P.O. Box 61
Carlton South Vic. 3053
www.cotma.org.au
A304117B
ABN 81 315 085 479

# Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

# News Update – March 2005

## From the Chairman

March 2005 has been a busy period for COTMA related business. During the second weekend of March, I attended the Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA) meeting at Belgrave Victoria on behalf of COTMA and the following weekend was the COTMA Executive Meeting in Adelaide.

ATHRA is the Australian body formed in June 2004 to represent the interests and needs of all tourist and heritage rail organisations at a national level. It is chaired by Paul Rollason of Queensland. COTMA was invited by ATHRA to send a representative to this meeting of the various state tourist railways members. Representatives from every state attended. It was very pleasing to see the strong co-operative spirit of all the attendees working together to ensure the survivability of the tourist and heritage rail sector in the long term. Attending the meeting was the Federation of Rail Organisations of New Zealand (FRONZ) Chairman/Executive Officer Paul Dillicar. Paul spoke of the organisations history, current work being done by FRONZ in New Zealand and the future directions and challenges ahead for them. The meeting looked at many facets of the sector including the problems of insurance, regulatory reform, training, liaison with the ARA and other bodies, codes of practice and promotion of the sector in general.

ATHRA sees a strong working relationship with COTMA and would like to see a representative at each of the future meetings. By successfully working together, we will be able to influence the regulatory direction and other controls on our industry taken in the future. Tramway organisations form a fair proportion of the number of heritage rail organisations overall and it is important that we take an active part in the management of the sector. This will ensure that we are not accidentally overlooked by the regulators or other people who have an influence on our activities. In this regard, all COTMA members should be an active member of their relevant heritage rail umbrella groups be they in Australia or New Zealand.

While it may seem that that this *News Update* is concentrated on Australian events and news, it should be noted that the New Zealand Regulator regularly attends meetings of the Australian Regulators and even South Africa sent a representative recently to a meeting in Western Australia.

*Warren Doubleday*

## COTMA Executive Meeting

The first meeting of the COTMA executive since Auckland in June 2004 took place in Adelaide on Saturday 19 March. It was hosted by the Australian Electric Transport Museum at St. Kilda and organised by Ian Seymour, the Australian Museum Liaison Officer. Our New Zealand Executive members were unable to attend, David Cawood because of work commitments and Henry Brittain, unable to fly from Wellington to Melbourne on 20 March due to poor weather. The weather affected the Test Cricket as well!

The meeting had a very full agenda looking at the current activities of COTMA, future planning, forthcoming meetings and conferences, tramcar equipment disposal, liaison, our communications within the organisation, matters affecting our members and future influences that can be expected. Many of these will be reported upon in the next two or three News Updates. The

subjects on the horizon, as seen by the Executive, which will affect us in the near future, are Rail Safety Accreditation legislative changes and competency training of our workers.

The Executive accepted the application of Heritrac Tramcar Preservation group of Seymour Victoria, as an Affiliate member of COTMA. The Executive also approved the application to AHTRA by COTMA to become an Affiliate Member.

The Executive was pleased to see the recent movement of surplus tramcars from Melbourne to Members that had requested to obtain complete trams; Perth – W7 1017, Adelaide W7 1013, Bendigo SW6's 880 & 918 and Y1 610, Bylands – W2 646 and Y1 612 and in the future W7 1036 to Sydney. The acquisition of these tramcars by the various Member groups has been the result of a long period of consultation, support and work with the Victorian Department of Infrastructure and VicTrack by COTMA. It is hoped that the next stage will be the commencement of the disposal of spare parts to COTMA members throughout Australia and New Zealand to those who have requested them.

While the meeting was taking place, we could see AETM members busy cleaning the tram to make it presentable after many years of storage at Preston.

**AS4292 Revision (ME79 Committee)**

Richard Clarke, COTMA Representative on the ME79 Committee undertaking the revision to AS4292 advises that he expects that the draft document will go out for public comment during April. It is most important that all members who work with AS4292 review the document and make comments back to Richard within the required time frame.

**NTC – Regulatory Framework for Rail Safety in Australia Review**

Prior to the ATHRA meeting on Saturday, three representatives of the NTC gave a presentation to some of the delegates on Friday afternoon on the progress of their work to improve the regulatory system for rail safety in Australia. This will most likely result in uniform legislation and regulations nationally, but with state based oversight. Possibly during April, model regulatory documentation will be released for comment. The Australasian Railway Association in association with ATHRA is proposing to undertake a visit to each of the state tourist rail associations seeking comment and analysis on the draft documents. It is most important that each our Member's review these documents and determine what the impacts on them could be and feed them back to the state organisations.

**The Waterfall Accident Report**

Recently forwarded by email to each Member was a four page document titled –*Implications of Waterfall Final Report March 2005,* as ATHRA Alert No. 1. Each Member operating rail heritage vehicles should review this document and determine what the implications are for their operation and whether they need to change any operational practices.

COTMA will circulate such alerts received from ATHRA, FRONZ or other organisations just in case our Members don't see them from another source. We apologise for any cross postings of these documents.

**June AGM**

The dates of 25 and 26 June 2005 for the COTMA AGM based at Hawthorn Depot are confirmed. The programme outlined in the Jan / Feb issue of the *News Update.* More details in the next issue.

**Next Issue – late April 2005**