

## **CODE OF ELECTRICAL PRACTICE FOR COTMA GROUPS**

*Chaired by Craig Tooke, Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association*

### **Introduction and Background**

The main aim of the session was to reach agreement in principle that museums will look at the draft "Electrical Operations Rules 1988" produced by the Melbourne Tramcar Preservation Association

Following some bad electrical accidents in Melbourne the coroner had been directed to enquire into the reasons for the accidents. Craig Tooke felt strongly that any accidents on museum operations could result in severe repercussions on all museum operations, and felt that a common standard should be produced and used as a guide.

A draft standard, based mainly on Melbourne Tramway practice, has been produced and distributed to all member groups following agreement at the last COTMA conference to progress this matter. However, there had been limited response from museums.

### **General Discussion**

Mark Skinner (Australian Electric Transport Museum) asked whether the SEC (State Electricity (Victoria)) had been involved in drafting the code because if the document is to be worthwhile there is a need to keep the SEC involved. Craig advised that no approach to SEC at this early stage.

Richard Gilbert (Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society) questioned the need for the amount of detail in the document.

Jack Nyman (Maitland Tramway and Museum) advised that his museum had already put the document to their local supply authority who are considering it.

Tim Borchers (Bendigo Trust) felt that to put the present document to SEC at this stage would be counter-productive because of repercussions which could ensue although Mr Borchers added that the SEC would no doubt like to have an input.

Bill Kingsley (Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society) mentioned that the SEC were perfectly happy with the expertise that Ballarat had, even allowing Ballarat staff to work on the tram overhead attached to their own poles.

Richard Gilbert (Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society) advised that Ballarat is looking at its operational standards and agreed that some regulation is better than none. He was of the view it was better to have our own rules than rules imposed from outside.

Jack Nyman (Maitland Tramway and Museum) was concerned that an accident, where there are no regulations, could have serious repercussions.

Tim Borchers (Bendigo Trust) noted that museums were already required to comply with Occupational Health and Safety regulations. He advised that Bendigo would not be bound by the draft regulations.

Craig Tooke asked the meeting whether it felt there was a need, in principle, for a self-regulatory document.

It was moved by Jack Nyman (Maitland Tramway and Museum) and seconded by Mark Skinner (Australian Electric Transport Museum)

"that the meeting agree that there is a need in principle for a self-regulatory document."

Discussion on the motion:

Murray Sanders (Tramway Historical Society) considered the present draft is excessively complex but the motion is supported in principle.

Mr Campbell (South Pacific Electric Railway) advised that he felt the draft document was well meaning but SPER would not be directed by it as it has its own procedures.

Richard Gilbert (Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society) felt the draft document should be broadened.

Messrs Kingsley and Skinner (Australian Electric Transport Museum) commented that the draft is oriented to operational considerations as opposed to construction.

The motion was put and carried with Bendigo Trust dissenting

Craig Tooke recommended to the meeting that a way to proceed would be to recommend the COTMA General Meeting that a sub-committee be formed to formulate the proposed regulations.

After considerable discussion this was agreed to by consensus.

Bill Kingsley (Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society) felt that persons for the sub-committee should be nominated now and it was agreed that the meeting recommend to the COTMA General Meeting that:

- a sub-committee be formed to progress this matter consisting of a representative of each of the four Victorian museums plus Mr Noel Blackmore of Perth.
- Craig Tooke be Chairman .
- that a draft code of practice be available by Christmas 1990 with a full report to the COTMA AGM in 1991.

It was noted that there would be no compulsion on any individual museum to adopt the rules that they should be basic and simple. Any further comments should be directed to Craig Tooke or Bill Kingsley.