

Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

P.O. Box 61
Carlton South Vic. 3053
www.cotma.org.au
A0030417B
ABN 81 315 085 479

News Update – November 2007 to January 2008

From the Chairman

In November 2007, the NSW Rail Regulator, ITSRR, sought comment on a paper titled "Safety Regulation of Heritage Railway Operators". COTMA worked closely with the Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA) on our responses to ITSRR. The paper discusses the barriers that Heritage Rail Operators encounter in trying to meet the ever increasing demands of the regulators and the problems of representation by umbrella bodies, particularly in NSW. Tramway Museums that operate heritage vehicles are faced with the same barriers. Copies of the submissions are available on the COTMA and the ATHRA www.athra.asn.au web sites. One of the concepts that was put forward by ATHRA was a "Deemed to Comply" safety system, in lieu of the existing regulatory system. This follows the Building Industry regulatory system. Copies of both papers have been distributed to those responsible for Rail Safety Management systems.

The overbearing regulatory system is robbing Museum personnel of the time that should be put into either preparing funding submissions, working on restoration etc. The continued existence of heritage rail organisations is threatened purely because of the impact of these regulations on the few that have the skills to prepare such documents and the resultant volunteer burnout. COTMA along with ATHRA is trying to mitigate the effects of these ever increasing demands. It is slow going, but we have made some headway over the last two or so years.

2008 COTMA Conference

Planning for the 2008 COTMA conference to be held in Launceston is continuing. The Launceston Tramway Museum Society (LTMS) had hoped to have information out before Christmas, but delays in finalising costs have occurred. Information should be available by early February 2008.

The dates however remain the same, opening Friday 21 August 2008 in Launceston and finish with the Conference General Meeting on Tuesday 26 August. A post conference tour finishes in Hobart on the weekend of 30 – 31 August. This tour will visits to the Wee Georgie Wood railway, the Wilderness Railway and Hobart. As soon as details are available, they will be placed on the COTMA web site, www.cotma.org.au

Call for Papers

We have received already some great proposals for papers for the forthcoming 2008 conference. We could do with some more however. This is an excellent opportunity to show and explain to other conference participants what your Museum is doing and transfer the skills and benefits to other member Museums.

A copy of the "Call for Conference" papers is attached to this News Update and the electronic Version. The closing date of 1/2/2008 has been extended to 15 Feb. but if you need a further extension, please advise the Chairman by e-mail as detailed on the enclosed sheet.

Executive Meeting

The next Executive meeting will be held at the Steam Tramway and Railway Preservation Society depot at Valley Heights on Saturday 9 Feb. 2008. If any Members have any matter that they wish to raise, can they please advise the Chairman by the 6th of Feb.

Uniform Caps

David Critchley of Sydney Tramway Museum has advised that a source of Uniform caps is Hills Hats of New Zealand. They are located in Petone near Lower Hutt, Wellington. The company was founded in the 1870's and it has a long tradition of quality. Their web site is <http://www.hillshats.co.nz>

Achievement Awards

An important part of each conference are the COTMA Achievement Awards and following the success of the 2006 Conference, an "EAR Award" (Excellence and Recognition) will be awarded again, subject to sufficient entries and will carry a cash prize of \$500. Entries will close with the judges on 30 June 2008.

The Awards are not competitive, but are to set standards of achievement that their fellow peers can recognise and inspire others to equal or better. Most importantly they offer an opportunity to recognise the achievements of your workers. For the first time in 2006, a formal "EAR Award" (Excellence and Recognition) was made to the organisation that the judges considered had made the most significant achievement.

Submissions can be for tramcar or other vehicle restoration, infrastructure, management, special events or any field of endeavour that you would think suitable for an award. Submissions are to be sent to the COTMA PO Box 61, Carlton South Vic 3053 and/or by email cotma@cotma.org.au giving details, up to three pages of the achievement with photographs etc, attaching any supporting documents that you feel are relevant. Details of past winters can be seen on the COTMA web site - <http://members.optushome.com.au/cotma/awards.html>

Congratulations to Wellington Tramway Museum

The Wellington Museum received a great Christmas present when they were advised that they were successful in an application for \$317,000 from the NZ Lottery Grants Board. This will enable them to rebuild the 1981 rear storage building, renovation of 1974 barn and most importantly, the provision of a new Library /Archives / administration building which would, amongst other things, replace the Palace. For those who have not visited Paekakariki, the "Palace" is a rather run down small building that serves as meal room, members room and a host of other tasks.

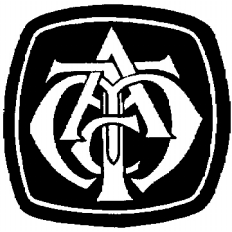
Personal Moves

Jeff Constantine has taken an opportunity following the completion of his contract with Portland Cable trams to move onto another challenging community volunteer management job, as the Manager of Coal Creek Heritage Village, Korumburra. We wish Jeff the best in his new job. Alan Rees has been appointed to the Manager's position in Portland.

COTMA members were saddened to learn of the death of Canon Lewis Nyman on 1 January. He attended a number of conferences and was a well known tram enthusiast, as well as an Army and Police Chaplin. Bob Merchant's cousin attended his funeral and a report is attached to the electronic copy of this New Update.

Blackpool Tram Fire Report

Worth reading is the UK Rail Accident Investigation Branch investigation into a rather spectacular fire on 24 January 2007 in Blackpool. Tram 611, a prototype City Class tram, caught fire at one end and was substantially damaged. The cause of the fire has not been conclusively determined but appears to be possibly an electrical wiring fault. For the report, use the following link http://www.raib.gov.uk/cms_resources/071127_R412007_Blackpool.pdf



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News Update – February & March 2008

From the Chairman

The Chairman, without a walking stick this time, is off to Europe of 9 April and returning, if all goes to plan on 2 June at 4am! I will be attending the Fedecrail Conference in Salzburg and visiting a number of Austrian and European tourist railways and tramways. Included in my planning are visits to Crich, York and a number of tramway cities and locations; as well as discussions with our counterparts on how they are faring and coping with ever increasing Government regulation and control. Although I will be accessing my emails on occasions, please copy e-mails to the Executive Officer, tookec@bigpond.com to assist in an early response.

ATHRA Canberra Meeting

A very successful meeting of the Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA) was held in Canberra 14 to 15 March 2008. The Chairman attended the meeting along with Peter Hyde and Ian Seymour representing their state bodies. Presentations were given by the NSW Rail Safety Regulator, the Australasian Railway Association and the Rail Industry Standards and Safety Board, the latter primarily about the progress on the development of a boiler code for railway steam locomotives. While this code may only be important for a few COTMA Members, it does show the industry support for the sector in ensuring we are able to operate professionally.

The preliminary results of the recent survey of the tourist and heritage sector about the impact of Section 68 (Competency Assessment) of the National Transport Commissions Model Bill should be known in early April. There was a good response from the sector and the general thrust of the responses was that any requirement to use Registered Training Organisations to do training and competency assessment would put us out of business financially.

2008 COTMA Conference

Arrangements for the Conference are proceeding. All participants of recent conferences should have received either an e-mail or a letter advising preliminary conference details and the post conference tours. Multiple copies have also been sent to Members for display at Museums, depots, etc. Conference details and Registration sheet are available on the COTMA web site – <http://members.optushome.com.au/cotma/documents/Proposed%20Program%20for%20COTMA%202008%20Conference.pdf>

- **Conference General Meeting**

The Conference General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 26 August. A draft agenda will shortly be forwarded to each Member and additional items for the agenda or discussion are welcome.

- **BRAGs (or what has your Museum Achieved since the last COTMA Conference)**

As in past conferences, we will be having sessions that enable your Museum to tell the rest of us what you have been doing since the last Conference. Presentations can be video, DVD, slides, or PowerPoint. Please limit your presentation to no more than 10 mins.

- **Achievement Awards**

Don't forget these are due with the judges by 30 June 2008. The Awards are not competitive, but are to set standards of achievement that their fellow peers can recognise and inspire others to equal or better. Most importantly they offer an opportunity to recognise the achievements of your workers. It is proposed, subject to sufficient entries, that a formal "EAR Award" (Excellence and

Recognition) will be made to the organisation that the judges considered had made the most significant achievement. This award will carry a cash prize of \$500.

Submissions can be for tramcar or other vehicle restoration, infrastructure, management, collection management, special events or any field of endeavour that you would think suitable for recognition of an achievement. Submissions are to be sent to COTMA PO Box 61, Carlton South Vic 3053 and/or by email cotma@cotma.org.au giving details, up to three pages of the achievement with photographs etc, attaching any supporting documents that you feel are relevant. Details of past winners can be seen on the COTMA web site - <http://members.optushome.com.au/cotma/awards.html>

Executive Meeting

A successful meeting of the Executive was held during Mid Feb. at Valley Heights, the home of COTMA Member, the Steam Tram and Railway Preservation Society. We were welcomed and very well looked by Society members who had Sydney Steam Tram 103A in steam and gave us journeys along their line. Most of the principle outcomes of this meeting are included within this news update.

Tram Equipment Protocol with Victrack

VicTrack assisted by the Executive has developed a draft protocol regarding equipment that has been donated to COTMA Members by VicTrack. The protocol provides a basis for the use, transfer between members and any disposal of the equipment. This will shortly be sent to all Members for formal consideration and is proposed to be finalised at this year's Conference General Meeting. It is expected that each Member accepting tram equipment and tramway infrastructure items from Victrack will formally accept the Protocol.

Overseas Shipping

Shipping something to or from overseas? Please let COTMA Assistant Executive Officer Rod Atkins know, especially if using containers or shipping tramcars. Rod can advise on how to arrange, the paper work aspects, costs and if another Museum is shipping something as well to the same place, thus co-ordinating shipments.

Wood Blocks

Available upon request are a number of wood blocks that were formally used in the Preston Workshops complex floors. Sydney Tramway Museum have requested some and this has been agreed to by VicTrack. You would be responsible for loading, transporting and any issues arising from subsequent use. If Members would like to be considered for further supplies, please contact Rod Atkins by email (ozrod_au@yahoo.com).

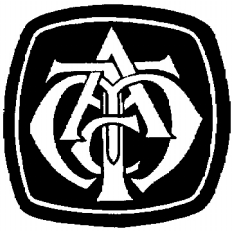
Name Change - Archer Park

The Archer Park Museum advised late January 2008 that it has changed it's formal name from, *Archer Park Station & Steam Tram Museum* to ***The Archer Park Rail Museum***.

No. 15 Truck Wheels – Do you need any?

Western Springs Tramway is considering the acquisition of new wheels or blanks - 28" (711mm) dia. for Melbourne No. 15 trucks and is seeking information about costs and availability. This is a good opportunity to see if we can order in bulk. If other Members wish to follow this through, can they please advise Ian Seymour of your potential needs. This will help in ascertaining the likely demand for these and follow through on likely costs. Please advise Ian Seymour directly on ian.seymour@dsto.defence.gov.au If any member has investigated this matter already, can they please let Ian know as well.

Next News update – June 2008



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News Update – July 2008

From the Chairman

It has been a while (March) since the last News Update. My eight week trip to Europe was most enjoyable, but it is now back to the grindstone once again. The trip was timed with the Fedecrail conference in Salzburg. Salzburg has a very extensive trolley bus system, which is considered as a railway by the Regulators in Austria – the tracks are in the air! While on the subsequent tour around Austria, which included Peter Hyde of Brisbane, we visited Graz, a wonderful tramway system with narrow trams in narrow streets, Gmunden – the world's smallest tramway system, Innsbruck, a steam tram and electric tram museum in Mariazell and of course Vienna. After the conference, I visited Prague (full and standing tramcars even at 2.30am in the morning), Berlin, Potsdam, Munich and Woltersdorf to the east of Berlin. The latter is very reminiscent of Ballarat, road side running, crossing the road a number of times, four wheel trams and a lovely lakeside terminus with a working canal lock to have lunch. Well recommended. A subsequent visit to the UK included a visit to Crich, Blackpool, Croydon (London) and Nottingham. Interesting to see the contrasts between the old and the new.

The Fedecrail Conference was interesting, with a number of European developments that could impact on rail heritage in the future. I presented a paper on behalf of Chris LeMarshall, ATHRA's heritage liaison officer, titled The Heritage Rail Sector – Interaction with the Rail Industry and Government The Australian Experience Are There any Lessons? The comments received back was that the regulatory situation in the UK and parts of Europe is very similar, but it seems that the volume of paperwork required in Australia and thus the resultant effort is a lot larger.

Changes in the air – one regulator and other changes

One of the agenda items for discussion at the COTMA August 2008 Launceston Conference will be the ramifications of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) move to a single rail safety regulator. Although the formal decision was not to be made until late July 2008, it is very likely. The problem for COTMA Members who operate trams is that the Safety Goal Posts (the documentation system) are very likely to change again unless we are able to find an alternative approach or method. However, hopefully, those with good systems already in place should not be forced to change once again.

ATHRA in a June 2008 discussion paper found a number of issues with the possible move to a single national rail safety regulator and the current regulatory system. The system is now oppressive, impeding development and being based around heavy railways; and is not scalable for heritage rail operators. It also found that there is a problem with regulatory staff in many places understanding the heritage sector. In many heritage railways, there is a significant problem of finding people willing to prepare this paperwork or having the necessary technical skills. We are already seeing this within the COTMA membership.

Part of the problem is that we are being caught up in the National transport network deliberations. Heritage railways and museum tramways are not part of the National Transport sector, we are part of the Tourism sector.

What does this mooted change mean potentially for our small sector? Further closures or moves to static museums are very likely. The enjoyment of preserving an important community heritage asset is going fast due to the nature of the regulatory systems that we are now facing. COTMA will work closely with ATHRA to try and find an appropriate solution, but there are no guarantees. As it was pointed out by one President of a COTMA Museum; *"But equally realistically, it is difficult to get bureaucrats to let go of anything"*.

ATHRA Submission to National OH&S Review

ATHRA has made a submission to the National Review of OH&S laws. It encompasses many of the problems that we are having with Regulators and other issues. It promotes the need for Codes of Practices. It can be viewed on the COTMA web site (see the Latest News tab) and will also be available on the ATHRA web site.

2008 COTMA Conference

Bookings for the 2008 Launceston Conference, commencing Friday 22 August are progressing well. Please book by the end of July to ensure your preferred accommodation in Launceston and your spot for the Post Conference tour.

Booking forms are downloadable or can be done online by using the links on the COTMA web site: <http://members.optushome.com.au/cotma/documents/COTMA%20Conference%202008%20Invite.pdf>

Conference details, programme etc can be viewed on the COTMA website at the following link - <http://members.optushome.com.au/cotma/conference.html>

• Conference General Meeting

The Conference General Meeting will be held on Tuesday 26 August. The draft Agenda and Notice of Meeting is included within this mailout. Delegates should be aware of any items that may require decision by your Board/Committee prior to the meeting. One of the items for decision will be the Tram Equipment Protocol.

VicTrack assisted by the Executive has developed a draft protocol regarding equipment that has been donated to COTMA Members by VicTrack. The protocol provides a basis for the use, transfer between members and any disposal of the equipment. A draft copy is attached to this mailout. It has been sent to Members for formal consideration and is proposed to be finalised at this year's Conference General Meeting. Each COTMA Member accepting tram equipment and tramway infrastructure items from Victrack is expected to formally ratify and accept the Protocol.

• BRAGs (or what has your Museum Achieved since the last COTMA Conference)

As in past conferences, we will be having sessions that enable your Museum to tell the rest of us what you have been doing since the last Conference. Presentations can be video, DVD, slides, or PowerPoint. Please limit your presentation to no more than 10 mins.

Disappearing Consumable Items

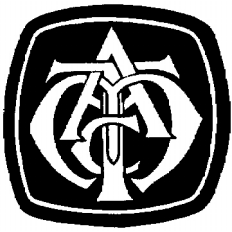
Incandescent Light Bulbs – both Australia and New Zealand have announced the phasing out of Incandescent light bulbs. This move is being followed around the world as well it appears. While in the future, alternatives for the bulbs we use in tramcars, may be developed, all we can say at this time is “go out and stock up”. Electric light bulbs if safely stored, don't have a shelf life.

Slotted Head Screws – another legacy item which is becoming almost unavailable in Australia and New Zealand due to the small use by industry and the prevalence of machine driven screws. At this time, they are available in the UK and the USA and from undertaking a web search, from India – for example: <http://www.brasparts.com/brass-wood-screws.htm> Information about suppliers would be most welcome.

Items within this mailout or from the COTMA web site:

1. Notice of Conference General Meeting
2. Draft Conference Agenda
3. Draft Protocol with VicTrack

Next News update – September 2008 – after the Launceston Conference



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News Update – August - September 2008

From the Chairman

The Launceston Conference during August 2008 was well attended, successful and a very enjoyable event. The Launceston Tramway Museum Society put on a great show, with their tram plying the Museum precinct at night on the opening evening. The weather throughout the time days, even though cool was fine and sunny during the day with a little rain at nights. A great conference and thanks to the organisers. For many of the Launceston Museum members, it was the first occasion that they had been involved in a COTMA event and an opportunity to meet many of their fellow COTMA Museum workers.

Launceston No. 29 operates at this time by coupling it with a generator wagon. At night, the lights are very dim when power is applied. Running on lower than normal voltage can result in some problems though. On the opening day, Friday afternoon, while the tram was running in brilliant sunshine, the compressor started to squeal. Fortunately, Ian Seymour of Adelaide was soon on hand to diagnose the problem; not enough oil being thrown around inside the compressor crankcase to keep the bearings lubricated.

The Conference papers comprised an excellent mix of information, advice and were thought provoking. They were well received and many thanks to the various authors and presenters. Most of these are already available on the COTMA web site for viewing, along with Conference reports and the group photo. The remaining papers (two at the time of writing) will be placed on the web site by the end of October, along with the discussions that took place after the presentations themselves.

The post conference tour visited Queenstown to ride the West Coast Wilderness Railway. Contrary to expectations, the weather was sunny. For those of us who had not been to Queenstown for some time, it was amazing to see the growth on the hills surrounding the town that was once a moonscape. The journey on the railway was great and we were warmly welcomed by the Railway. Our visit to Hobart had been co-ordinated by Jeremy Kays and Leon Parker; we viewed all the Hobart tramcars in their various stages of restoration and finished up with a great afternoon at the Tasmanian Transport Museum at Glenorchy.

The next Conference is in Wellington during 2010 and currently timetabled for New Zealand's Queens Birthday weekend. Further information and preliminary thoughts of a post conference tour should be available by mid 2009. We look forward to seeing you there, many great things are happening in the New Zealand heritage tram scene.

Changes in the Air – One Regulator and Other Changes – the news continues

One thing that affects all the Australian tramway museums that operate trams is the Rail Safety legislative environment. Possible changes are in the air – a single national regulator. For the major interstate rail operators, the state regulatory environment remains fragmented with different "legislative rules" in each state and unlikely to be common for many years. While for the heritage movement, the fragmentation is not so important, but any changes should cater for the sector and indeed foster it, rather than inhibiting us as it now often does. COTMA will be working with the Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA) to try and achieve a more appropriate regulatory environment for heritage than it currently is. Early discussions with the consultants for the National Transport Commission who are preparing a Regulatory Impact Statement have already occurred. It is good to know that this time around we are recognised as part of those who

will be impacted by any new regulatory environment – there are over 80 heritage rail operators in Australia; some very small community based operations.

Disappearing Consumable Items Slotted Head Screws –

Leyton Chan of MOTAT, has researched this growing problem and advises.

“We have found that round head and oval head screws are all but extinct in our country; and only the largest hardware stores still stock a pitiful selection of flat head screws (at exorbitant prices). As far as I can see the only market which still demands these screws are the traditional wooden boat builders. At present I source all wood screws through a company in Rhode Island USA called Jamestown Distributors; whom still have a very large selection of all types including larger sizes (up to 24 gauge) in silicon bronze. Service is excellent and ordering is easy online. For hard to find or custom sizes it is heartening to know that there are at least two companies who are able to make sizes 2 to 24 gauge, both in USA - the Narragansett Screw Co, and Goulet Specialties. I did get a quote once for 100 24g x 2½” brass oval headed screws (for attaching handrails); needless to say it was a 4 figure sum! There continue to be many suppliers of the smaller flat head screws from online mail order firms such as Lee Valley & Vertitas (Canada), Woodcraft USA etc. One thing though I still can't find any reliable supply is for bright nickel or chrome plated screws (for trams built from late 20s on such as Auckland streamliners and Adelaide H cars). My only solution there is that when we come to need these we will have to get standard screws electroless plated. Perhaps France, with it's ebeniste tradition may be the last place we could find these?”

Thanks to Leyton for the advice.

Another item that may be hard to find is plain trolley rope, or heavy sash cord. Recently the Ballarat Tramway Museum found that it cannot get plain rope in Ballarat, it now comes with red flashes in it – not quite the right look.

COTMA Web Site

The COTMA Web site has changed servers. Our formal address www.cotma.org.au will work as before, but if you had bookmarked the main page rather than the index page, you will no longer be in the correct server and will get a redirection message. The change has been necessary because of the 2008 Conference papers and their size. Thanks to Andrew Cox for hosting the COTMA web site on his system for many years. Currently it is sharing space with the Ballarat Tramway Museum's host as a separate identity.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning in the heritage rail sector and museums in general, seems to be something that is seldom done by organisations – what are you doing to ensure you survive? There is plenty of advice out there on how to do it, but something in the rail environment may assist you. Greg Sutherland of Sydney Tramway Museum picked up an interesting presentation of the method by the West Coast Railway Association, Canada. A copy of this presentation is attached with the electronic version of this News Update. Also included in a separate file are notes from the Museum's Australia workbook for small museums about Strategic Planning.

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of COTMA was held on Wed 26 September. This meeting is necessary to formally accept the accounts in Victoria as part of being an incorporated association. Minutes of the 2007 and 2008 Meetings are enclosed within the Annual Report – itself enclosed within this mailout.

Next News update – November 2008



Council of Tramway Museums of Australasia Inc.

News Update – October - November 2008

From the Chairman

It is distressing to hear about the severe damage that has occurred to the Brisbane Tramway Museum's site at Ferny Grove. They have sustained heavy damage to their substation complex and its traction equipment, depot and buildings and some damage to their tramcars as a result of the thunderstorms that hit Brisbane in the evening of Sunday 16 November. We can as a team, help them overcome these major problems by donating funds. I would urge all members to consider making a donation. If there are any other ways of assisting them please consider it. COTMA Members and friends have already commenced to assist where possible. Donations can be sent to the BTMS; PO Box 94, Ferny Hills Qld 4055.

*Photos from John Lambert of the BTMS.
Below – substation interior*



IATM Conference - 2009

The 2009 International Association of Transport Museum's (IATM) Conference will be held in Dresden and Nuremberg, Germany 15 June to 19 June 2009. The Conference includes pre-conference tours in Dresden, visits to Chemnitz, Munich and post conference tours to Stuttgart and Sinsheim. Full details of the event can be obtained from the web site: [http://www.iatm.org/userupload/431 IATM Conference 2009 .pdf](http://www.iatm.org/userupload/431_IATM_Conference_2009.pdf)

Incandescent Light Bulbs

Yes, your incandescent light bulb is being replaced by compact fluors etc, whether you like it or not. While you will / (may with some difficulty) be able to continue to purchase incandescent bulbs for purposes where alternatives are not available, no doubt this will become more difficult over time as the need for these bulbs generally decreases. All we can suggest is work out your needs and purchase them in bulk from the suppliers and store them safely. Tramcars are not the only ones affected by this phasing out of incandescents. It is suggested you shop around for traction light bulbs as the price seems to vary between stockists. Stockists that could be consulted are: [Crompton Lighting](#), [Osram Australia](#), Further advice as to suppliers and costs from Members would be welcome.

A Single Rail Safety Regulator for Australia

The National Transport Commission released its Regulatory Impact Statement on the considerations for a single Australian Rail Safety Regulator. The associated press release can be accessed on <http://www.ntc.gov.au/NewsDetail.aspx?page=A0240030550000002000278> and the document itself from <http://www.ntc.gov.au/RFCList2004.aspx>. Submissions close on Friday 19 December 2008. The Association of Tourist and Heritage Rail Australia (ATHRA) has been consulted on this matter and will be included in the invitations for the briefings/feedback sessions being held in each state over the next month. Concerns that ATHRA have, will involve transitional issues, costs of accreditation (currently most of us are exempt) and local Offices. You are welcome to make submissions to the NTC or provide feedback to the Chairman of COTMA (tramwad@alphalink.com.au) who will be drafting the ATHRA submission. Please if you have any comments, please forward them by 4 December to give us time to do the necessary submission.

COTMA Conferences

All the Launceston 2008 conference papers and discussions have now been loaded onto the web site, www.cotma.org.au, under the Proceedings Tab. This includes the conference reports.

The Wellington Tramway Museum is hosting the 2010 Conference and planning is underway. A email address has been established - cotma2010@paradise.net.nz. Details about timing, some initial concepts about the conference, tours etc should be available for the next News Update.

Collection Management Resources for Museums

The Victorian Branch of Museum's Australia has recently added to its website, a number of resource information documents that may be useful to you to care for and manage your collection. These can be accessed from <http://www.mavic.asn.au/services/resources/>. It includes the development of conservation plans, Museum policies and plans such as forward planning, collection and interpretation policies and many information sheets. These include conservation and lighting, temperature and humidity control, air pollution, effects of storage on object, museum storage, collections care, numbering objects in collections, displays, informative websites and essential references.

UK Guidance for Heritage and Tramway Sectors

The UK Office of Rail Regulation recently published guidance to help the tramway and heritage sectors with the "Safety Verification Process". This document provides useful background information to help you through the "Change Processes" of introducing new infrastructure or rollingstock in particular. While the process is designed to fit with the UK legislative framework, similar processes to control the risks are needed in Australia and no doubt New Zealand. The document can accessed from <http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/ConWebDoc.9203>

Broadcasting Functions Through COTMA News and Contact list

If you are holding a function or event and would like to let other COTMA Museums and some of their members know of the function, COTMA is able to "broadcast" this to our E-mail contact list. This list has been compiled from those who attend Conferences and others who have opted to join the list. Please send to the Chairman your request and we will be able to "broadcast" it for you. Individual contact lists are maintained and sent out on a private basis. It is planned to upgrade this service early in 2009 to a mailing programme.

And finally Season Greetings to all our readers. On behalf of the COTMA Executive, we trust you all have a good Christmas and we wish you a Happy New Year.

Next News update – January 2009