. Malt vinegar is an excellent window cleaner.

Terry Verney: No foodstuffs allowed on board.

Don Smith: suggested a 'swirlon' brush be tried.

Peter Lumb: problem with waxing when repainting.

Morris Moller: try and stop children from standing on seats.