



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF **LIVE STEAMERS**

AALS Web Site

www.aals.asn.au

Limited

ACN 107 882 404 - ABN 81 107 882 404

AUSTRALIAN MINIATURE BOILER SAFETY COMMITTEE

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AMBSC Chairman's Report, Easter Convention, 2013

Gentlemen,

The past year has seen the release of the revised copper and steel codes. Each of your club secretaries has been issued with a copy of both revised codes which should have been passed on to your boiler inspectors.

Both of the codes have been simplified and made easier to understand. The integrity of the codes has not been compromised in any way as the safety of our boilers is paramount. Boiler inspectors will note that items such as fire box girder stays on steel boilers have been eliminated in favour of rod stays and cross stays on round top copper boilers have also been eliminated. The issue of rivets in copper boiler butt straps as discussed previously has also been included in the revision and is now clearly spelled out. Any boiler that has been designed or started using the previous issues may be completed without reference to the latest revision.

I hope that all boiler inspectors will understand that it would be almost impossible for truly comprehensive codes that covered every possible eventuality to be produced, as there are so many possible combinations of boiler designs.

This is the reason why we have individual club boiler inspectors. Their job is to interpret the codes in light of the specific design and their individual experience to ensure that a safe boiler results. If we were able to clearly spell out every possible eventuality in the design and construction of model boilers we would not require Boiler Inspectors with any experience as any person could do the job by simply reading the instructions.

With regard to the changes proposed by the Sydney Live Steam Locomotive Society I make the following comments:

Firstly, I am not in favour of the various AMBSC Boiler Codes being included in the AALS web site. I believe that they are the intellectual property of the AALS-AMBSC. The sale of these codes is a vital source of funds for the AALS and the free access to this information would result in increased fees to all affiliated AALS clubs.

Secondly, the issue of cleaning plugs in water gauges, section 5.3.6, has been included in the SLALS submission. In my opinion this is one of the items about which any boiler inspector should use his experience and initiative.

Some published designs show top water gauge fittings without any cross clean out plug. It is quite OK for the boiler inspector to insist that the fitting be changed. However if the change is impractical or the water gauge was manufactured before this requirement was included in the codes then it is up to the discretion of the inspector, taking into account the reliability of the particular gauge, the quality of the water used etc. I am not in favour of any change to this section.

Thirdly, with regard to Section 5.6 washout plugs, I am not in favour of any change to this clause as I consider that it is self-explanatory. A washout plug is any fitting located as low as possible in any boiler that can be opened to drain the boiler. In the opinion of your AMBSC committee a blowdown valve serves the same function as a washout plug whether or not it can be readily removed.

Finally, Section 3.4.4 Girder stays: I fail to see how this section could be made clearer without the elimination of one of the methods of staying the relevant plates. This is another of the instances where Boiler Inspectors should use their experience and initiative to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. I am not in favour of any change to this section.

I must take this opportunity to apologise for my inability to attend the forthcoming convention at the Warner Club in Brisbane. I am confident that Les Irwin is more than capable of handling any queries or questions that may be raised at the AMBSC meeting.

I must also thank each and every AMBSC Boiler Inspector for the time and effort and dedication that he has invested in this great hobby during the last year.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Potter,
Chairman AMBSC