



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

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News Update – September 2005

From the Chairman

While things may at times seem to slow down a bit, there is always plenty going on. With the revision of codes such as AS4292, training processes, new rail safety Acts and regulations, there is often far too much for all of us to keep up with. The sale by tender of the Adelaide H class trams by Trans Adelaide, has livened things up for those Museum Members who are interested in acquiring them. COTMA is assisting those members who are interested in obtaining these trams with letters of support and will be submitting a tender on behalf of the Members to acquire the spare parts. But the preservation of historic equipment and the traditions of running a tramway system are some of the reasons why we are here and forge on despite everything. Our volunteer and paid workers are to be congratulated on preserving, getting on with the job and achieving their goals. Our Community thanks you.

SA level crossing ads

It is good to see the SA Government putting some effort into level crossing safety by advertising on TV. The ads can be seen at www.transport.sa.gov.au/safety/rail/advertising_campaign.asp. Some criticism was levelled at the ads over their graphic nature – but the effects are very good and hopefully will start to get the message through to the public.

Membership List.

Enclosed is a copy of the current COTMA Membership list, with email addresses. Can you please check and update your records.

Items for Download

Two documents that could be of interest and that can be downloaded off the Web are:

1. [ICS Electric Railways Handbook c1901](#) – how to build and operate an electric tramway.
2. [USA Military Railways Handbook 1917](#) – great for building railways in France during a war.

AS 4292 Review

Richard Clarke reported that the AS4292 meeting while successful in having some of our comments included in the code, we were not successful in others, in particular with the definition of “light rail” or “tramways”. There seems to be a lack of appreciation that light railways in a shared street environment are different to heavy rail. We understand that it will be, however a bit more friendly towards Heritage Rail organisations than currently.

Conserving Photographs and Slides

The problem of scanning photographs on digital scanners is relatively easily handled by most commercial scanners. But few handle negatives of varying sizes and colour positive slides. They tend to be slow, one at a time and don't give that good a definition, without paying a huge amount of money. A STM member recently obtained a Canon Canoscan 9950f which does 12 slides at a time, at 4800 dpi. The cost is about \$750. Details can be obtained from the Canon website at:

http://www.canon.com.au/products/scanners/scanners_low_medium_volume/canoscan9950f.html

The National Scene

The drafting of the National Model Rail Safety Bill by the NTC, including the Regulations, Regulatory Impact Statement is proceeding, but is running about three months late. It is expected to be released for public comment during September. Also expected soon is the NTC's paper on accreditation requirements and risk. Watch for ATHRA alerts on these matters. Your comments could be very important. Unfortunately the Victorian Regulator has beaten the starting gun with their own new Rail Safety Act. COTMA Victorian members attended a Victorian DOI briefing on some of the draft provisions of the new Act on 15 September. The period for comments closed ten days later.

ATHRA Alerts

Since the last News Update the following ATHRA Alerts have been issued. Your timely comment on these could be important for your ongoing operations. Don't leave it to the few to make comment.

#6 – Draft of Revision of AS 1742.7-1993 - *“Manual of uniform traffic control devices Part 7: Railway Crossings.”* Although comment has now closed, it was interesting to see that it included a definition of light railways/tramways – *“Urban public transport systems comprising railed vehicles, i.e. trams, which commonly, but not necessarily travel on streets intermingling with road traffic, and maintain separation from other traffic by line of sight.”* One of the outcomes of this review is likely to be the change in the standard of new level crossing signage, from open cross bucks to a sign with white cross bucks on a red background.

#7 - Draft “National Standard for Licensing Persons Performing High Risk Work” The National Occupational Health and Safety Commission has put out a call for comment on a proposed "New National Standard for Licensing Persons Performing High Risk Work". This includes operation of Boilers and Reciprocating Steam Engines. It would replace the standard originally declared in 1992 which has been adopted in OHS regulations throughout Australia. It includes forklifts, work platforms and other machines that require licensing to use. Comments close 26 October. One of the important changes is that the requirement for training and assessment to be provided by Registered Training Organisations (RTF) under the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF); This could be difficult for there is a lack of courses available on old types of boilers for example.

These alerts have been emailed to Members. If you need copies, please contact the Chairman.

2006 Centenary in Melbourne' COTMA Conference

Planning continues for the November 2006 conference with details planned to be sent to all Museums early in 2006.

Forthcoming Events:

Sydney Tramway Museum – Forties Days – Sunday 9th October – winding the clock back to the 1940's with scenes reminiscent of the wartime Home Front. A camouflaged double decker bus will operate between Loftus and Sutherland. Trams will be blackout ready and staff in the uniforms of the day. The Sydney Swing Dance Group will be providing the music.

Perth Electric Tramway Society are holding their 20th Anniversary Celebrations on Sunday 27th November at Whiteman Park. A big weekend is planned, including a dinner on Friday night, a practice day on Saturday. Please let Bob Pearce, PETS Secretary know by email at probert@iinet.net.au or on mobile 0418 337 302 if you are likely to be attending during the weekend or for the dinner. All welcome.

Next News Update – late October 2005.