



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIVE STEAMERS

AALS Web Site

www.aals.asn.au

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ACN 107 882 404 - ABN 81 107 882 404

AUSTRALIAN LIVE STEAMERS SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Warwick Allison: 68 Marshall Rd Mt Riverview NSW 2774 Tel: (02) 4739 5921 wallison@pnc.com.au
Secretary: Alf Grigg: 168 Wharparilla Drive Echuca Vic 3564 Tel: (03) 5480 1955 aagricon@bigpond.com

02nd December, 2011

Hon Secretary
Club as addressed

**Re: ALSSC Consultation Process on
Code of Practice for Operation and Training**

This letter constitutes the review of the outcomes of the 2011 consultation process with all AALS member clubs.

A number of key Code of Practice for Operation and Training (referred to in this document as the Code) and operational safety issues were proposed to be evaluated in detail then resubmitted to member clubs for determination in accordance with the AALS constitution.

As in previous years, this consultation process was intended to provide a forum for detailed evaluation and discussion of issues associated with safe operation of activities at member clubs. This process was proposed as a better, consultative approach to the current process of drafting and submitting motions to the AGM. The latter involves virtually no debate given that most member clubs have determined their position and have returned their completed votes well before the AGM.

The process continues effective consultation and due diligence. The consultation process is not open-ended, and will ensure that issues are fully addressed, all submissions considered, and the matters ultimately determined by the democratic processes of the Association.

Equally, very few clubs and/or individual members of clubs offered contributions to the consultation process, with detailed contributions being received from Diamond Valley Railway and three individual members of societies. The most topical item was the proposed gas firing code.

Accordingly, we intend to continue to develop the Gas Firing Code for formal presentation to the 2012 AGM. We have developed a motion proposing modifications to the Code detailing passenger carriage lengths for 7¼" gauge carriages. The other two items, driver's licenses for passenger carrying operations, and use of speedos for public running operations, are being carried forward into the 2012 consultation process. However if no further comments are received, they will be dropped for the following year.

We recognise that the consultation process will not satisfy all member clubs, yet believe that consultation continues to enhance the democratic constitution of our Association while permitting all views to be expressed and evaluated. We welcome discussion of these and other safety issues.

Warwick Allison
Chairman

Alf Grigg
Secretary

Length of Passenger Carriages

The update to section 6.3 of the Code for Safety and Interoperability sought to provide mandatory requirements for passenger carriages while removing dimensional constraints and providing typical dimensions only.

Concern has been expressed that the length of 7.25 inch gauge carriages which was 12 ft is now 8ft. The 12ft was reduced as it was considered to be a maximum and not typical.

Submissions were invited from member societies to give details of the dimensions of their passenger carriages and carrying capacity and comment on the recommendations that should be provided in the code. We sought any special considerations for the use of long carriages, such as curve overhang and the capability of running gear for the weight.

Only Diamond Valley Railway (DVR) submitted a response to this topic. DVR is well experienced in the use of large passenger carrying carriages given the scope of its public passenger hauling operations. The submission can be reviewed at the AALS website.

With the discussion at the last convention together with informal discussions in the model engineering media since the convention, it would be expected that some further significant technical submissions would have been received. It is disappointing that none further has been submitted.

Despite this a draft motion has been prepared to amend the code on the matter of carriage length.

Development of Draft Code for Gas Firing of Miniature Boilers

The Gas Code had been proposed some years previously. Considerable effort and development had been undertaken by Doug Baker as former Chairman of the ALSSC, other ALSSC members, and others.

The current draft code has been prepared by Brian Carter and the Committee wishes to record its thanks for his considerable contribution.

A draft copy has been uploaded to the AALS website and several letters with comments on it have been received. These comments are being considered and together with advice expected from the Dept of Fair Trading, the published draft will be further updated.

It is intended that the final draft Gas Firing Code document will be available on line in time for any final consideration prior to voting taking place in the 2012 AGM.

Driver Licenses for Public Running

The Committee received requests from a limited number of member societies for the Committee to consider a system of driver certification such that the certification will provide information to other associations as to the competence and operator capabilities of individual members when they visit other society tracks.

The request was specific to visiting individual members seeking to drive under public running conditions.

We agreed that this proposal has both merit and significant challenges if it is to succeed and provide a common basis of competency testing and certification of drivers.

Only one society, Diamond Valley Railway, provided a submission to this topic. The submission is available on the AALS website.

We consider that this topic has not been the subject of sufficient discussion and response from member societies to be able to progress the proposal.

However, we believe that the proposal is worthy of further exploration and commentary by member societies and individual members of societies. We have resolved to submit the proposal to further consultation in 2012. However unless some significant submissions are received, it is not proposed to carry it forward into 2013.

Speedos for Public Running

In 2008, John Wakefield submitted a formal suggestion that all locomotives utilized in public running be fitted with speed indicators/electrical speedos to provide the driver with an accurate indication of the speed of the train so as to ensure compliance with the Code speed limit for public passenger train operation.

The rationale behind John's proposal is that speed is a critical factor in rail operations safety and impacts from derailments. Most observers of miniature railway operations can readily name drivers who have a reputation for fast running, yet few railways have speed checking equipment with which to check and ensure compliance with Safety Code speed limits.

The basic proposal is that drivers of locos that are employed in hauling public passenger train haulage would fit suitable electrical speedos as readily available for bicycles. These speedos can be purchased for very modest prices, are small and unobtrusive, yet will produce sufficiently accurate speed readings in large digital figures. Many drivers currently utilize such speedos.

Drivers would then have the information with which to comply with the Code and individual society speed limits for public passenger and general operations.

We considered that some points about speedos would include the following key considerations.

Each member society should determine if the track layout, safe working systems, and operating conditions justify the need for a speedo to be fitted to each locomotive engaged in public running operation.

The speedo would need to be fitted somewhere on the loco assembly such as to be readily visible to the driver. We believe that this would be difficult with small locos, and agree that speedos are non-prototypical for most steam locos.

The type of speedo technology would not be specified, beyond the accuracy of the device being equal to a guideline level of accuracy.

If train speed is considered to be critical to safe vehicle operation, societies would need to determine safe speeds throughout the operating railway, and where appropriate place line-side speed boards as visible speed guides. The society competent person would need to determine safe train speeds based on track condition, curvature, equilibrium speed, and overturning speed.

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