



# Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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## News Update – July / August 2005

### From the Chairman

June is over, and I am over it too. It was a busy month for the Chairman. Going to the very enjoyable and well attended FRONZ Conference in Greymouth NZ, having a few days off in NZ, then undertaking final arrangements for the COTMA AGM on the last weekend of June and being busy at work with year end.

The FRONZ Conference was a good opportunity to catch up again with the COTMA's NZ members and the various rail heritage operators in NZ. The NZ Regulator attended the conference and spoke of the introduction of the new Railways Act and the introduction of Safety Cases. This will mean a lot of work for our NZ members over the next 12 months. All the paperwork has to be with the Regulator by July 2006. Many of the issues they are facing are similar to those of Australia. The regulators all talk to each other too. While in Christchurch I met with the new manager of the Christchurch City Tramway, John Smith. The new operator also operates the Christchurch Gondola.

The COTMA AGM weekend was very successful, with an excellent attendance, including six representatives from New Zealand and most Australian Members. One of the principal benefits of these meetings is the opportunity to meet and network with each other and find out what is happening around the place.

### The 2005 COTMA AGM

The AGM based at Hawthorn Depot was held on the weekend of June 25 and 26. It was well received by those who attended. The formal meeting itself on Saturday and the follow on discussions on Sunday morning ranged over a number of matters. The affiliate memberships applications of Heritrac and Tramcar W2 568 Inc accepted by the Executive were endorsed. Some of the matters discussed were public liability insurance, COTMA Achievement Awards, disposal of redundant equipment from Melbourne and Adelaide, COTMA handling charges for disposal of surplus equipment, the ex MMTB drawings now stored at Hawthorn, the Museum Agreements and security protection on Saturday.

On Sunday morning, discussions included the draft Code of Ethics, a review of how COTMA is going, the web site and knowledgebase. Graeme Breydon, ATHRA representative updated us on the situation regarding the proposed changes to Rail Safety in Australia. We will elaborate on the items discussed at the meeting over the new few News Updates.

Although we did not use Y469 as planned for the tour due to technical problems with the tram and due to nearby track and overhead replacement works, we had to rearrange the tour in the week before the AGM. After a lot of emails etc, we used 'future' heritage tramcar B2001, out of Southbank Depot. Thanks to Greg Rodgers for driving the tram and to Yarra Trams for making the tramcar available to us. A great lunch was provided by the ???? team on the tram.

Following the tram tour, Mike Ryan of the Victorian Department of Infrastructure held the regular two monthly Tram Heritage Forum Meeting at Hawthorn. Also attending was Tricia Brett of the Public Transport Safety Division of the Victorian Department of Infrastructure and Ian Cordwell of VicTrack. Mike, Tricia and Ian updated the group on a number of matters including the disposal

of the redundant equipment, PLI insurance arrangements in Victoria, the Friends of Hawthorn Tram Depot, Custodial Agreements for surplus VicTrack trams, changes to State and National accreditation systems and the use of heritage trams on the network.

On Saturday evening a very pleasant social function was held in the depot at which a series of slides from the late Wal Jack collection (from the BTM Collection) was screened. We had hoped to screen some old movies as well, but equipment difficulties prevented this. This highlighted the problem of deteriorating movie projection equipment – now becoming heritage in its own right. Following the completion of the Sunday morning meeting, most of us adjourned to Yarra Tram's Eastern Road Operations Centre for a tour of this new facility. Thanks to Yarra Trams again for allowing us to visit the centre and for the staff on duty who expertly explained how the Melbourne Tram system is monitored and controlled and to Yarra Tram's Marketing Department who provided a bag of interesting information and samples.

Finally thanks to all those who arranged the food and the events or assisted during the weekend and to those who attended and made the meeting very successful overall.

As the 2006 Conference will be held in Melbourne during November, commencing Friday 17 November, it is planned to hold an informal AGM in Sydney in June 2006 to enable matters to be discussed by Members. Although the formal AGM must be held in Victoria, it can be undertaken in a short format, as it was done following the Auckland CGM, for example at a DOI Tram Heritage Forum meeting.

### **Australian Museums - Check your Charitable Organisation Status**

As from July 1, 2005 you can check your organisation status as a charitable organisation and the tax concessions you are entitled to access on the Australian Business Register at [www.abr.business.gov.au](http://www.abr.business.gov.au). It is recommended that you check your status on this list. You should note that anyone can check your status using this website.

### **AS4292 Review**

COTMA along with other COTMA Members and Yarra Trams made submissions to the Committee reviewing AS4292 part 1. These submissions were made in conjunction with the Australian Tourist and Rail Heritage Association (ATHRA). The main point made is that street tramways are different to heavy interstate railways, have different interface characteristics and the need to consider heritage elements as well.

### **The Riga Charter**

At the Auckland 2004 Conference AGM, one of the matters raised was: *What are our ethics of work?* In the August 2004 *News Update*, the draft version of the Fedecrail, the European Federation of Museum and Tourist Railways *Riga Charter* which addresses these issues was noted as being available on the web and a web link provided. The Charter was finalised at Fedecrail's recent Conference held during April 2005. Arthur Brook of the Daylesford Spa Country Railway has prepared an article for their newsletter, *The Turntable* and has made it available for publication. It includes the final version of the Charter. It is well worth reading and a copy has been included in both the digital mail and the mailout itself. Thanks to Arthur for following through on the Charter and preparing the article. The Charter will be very useful in preparing or updating your Conservation Plans and explaining to people outside the Museum movement what we are about.

## **Visibility at Level Crossings**

ATHRA Alert No. 4 – *Australian Code of Practice – Rolling Stock Lighting and Visibility Sections were issued for comment.* This is currently being developed by the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) was distributed to all Members by email on July 2 or July 4. While light rail (trams are excluded), those Members who operate their vehicles across “level crossings” with road traffic should review the document, just in case. Comments can be made either direct to the ARA (please include us on a copy) or send any comments to the Chairman for consolidation into a single submission.

## **Rail Safety Matters**

The Victorian regulator has sent out a questionnaire to all Victorian Rail Heritage operators seeking feedback about the implementation of the Code of Practice for Health Assessment of Railway Safety Workers. While the evaluation is limited to Victoria, if you wish for us to feed back any comments from your organisations viewpoint, please let us know of them.

One issue common to us and the rail industry in general is we are all suffering from change fatigue. This applies to those across the Tasman as well. While they may be some prioritisation of the issues, they could still be overwhelming for us and our volunteer workers. Issues currently on the big agenda are Training, the National Accreditation Package, skills knowledge and competencies, interface management and the list goes on. Stay Alert for all these possible changes in case they consume you.

## **Documents Available on the Web or from the COTMA Chairman**

The following documents are recommended for those interested in Tramway or Railway Engineering standards or knowing what is happening around us and can be downloaded off the web.

1. Railway Safety Principles and Guidance – part 2, Section G – Guidance on Tramways (UK – Health and Safety Executive, HM Railway Inspectorate)
2. ditto – part H – minor railways
3. The Management of Steam Locomotive Boilers (UK) – also from HM Railway Inspectorate.
4. ARTC – NSW railways Engineering Standards – many interesting infrastructure related.
5. TDT Paper
6. The US Vintage Trolleys document – available from the Chairman by email.
7. A review of Western Australia's Rail Safety Act 1998 of October 2004. The report has only recently (21 June 05) become available on the web at <http://www.dpi.wa.gov.au/rail/safety/act.html> It includes a very eloquent summary of how regulation can have undue impacts on small heritage operations and summaries of verbal and written submissions by Hotham Valley, PETS, ARHS-WA and ARPGWA. This is good background reading for those reviewing the NTC model legislation and regulation proposals over the next six months.

## **Forthcoming Events:**

Brisbane Tramway Museum - 25th Anniversary of Opening celebration on Wednesday 10th August with the Brisbane Lord Mayor officiating at 9am.

Ballarat Tramway Museum – 100 years of electric trams – Sunday 25 September 2005. Book Launch, *The Golden City and Its Tramways* - Wed. 21 September.

## **Next News Update – mid to late August 2005.**