

# Rail Horizons

June 2005



## From the Chair

### Effecting Cultural Change within the Rail Industry

Today, railways are an integral part of our lives; they have captured the imagination of communities for more than 200 years and the importance of the rail industry to the Australian community cannot be over emphasised. In the late 1800's we saw rail open this great country to settlement and development, this was a 'Golden Age' for rail in Australia and throughout the world. It was a period of pride and significant growth. During this period, rail developed its own 'Culture', however, its genesis was in an era when educational levels were poor and management style was rule based and autocratic. This was clearly necessary with the community of the day, where the reasons for doing things were sometimes only evident to the privileged few, generally the educated members of society.

The Macquarie Concise Dictionary defines 'Culture' as:

*"...the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings, which is transmitted from one generation to another"*.

Generally speaking, when we talk of 'Culture' we immediately associate this with identifiable community groups. These groups invariably guard their cultural heritage jealously and strongly resist change. Therefore, to engender change, there needs to be good reason for its acceptance by the community it affects.

Like communities, organisations evolve their own 'Culture' and as a general observation, the longer an organisation has been in existence the more embedded the culture. Organisations of long standing, like the military, merchant navy and railways have a strong and proud 'Culture' and effecting change is difficult, even if the reason for change is clearly apparent.

Therefore the reasons for effecting change need to be clearly understood by the leaders of these organisations if they are to implement the change process successfully. Secondly and before stepping into the change process, the way forward must be clearly mapped and the impact on the organisation and individuals fully and effectively communicated. Where change is needed, inspiring people regarding the necessity for change and guiding them through the process is fundamental and in my opinion a key indicator of good leadership. Change is often not without pain, and requires empathy on the part of our leaders who effect it; however, if the reason for change is clearly understood and communicated, the people involved will more readily accept change. Finally it is essential to actively involve people in the change process, lip service is not good enough, that is, the people affected by change must be fully involved in the process if it is to be democratically accepted and embraced.

So, is there need for 'Cultural Change' within the rail industry of today?

In my opinion, yes! In the mid to late 1900's we saw the demise of rail brought on by the advent of modern road transportation. The rail community in a desperate struggle to survive has clung to old 'Cultural' values, values that are rule based and autocratic. However, many of these old values are not aligned with present day societal norms in which our younger generation who are well-educated demand to be involved in the organisational decision processes. Therefore and in my opinion, the driving force behind a need for 'Cultural Change' within the rail industry emanates from a need to engender current community values/demands in an industry having many 19<sup>th</sup> Century ideals that are not attuned to current community needs. Without being limited some of these new demands include issues such as:

- The 'Global Economy', with its off shore competition

- Internal competition, from the maritime, aviation and road transport sectors
- Community expectations, with respect to reduction in costs, accountability, improved safety, higher levels of customer service, better responsiveness, litigation, etc, but most importantly
- A call by today's community for rail to be a positive and contributory force in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

To prosper in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, railways must be highly efficient and attuned to customer needs. However, many railways continue to run with infrastructure that is dated but of greater concern are the 'Cultural' values that are clearly dated.

To move forward, rail needs visionary leadership that has progressed beyond what is the rule based, autocratic style of the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century with a style that reflects a participative flair in keeping with current community values. The leaders of today need to work with and involve the people/employees who are now well educated and prepared to take on higher levels of responsibility, if we are to realise real and long term 'Cultural Change' in rail.

The second renaissance of rail is here, but to effect needed 'Cultural Change', it must start with the people who make up the business that is the employees, management and unions. All must work together as a cohesive and consolidated team to move rail down a path of future prosperity. The 'Them' and 'Us' attitude as currently pervades the industry must be replaced by a unified 'Rail Team' approach.

So where to start? It must start with the leaders, they must set the vision. Anyone who I've ever spoken to within our industry sees 'Safety' as core to our business; it is something we can all relate to. So let's concentrate on 'Safety' to drive 'Cultural Change' and build the trust and rapport that is needed between all segments of the business. When we all have learnt to talk a common language through 'Safety' and develop mutual trust, we will be on our first important step towards positive 'Cultural Change'.

*Can we use 'Safety' as a focus for driving 'Cultural Change' within the rail industry?*

*George Erdos  
RTSA National Chair*



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### *POINT OF VIEW*      Max Michell

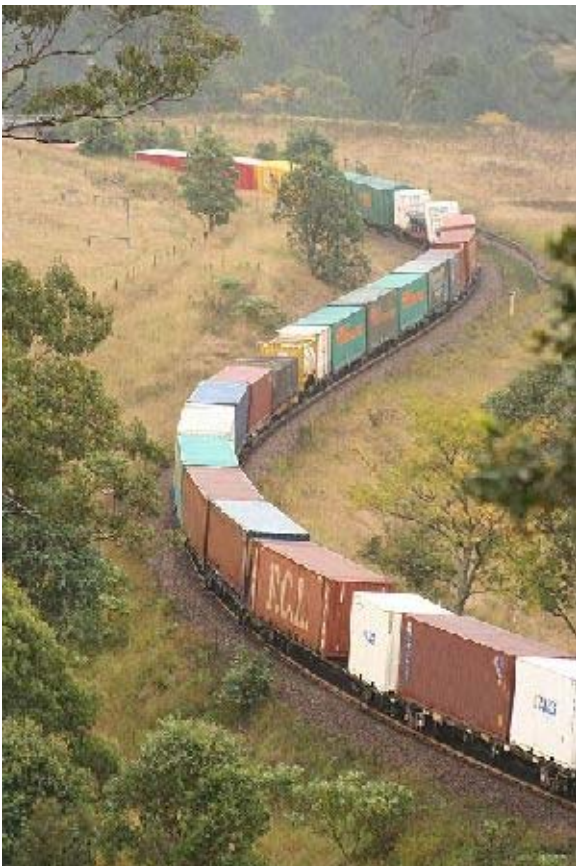
As time and events pass the mood around rail seems to change. Sometimes all seems doom and gloom, with eventual demise the only possible outcome – or at least that what the bean counters and policy wallahs seem to say. At other times there is the feeling of a new dawning, with hope and optimism in the air. Well right now is one of the latter.

Thinking back to the post 'One Nation' (Keating funding not the short lived political outburst) period in the late part of the 1990's there seemed to be little to look forward to. There was no interest or likely funding for rail improvement and at the same time components of the former state and federal railways were being split up and sold off at an indecent rate. The much vaunted promises of a privatisation led revival of rail had hardly risen over the horizon before a whole new set of institutional

problems were created that drew attention away from the fundamental problems that were left languishing.

There were some feel good events, such as the rapid growth of the privatised former Victorian freight network, but in many cases they were offset by negative events such as the perpetual intransigence of Freight Australia in its dealings with all other parts of the rail community.

Perhaps the one reasonably bright light in the late 1990's and early 2000's was the national track concept. Initially created (as a separate entity) at the time Australian National was sold off, the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) has been consistent in its approach to its business, and dogged enough to eventually work its way through the artificial maze of parochial nonsense that passed for good governance on the East Coast. Just nine months ago ARTC formally took up its lease and management arrangement over the majority of the NSW track. Since that time a lot of very concentrated strategic and functional planning has gone into establishing the NSW arm of ARTC. At the same time detailed plans for major improvement (and remediation) of the main part of the network have been developed. Funding released by the Federal Government, in part through the coincident AusLink land transport scheme, was added to the already committed funding written into the agreement with NSW, which at one stroke opened a new range of opportunities but in the immediate term added to the already very



substantial burden that had been taken on by ARTC.

Key upgrading work was fairly obviously required on the main East Coast inter-capital route from Melbourne to Sydney and Brisbane, a line that has been sadly neglected for seventy years or more and is now sadly close to irrelevancy. The scope of improvement possible on this route was unlimited, so the initial task was to sift out a sensible and effective strategy that would give a qualitative leap to the route and thus engender the sort of traffic growth that will encourage and justify continued improvement beyond the next few years. At the same time there were several other demanding planning tasks



that needed to be undertaken – rapid enhancement of coal capacity in the Hunter Valley, the Southern Sydney freight line (part of the inter-capital route but a large project in its own right), significant communication, signalling and train control projects, not to mention the organisation and mobilisation of resources for the ongoing maintenance activities. I really have my doubts if anyone outside ARTC can appreciate the effort that is being put into the concurrent running of these multifarious tasks.

On the last day of May ARTC ran an Industry Briefing in Sydney to detail the works to be undertaken and the relationships and structure that they wanted to enable these works to be brought to fruition. The expectation was that maybe 150 interested parties would turn up at the briefing, but in the end over 500 respondents put their hand up of which only about 450 were able to actually be accommodated. Even then there was a double row of standees around the perimeter wall as well as a full seated crowd, representing a who's who of the Australian rail industry. As David Marchant observed if a bomb had gone off in the room the rail industry would have come to a permanent halt.

The briefing covered the background, actual work to be done, the alliance and partnering arrangements that ARTC want to set up and the actual process that interested parties will need to follow. There was a good bit of detail about the reasoning behind some of the decisions, such as adoption of 'passing lanes' (short sections of double track

instead of conventional crossing loops) on the Melbourne – Sydney route and the consequent opening of that line to running of trains of 1800 metres or longer. Even here ARTC thought through the longer train issue strategically and have arrived at a couple of very interesting caveats that will apply to trains greater than 1500 metres. Just as with the issue of concrete versus timber sleepers where ARTC has developed a very enterprising strategy that will effectively put the sleeper industry in the position of having to decide. It was evident at the presentation that ARTC does not see the improvement and renewal process ending with the existing funding tranche. There seemed to be a continuity implicit in the plans that suggest a longer term view and funding expectations than are covered in the current proposals.

The total bill for the work outlined at the briefing will be in the order of \$1 billion, yet most of it is to be completed within four years. To achieve this ARTC is running a quick but efficient ‘lead contractor’ selection process for just six bundled projects and that was the real point of this briefing. David Marchant’s introduction, all of the power point presentations and the most recent North – South and Hunter Valley strategies are all available on the ARTC web site - [www.artc.com.au](http://www.artc.com.au) and are well worth following up.

For some time there has been a feeling that maybe the tide has turned in terms of government attention to the languishing rail industry. From almost total indifference there has been a slow turning to ‘promises’ of Federal money when the national rail network issue was resolved, which in the end has come to be. Even at this point there was no guarantee of continuity when the money started to flow, nor of a real result as a consequence of the expenditure. It is to ARTC’s credit that they have grasped the moment and in what, by rail standards, is a very short period of time, have taken a conceptual need, converted it to a series of interlocking plans and at the same time have made the critical move to translate these plans into reality. It is this most recent step in particular which is cause for optimism that the outcome will be worthwhile and has a good chance of actually achieving the better than market growth that has eluded rail for a long time. For the first time in a long time I feel that there is good reason to believe that rail may have turned the corner.

The next few years will be critical, as will the responses coming from the various operators. ARTC can provide the best track in the world, but if the operators don’t engage in a bi-partisan approach to improving rail’s position the expenditure will underachieve and effectively be lost. At this stage there is little evidence of new train resources required for a long haul traffic boom. It is essential that the current situation, the best that rail has had in the last 50 years, is not lost for lack of foresight,

enthusiasm or entrepreneurial nous on the part of some of the important players. It would be really good if they, despite the closed attitude of ‘commercial in confidence’, could actually demonstrate that they will enthusiastically join the renaissance.

## Government Relations Committee

The Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee inquired into the AusLink Bill and reported on 12 May. Some 29 parties made submissions, including the RTSA (with Mr Jon Bailey and myself appearing before the Committee in March).

A further transport inquiry is now underway by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services (the Neville Committee). The new inquiry is into the integration of regional rail and road freight transport and their interface with ports. The RTSA submission may be viewed at either the Committee’s website via [agh.gov.au](http://agh.gov.au) or at [rtsa.com.au](http://rtsa.com.au). A summary follows on Page 5.

The RTSA welcomes an increased interest by several State Governments into infrastructure. For example, South Australia’s new infrastructure plan (April 7) includes extension of the Glenelg tram from Victoria Square to the Adelaide Railway Station (and possibly North Adelaide (AFR, May 19)) plus studies into urban rail electrification and extension.

Queensland, on 27 April, announced a major infrastructure package with \$24.5 billion for transport projects to 2026. This includes rail upgrades and extensions on the Gold Coast, and North Coast lines and upgrading between Grandchester and Gowrie.

However, as noted by Queensland Premier Peter Beattie, the Federal Budget “*shows an infrastructure blind spot*” (AFR May 7). In addition, the budget allocation of even more money – now over \$500 million - for Victoria to convert the Scorseby Tollway to a freeway is poor politics and bad economics. Here, Canberra could learn from the NSW Parry report – that improved road pricing is needed for sustainable transport.

The announcement (April 18) by the Federal Government of a detailed \$20m study into an inland rail route from Melbourne to Brisbane is welcome. It only remains for NSW Premier Carr’s to change an unwillingness to contribute any funding to the positive approach of South Australia’s support of the railway from Alice Springs to Darwin.

**Philip Laird**  
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## Regional Rail and Road Inquiry

A brief précis follows of the RTSA submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services into regional rail and road freight transport and their interface with ports.

Given the state of much of Australia's rail network, the current inquiry by the Committee is timely. Although Australia's iron ore railways perform at world best practice, the 2004 OECD report on Australia and recent statements by the Reserve Bank of Australia show that Australia is now facing serious economic problems due to bottle-necks caused by inadequate transport infrastructure. Australia has also demonstrated an over-reliance on road transport of bulk commodities to ports.

In part due to rail privatisation, problems of grain movement and maintaining branch lines as 'fit for purpose' is a particular issue for Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia. The impacts of grain movement in regional and rural Australia have wider economic and social impacts that require national consideration. Closing branch lines with the consequent increase in B-Doubles and other heavy trucks on regional roads is likely to impose high external costs.

AusLink is a good start but the first five year plan needs some modification to provide some funding for **Intercity rail freight** on each of the Brisbane - Townsville and Burnie - Hobart corridors. Advanced planning for a second five year track upgrade programme (2009-2014) for the North South rail corridor is also needed and this upgrade will require major track straightening on the NSW Main South line. As is well known from experience, road or rail deviations have long lead times to address environmental impact assessment and land acquisition. Rail corridor protection at an early stage is essential.

It is necessary to restore the intended funding of \$400 million for regional strategic transport initiatives to include rail as proposed by the AusLink White Paper. The need for grain line rehabilitation is urgent in most mainline states as is the need to make provision for major developments such as the timber industry in South Australia and NSW. There is a case for improving regional rail passenger services, rather than withdrawing them. RTSA commends the 'Queensland model' of upgrading mainline track for faster and heavier freight trains, and the use of medium high speed trains.

RTSA supports a microeconomic reform program to focus on land transport. This includes a reassessment of road pricing for the heavier long distance trucks. Better land transport data is needed. The prospect of sustained higher oil prices ('Peakoil') is something Australia may well need - sooner better than later - to address.

## The Senate Committee Report on AusLink

by Philip Laird

The Senate Committee examining AusLink reported on 12 May. The report notes, inter alia, in the seven years to 2003-04, the Commonwealth spending on roads was \$11,656 million as against \$992 million for rail. This is despite road and rail having about equal shares of the Australian freight transport task (35 and 37 per cent respectively). Whilst the AusLink White Paper sets out \$11.8 billion in Commonwealth land transport spending over five years, including an upgrade of east coast interstate rail, roads are again favoured. This \$11.8 billion is mostly for roads and included \$300m per year for road maintenance (p20) and \$400m over four years for 'regional strategic' funds (including rail) which was diverted before the 2004 federal election to roads (p25).

The Committee's report notes the need for efficient charges for use of infrastructure, including for heavy trucks "...that compete directly with rail [and] affirms the need to confirm working towards efficient pricing of access to infrastructure..." (p28). Although the AusLink White Paper maintained the present Federal Government's position of not supporting public transport (unlike all other OECD countries and previous Federal Governments (including the Fraser Government)) public transport issues "are still on the table". Moreover (p30) "there may be a case for Commonwealth assistance to major projects such as rail extensions which are unlikely to happen, or unlikely to happen soon enough, without the involvement of the bigger budget which the Commonwealth commands."

The Committee cited the support of Engineers Australia and others for a National Transport Advisory Council (NTAC) and supported such a forum for "co-ordinating policy" in "investment policies modal integration and access pricing".

The need for research and better data was noted, including protocols in the case of rail to allow "information gathering of industry-wide importance".

As a whole, the Committee recommended that the AusLink Bills should be passed. Additional comment by the ALP Senators gave two recommendations; one calling for guidelines to be provided by 1 July 2005 for rigorous and transparent assessment of Strategic Regional Projects; the other to form a NTAC, or, a National Infrastructure Advisory Council.

Senator Lyn Allison for the Australian Democrats had the last word in the report. In short, transport issues in Australia need addressing and AusLink is "not the promised comprehensive, strategic, long-term plan" needed, as it does not adequately address either urban congestion and continues "to rely on national highways as

*the primary mode of regional freight transport*". Indeed, "...this is a patch up of existing road and rail systems".

Accordingly, there is a need for 'Getting the Balance Right' in funding Infrastructure (AusLink remains heavily weighted to road transport - \$10.9 billion for roads and \$1.8 billion for rail (with rail's including loan funds, not grants as per roads). There is also a move to make "AusLink Transparent, Accountable and Strategic" and support for a NTAC. The NTAC should also focus on "environmental, social and economic sustainability" – both now and into the future.

The Committee and its Secretariat have produced an excellent report. The issues raised by the Committee as a whole and in additional comments, warrant a response from the Government. This includes a NTAC and the need for a better balance between rail and road in all of Australia (including its major cities).

In this regard, much can be learned from New Zealand (who has increased fuel excise rather than reduced it in real terms, and uses mass-distance charges for heavy vehicles, etc). New Zealand recently released a definitive Surface Transport Costs and Charges study. And in contrast to short term popularism, as observed by New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark (OECD Annual Report 2004, p121) "the best short-term policies are also good long-term policies".

### Rail CRC makes tracks to address rail industry education needs

Central Queensland University-based Rail CRC, the Cooperative Research Centre for Railway Engineering and Technologies, has made a significant move this month to address the education shortcomings in the Australian railway industry, announcing an inaugural Understanding Rail course for rail managers.

According to Rail CRC Chief Executive Professor Dudley Roach, the course, to be staged in partnership with the Australasian Railway Association, would give managers and others new to the railway industry a comprehensive overview of the operational, technical and business setting of today's increasingly competitive rail environment.

To be held in Sydney from 28-29<sup>th</sup> June 2005, the course will bring together some of the nation's leading rail experts, including Chief Executive Officer of Pacific National Stephen O'Donnell, former Queensland Rail chief Vince O'Rourke and authors of the textbook, *New Railway Environment*.

"As with many other industries, to maintain their business edge rail companies are often hiring the most experienced business managers to lead their company's activities –

professionals who may not always have a complete understanding of the complexities of the modern railway industry," said Professor Roach.

"The ARA and Rail CRC recognised this and have developed a course which will give these business managers an overview of areas such as the legislative environment, railway access, safe railway operation, railway safety regulations, rolling stock, railway infrastructure, railway operations and standards and accident investigations."

The Understanding Rail course adds another bow to the educational achievements of the Rail CRC, which this year commenced its second intake of the world-first Postgraduate Diploma in Railway Signalling through the Central Queensland University.

Offered through distance education with online support and rail industry mentors, the Diploma has true national participation, with 25 signalling professionals located in various locations throughout Australia undertaking the course in 2004 and 26 in 2005.

According to Professor Roach, planning is underway to extend this signalling diploma offering to the United Kingdom, due to strong international interest and the world-wide shortage of fully trained signalling engineers.

Learning resources for a postgraduate program in track and civil infrastructure are also being developed, with Rail CRC currently consulting industry on the most appropriate way of utilising these resources. At the same time, Rail CRC is well advanced in its development of a Postgraduate Diploma in Rolling stock Engineering, planned to commence through the University of Wollongong in 2006.

"Rail CRC is powering ahead and is truly committed to addressing the skills shortage in the Australian rail industry," Professor Roach said.

"Since Rail CRC's commencement in 2001 we have worked closely with our railway industry participants to help meet their education and training needs and we look forward to continuing to do this in future."

For further information about the *Understanding Rail* course or other Rail CRC education initiatives, please visit [www.railcrc.cqu.edu.au](http://www.railcrc.cqu.edu.au) or phone (07) 4930 9597.

### STOP PRESS

Unfortunately this workshop is already **FULLY BOOKED**. Rail CRC has already received a number of expressions of interest for an additional course later in 2005, and urges potential attendees to register their interest.

### **\$62.3m for New Generation Train Control**

Australian Rail Track Corporation and Lockheed Martin have entered into an agreement to develop a blueprint for a new Advanced Train Management System (ATMS) which will provide new communications and control technology for ARTC's national and Hunter Valley rail networks.

ATMS is being developed by Lockheed Martin as the next generation of train control technology, for introduction across the ARTC rail networks.

ARTC CEO David Marchant welcomed the working relationship with Lockheed Martin saying ARTC had chosen ATMS as proposed by Lockheed Martin as the superior train control technology for Australian conditions. He said it should leapfrog train control technology for the Australian national rail freight industry to the highest international standard.

The funding for the development of a blue print for this high technology project is through the Australian government's \$12.5 billion land transport plan AusLink. The Australian government will provide ARTC with \$42 million to build a fully interoperable communications system for the interstate rail network and \$20.3 million to develop a blueprint for its new Advanced Train Management System (ATMS).

The new communications system will be based on Telstra's Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) technology and will provide a safe and cost effective single communications medium across the whole rail network replacing nine separate communications systems.

The ATMS will include new computerised in-cab signalling to replace the current trackside system, satellite based location technology with accuracy to within three metres and a computerised warning system to alert drivers of impending dangers.

### **Adelaide Trams to Revitalise the City**

The South Australian Government plans to further extend the Glenelg tramline beyond the already announced extension along North Terrace to the Adelaide Railway Station.

SA Premier, Mike Rann visiting Portland in the State of Oregon during May, took a tour of the city's extensive light rail 'TriMet' system to see how investment in a light rail network had transformed Portland, economically, socially and environmentally.

Premier Rann commented, "It is clearly evident that Portland's public transport light rail system has been responsible for a renaissance of large parts of the city. It's good to visit cities similar to Adelaide to see first hand the difference a new light rail system can make. Portland is probably one of the best examples in the world."

"Where once old neighbourhoods in Portland were crumbling and neglected, new business and housing investment have sprung up along the new metropolitan tram corridors which have led to a regeneration of those areas. Investment in buildings and businesses along the tram lines has been enormous in Portland."

"Today we travelled along one stretch where about 50 new businesses had opened as a result of the tramline being built past their front doors. The new public transport system has also attracted many more young people into the city to study at university and to work. That is something I would like to see occur in Adelaide, especially with the opening of our fourth university in Victoria Square early next year."

"Investment in light rail is a significant capital expense, but the economic spin-offs can be tremendous if the system is planned well. A good light rail system also has the advantage of being a "cleaner and greener" and cheaper way to get around than cars."

The SA Government will embark on a comprehensive community consultation over the next few months to decide where the line will go next. Options being investigated are to extend the tram line from North Terrace, up King William Street past the Adelaide Oval and Women's and Children's Hospital to Brougham Place or possibility of along O'Connell Street.

### **New Zealand Notes**

*by Philip Laird*

Along with bringing New Zealand's rail infrastructure (but not rail freight operations) back into public ownership in 2004, the New Zealand Ministry of Transport has recently released two important reports as follows

Surface Transport Costs and Charges (STCC -31 March).

The National Rail Strategy (25 May)

To quote from the later report, the STCC examined the relationship between the costs (including economic, social, and environmental costs) of the use of road and rail transport and the payments users make for using each mode. The findings of the study were that:

- the charges paid by road and rail users do not cover the costs of those networks, and that some costs are not paid by anyone at all
- rail users pay a higher proportion of their costs than road users

- users of urban local roads pay a lower proportion of costs than users of rural roads

These findings will assist government in making decisions on the absolute and relative levels of charges for the use of road and rail networks.

To quote Transport Minister the Hon Pete Hodgson MP. his Government has already made a very firm commitment to give clear directions to the New Zealand transport system that would reflect the realities we shall face in the 21st century. This includes the 2002 New Zealand Transport Strategy which states *'by 2010 New Zealand will have an affordable, integrated, safe, responsive, and sustainable transport system'*.

Minister Hodgson also noted *"Another driver of this process has been the Kyoto Protocol, which the Government agreed to ratify three years ago, and which came into force in February 2005. In order to meet our protocol commitments we shall need to focus on reducing transport energy use in particular. Under the right conditions, rail is a very energy-efficient transporter of both passengers and freight, and we look forward to seeing better use of New Zealand's rail network."*

Making progress towards the national rail objectives and key priorities to be regularly monitored, with reviews as necessary, using performance indicators.. **To the extent practicable, all indicators will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound).** Regular monitoring and review will be undertaken to ensure progress is made.

We could well do with some of this approach in Australia.

## QR National

QR is quietly establishing its new 'National' image with the appearance in the last couple of months of a new corporate paint scheme for its locomotive fleet and an initial foray into Hunter Valley export coal haulage. In early May QRN undertook a 'spot hire' export coal haulage contract for Newpac Mine in the Hunter, using its new 120t QHAH hoppers. At the same time the first of QRN's new 5000 class 4000hp AC traction locomotives, built by United Goninan, were undergoing trials on the Muswellbrook-Ulan line, in anticipation of their full entry into service at the beginning of July.

QRN through its Interrail subsidiary has operated two smaller contracts in the NSW Hunter region for several years now, but the advent of the new locomotive fleet and the new Mt Arthur haulage contract can be seen as the first real competitive challenge to Pacific National's dominance of coal haulage in the Hunter Valley. QRN also increased its Melbourne to Brisbane intermodal services to six return trips per week at the beginning of the year.

At the beginning of May, Queensland Premier Peter Beattie officially announced that QR's coal, bulk and general freight businesses would now operate as QRNational.

"For some time now, QR has been operating in an open national market, where competition is fierce and state boundaries are irrelevant."

"The new name describes the reality of QR's coal and freight business today - an integrated national provider of responsive, innovative freight and logistics solutions."



## Major Study for Inland Route

The Australian Government has announced that it will fund a North South rail corridor study, to be completed by June 2006. The North South corridor study will be funded from AusLink funds and will be managed by the Department of Transport and Regional Services working closely with the Australasian Railway Association.

The aims of the study are to determine:

- Future rail demand by sector for Melbourne-Sydney-Brisbane freight;
- Deficiencies in the existing Melbourne-Brisbane rail corridors to meet that forecast demand;
- The viability of possible options to rectify the deficiencies, including timeframes;
- Estimates of likely costs including estimates of any shortfalls in the commercial viability of the options;

There have already been a number of feasibility studies into a proposed North South Inland route and therefore where appropriate, it will use and not duplicate earlier work.

A variety of options will be considered beyond the current Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) works program, including possible enhancements to the coastal line. Up until now, a major impediment to progress on an Inland route rarely acknowledged by its proponents was

the issue of dealing with multiple track owners. The ARTC take-up of responsibility for the NSW interstate network, combined with Pacific National's takeover of the regional network in Victoria will have greatly simplified the issue, though not totally resolved it.

The Australasian Railway Association will lead and coordinate vital industry involvement in the study through a joint steering committee with DoTARS.

### **..and Mount Isa To Townsville**

The Australian Government will work with industry to undertake a study into upgrading the transport corridor between Mount Isa and Townsville.

The road and rail corridor between Mount Isa and Townsville carries \$12 billion worth of freight a year, primarily for export markets. The Government says it has recognised its importance by including it in the AusLink National Network as one of the backbones of Australia's freight transport system.

The study will:

- Forecast the industry trends and developments that will have a major impact on the corridor over the next twenty years;
- Identify measures to assess how well it is handling its level of traffic; and
- Propose long term strategies to upgrade the corridor.

The study will be undertaken by the Department of Transport and Regional Services. It will consult closely with Xstrata; other private sector companies; and organisations such as the Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Development Zone (MITEZ) and the Mount Isa, Cloncurry and Townsville councils. The study will be a major input into the corridor strategy that will be developed under AusLink for the Mount Isa-Townsville transport route.

### **United Group purchases ALSTOM Australasia operations**

The United Group Ltd has signed a binding agreement with ALSTOM for the sale of ALSTOM's transport operations in Australia and New Zealand. The base purchase price is AUS\$ 267.5 million (app. €165 million), but ALSTOM could receive up to an additional AUS\$ 30 million (app. €8 million) based on future financial performance.

ALSTOM's transport operations in Australia and New Zealand include engineering and maintenance support, road and rail infrastructure projects, and the provision of professional services and systems to the transport industry throughout Australia and New Zealand. This business

employs approximately 2,000 staff and operates from both countries. Key customers include major road and rail operators and Australian construction companies.

As part of the acquisition, United Group has agreed a strategic alliance with ALSTOM, one of the world's leading providers of rail products, services and systems.

The agreement is conditional on obtaining a number of consents, including that of the Victorian Director of Public Transport. United Group has had extensive discussions and briefings with representatives of the Victorian DoI. United Group is not in a position to seek the Director's consent until the transaction documentation is finalised, but is not aware of any issues that would prevent the consent being obtained, and it is envisaged that financial close will occur in July 2005.

Meanwhile, United Group's rail arm, United Goninan has been awarded a \$262 million contract for the manufacture of an additional 81 OSCAR carriages for Sydney's outer suburban rail network. United Goninan is already well advanced with the manufacture of the previous order of 41 outer suburban double deck cars, the first of which is due for delivery early in 2006.

### **China to build first cross-desert railway**

Construction of China's first railway across the Ulan Buh Desert and Badain Jaran Desert in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region will begin this year, local railway sources said.

The 1,390-kilometer railway starts at Linhe in Inner Mongolia, runs westward through the Ulan Buh Desert and the along the northern rim of the Badain Jaran Desert on the Sino-Mongolian border, then enters Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region from northern Gansu Province and ends at Hami in Xinjiang, according to the railway administration of Hohhot, capital of Inner Mongolia. The estimated cost and scheduled completion date were not disclosed.

The section of the railway in Inner Mongolia is 1,070 kilometers and the sections in Gansu and Xinjiang are 320 kilometers.

Upon completion, the railway will serve as a direct link between north and northwest China and will be a convenient passage linking Xinjiang with north and northeast China and the national capital, Beijing.

The Linhe-Hami railway runs along the north route of the ancient Silk Road, which was the land thoroughfare linking China with Central and Western Asia to the eastern shore of the Mediterranean between the second century B.C. and the eight and ninth centuries A.D.

The Ulan Buh Desert and the Badain Jaran Desert are the third and fourth largest deserts in China.

## Chapter Reports

### Victoria & Tasmania

The Victoria and Tasmania Chapter has been more active over the last three months and members have continued to support the activities offered.

On Wednesday 13th April, Mr Pat Kelly of the Major Projects Section of the Victorian Department of Infrastructure made a presentation demonstrating the complexity of management of Victorian rail infrastructure projects in the contemporary environment.

Our annual dinner meeting at the Savoy Plaza Hotel on 6 May was extremely well supported with over 70 members and guests attending. The dinner was excellent, and our guest speaker was the Victorian Minister for Manufacturing and Export, and Minister for Financial Services, spoke of the importance of manufacturing in Victoria. He covered the importance of the railway based industries to Victorian manufacturing and export, citing considerable growth and good prospects for the future.

The busy programme over forthcoming months will continue, and details are listed below.

<b>Wednesday 20 July, 2005</b>	Technical Presentation on the science of rail grinding by Speno Rail (Details to be circulated).
<b>Wednesday 17 August, 2005</b>	Annual General Meeting, with a report on the Brazil IHHA conference by those fortunate enough to have attended.
<b>Wednesday 14 September, 2005</b>	Presentation on Safeworking developments in Victoria
<b>Wednesday 19 October, 2005</b>	Presentation on R&D developments and progress (Rail CRC update) by Mr. Vince O'Rourke.
<b>Wednesday 16 November, 2005</b>	Site visit to the Spencer Street Station construction site (approaching completion)
<b>Wednesday 8 December, 2005</b>	Christmas function

More details of all of the above events will be circulated in advance, and will be available on the RSTA website.

Arrangements for CORE 2006 (to be held in Melbourne) continue to make good progress with the tempo increasing. Several major sponsors have been secured, including The Victorian Department of Infrastructure. We have received more than 120 papers, and the social and technical tours programmes are well advanced.

Visit the CORE 2006 Website ([www.core2006.org/](http://www.core2006.org/)) for more details.

*David Ferris, Chapter Chair*

### Western Australia

With almost six months of 2005 already gone the program for WA has progressed slowly with a full set of technical meetings scheduled for the latter part of the year.

The March meeting combined a technical presentation with the Annual General Meeting where officers for 2005 year were elected as follows;

Chapter Chairman: John Syers

Secretary: Bill Singleton

Committee: John Goodall, Brian Cornish, Norman Tan, Keith Jones, Hugh Smith, John Carlisle, Viv Rodrigues

The group are especially pleased to welcome Hugh Smith (GM Network and Infrastructure PTA) and John Carlisle (Principal Engineer – Rail, Maunsell) to the committee. These members have a good understanding of the railway industry and their contribution to the management of the WA Chapter will be extremely valuable.

#### Meetings

##### 24 March 2005

The topic of the March meeting was “Slab Track Construction and the use of Low Stiffness Fasteners” presented by Steve Barlow, Track Support Engineer for Pandrol Asia Pacific. The subject was especially relevant to the forthcoming Mandurah Railway construction where the route is planned to enter the Perth Central area from the south via tunnelling under the William Street Alignment. The use of slab track with acceptable fasteners will be a feature of the track design.

Once again a good attendance resulted with over 40 members and guests for the presentation.

##### 28 April 2005

WestNet Rail has introduced a system for the monitoring of bearing faults in wagons. The system “Rail Bearing Acoustic Monitoring System” or RailBAM has been developed by Vipac and the SA State Manager, Mirek Vesely provided the presentation which described RailBAM, its operation and some outcomes of in-service performance.

The presentation was supported by comments made on behalf of WestNet Rail by John Ursic, Control and Communication Systems Manager who explained the performance of the system over the past 12 months.

Again a good attendance was recorded for the meeting.

## Future Program

A full program of presentations and site visits is planned for the remainder of the year. Although the meeting planned for June has been deferred an alternative presentation is being sought and members will be advised of the outcome when this is confirmed. Other meetings scheduled for the period are;

**Thursday 28 July** “Heavy Haulage Rail Research Developments” Peter Mutton, BHP Institute of Rail Technology and RTSA Individual Achievement Award Winner, 2004.

**Thursday 1 September** “Advances in Rail Flaw Detection” David Griffiths, Rail Technology International.

**Thursday 13 October** “WestNet Rail Contract Maintenance Update” Jelle Sibma, Tony Notte, WestNet Rail

**Thursday 24 November** Site Visit – Perth Urban Rail Project.

Plans for CORE 2008 are still in the preliminary stage with the booking for the venue almost secured following an extensive evaluation into the available alternatives. There remains a need for further members of the railway industry in Perth to join up with the organising committee to provide us with more support for this important event. Any willing contributors can do so by contacting the Conference Chairman, John Goodall (08 9371 5069 or Email [jwgoodall@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jwgoodall@bigpond.net.au))

**John Syers**  
**WA Chapter Chair**

## Queensland

### ARA Qld Member Dinner

On the 11th May, Mark Wishart represented the RTSA at the ARA Queensland Member's Dinner held on the riverboat Kookaburra Queen. The event was very well attended and attendees were able to listen to a talk given by the Honourable Paul Lucas, Queensland Minister for Transport discussing the Queensland Government's transport infrastructure plans over the next 20 years

### SEQ Infrastructure Plan

Certainly the biggest news in Queensland, which carries on from the previously published SEQ regional plan, is the South East Queensland infrastructure plan.

If you are interested, have a look at [http://qld.ieaust.org.au/jetspeed/static/items/2/2935/SEQIP\\_Pfull.pdf](http://qld.ieaust.org.au/jetspeed/static/items/2/2935/SEQIP_Pfull.pdf) or see the link at the top right corner of the Qld division website for more information.

## Recent Meetings

Three meetings to report on since last report:-

### 23 March 2005

Mike Walsh, General Manager iQR, talked to us about Strategic Asset Management Using Modern Technologies, utilising QR as an example of how it uses new technologies to manage its massive track and infrastructure asset. *Attendance 36*

### 27 April 2005

Dave Schonfeld, Research Director of the Rail CRC talked with great passion to us about the wide range of fascinating achievements of the Rail CRC, across a broad spectrum of technological and operational innovations. As a part of the night, we also heard from Les Brearley, about the successes so far of the CQU Signalling Engineering Course, as they have embarked on their second intake of students. Dudley Roach, CEO of the Rail CRC ended off the night by talking about where to from here, especially as this team begins preparations for the next round of CRC funds bidding. *Attendance 33*

### 25 May 2005

Ian Goldney of Interfleet Technology gave us an informative lunchtime talk on Railway Vehicle Gauging (including a brief overview of some of the difficulties of establishing workable kinematic envelopes for tilting trains on Britain's existing rail infrastructure). We would like to extend our thanks also to Mark Wishart of Interfleet Technology for agreeing to sponsor this event. With an *attendance of 41*, lunchtime seems to be a popular choice for future meetings.

## Upcoming Events

The Queensland Chapter organising committee trusts that you will enjoy the 2005 event calendar that they have prepared for the members. Whilst every attempt has been made to bring members a widely varied range of topics, we would welcome any other suggestions from members for interesting topics or ways to present it.

### 22 June 2005 6pm

Andy Taylor, Group General Manager Rollingstock and Component Services, QR. A new name or a new direction for QR's previously known Workshops Group.

### 20 July 2005 6.30pm

### Annual General Meeting/Dinner

Yes, something new and Yes, I am getting in a bit early to plug this event on 20 July, when we plan to hold our Chapter Annual General Meeting in combination with the RTSA National AGM and a dinner at the Irish Club in Elizabeth Street, Brisbane. We will have George Erdos,

the RTSA National Chairman, as our after dinner speaker. This will also be a chance to meet some, if not all, of the RTSA National Council members.

Fliers will be out soon. RTSA member cost per person will be \$38.50 (incl GST), and non-member cost per person will \$44.00 (incl GST).

#### 24 August 2005

Barry Payne and Chris Formenton, QR, talking about the introduction of ECP brakes systems on QR coal trains.

#### September 2005

One for the Central Queensland members – linked with QR's annual Track Engineering Conference in Rockhampton, we hope to have Vic Stevens from QRNational speaking about the future of QR's newest venture into the national transport logistics marketplace. Date still be finalised, so keep watching the website.

#### 26 October 2005

Bauhinia Rail Project. Speaker to be confirmed.

#### Note of Thanks

I just want to take this opportunity to thank George Nikandros (our past Chapter Chairman) for standing in as chapter chairman for the next two months during my absence.

*Cameron Smart,  
Queensland Chapter Chair*

## New South Wales

**Rail for a better future** is scheduled to conclude on June 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Harricks Auditorium with an all day seminar outlining the results of the process so far. Under the leadership of Sydney Division Immediate Past Chair of EA, Professor Vernon Ireland, the Sydney Chapter of the RTSA has combined with the Centre for Engineering Leadership, the Transport Panel and the Civil Panel of Engineers to provide some solutions to identify to the operator and travelling public a perception of what the NSW Rail System can do to improve the rail services of the Sydney suburban and interurban rail services addressing the current issues of congestion, driver shortages, long lead times and slow delivery of new train sets and the continued use of older non-air conditioned rolling stock until new contracts are let for their replacement later this year. Speakers have been sourced to address the solutions to the various issues already aired by the community through the previous sessions.

During 2005, normal Sydney Chapter RTSA meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month, December excepted. Some exceptions will occur when the Chapter

combine with other groups for joint meetings on their nights and at their premises, please inspect the events program and the website for times & locations.

#### Meetings

Since the last edition of Horizons the Chapter have held the following meetings:

#### 27 April 2005 Joint Meeting with IRSE

The speaker for this meeting was unable to attend, being interstate on that night. Trevor Moore stood in with a presentation on learning from others disasters. When an event happens on another system, do we then look to see if that event or something similar could happen on our own? Proactive studies of accident reports could save lives and disruptions if applied at home.

#### 5 May 2005 Australian Railroad Group (ARG)

Ron Dagostino spoke of ARG's operations, its locomotive fleet and the various issues with differing systems across the nation where ARG operate.

#### 2 June 2005 Sydney OSC Rail Cars.

Neil Saville gave an excellent presentation on the OSC (Outer Suburban Cars) being built by United Goninan. Neil used 3D graphics to walk through the cars and spoke of some of the attributes of these cars with respect to crashworthiness, power rating, component suppliers, etc. Stage two of this contract has already been awarded.

The Sydney Chapter has requested a site visit in the next months to inspect the various stages of construction along with a look at the Hunter Cars that Neil spoke about at a previous meeting.

The Chapter is indebted to the individuals and companies who make their time available to present to the members the vast variety of rail issues and developments taking place in the current rail systems across this nation.

#### Future Program

<b>Thursday 7 July</b>	ARTC NSW operations Malcolm Owens
<b>July (provisional)</b>	Site Visit - OSCAR/Hunter Railcar plant United Goninan, Newcastle
<b>August</b>	JOINT MEETING WITH PWI Details to be confirmed
<b>1 September</b>	150th Anniversary Heritage Topic David Hill
<b>Possible October</b>	Epping – Chatswood Tunnel Inspection Site Visit TIDC
<b>Possible October</b>	OSCAR/ Hunter Railcar plant visit United Goninan, Newcastle

<b>6 October</b>	QR Hunter Valley Rolling Stock
<b>Thursday 3 November</b>	Rolling Stock Maintenance EDI Rail
<b>December</b>	NO MEETING
Meetings and Events are subject to confirmation.	<b>First Thursday of the month meetings are held at Harricks Auditorium, Ground Floor, Engineers Australia, 118 Alfred Street Milsons Point, NSW 2061</b>

*Bill Laidlaw, Chapter Chair*  
*Basil Hancock, Secretary*

## South Australia

### Year of the Young Engineer

Engineers Australia (EA) has pronounced 2005 as the Year of the Young Engineer. All areas of EA are finding it difficult to attract young people into joining and participating in the diverse range of activities being offered by EA and their related branches, colleges and societies. These young people are the future of industry and it is important for them to keep up to date and be trained in the latest developments which contributes toward their Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Involvement in EA is also beneficial for their own career advancement as these meetings and associations provide excellent Networking opportunities.

EA has challenged all groups to have 2 Young Engineers join each of the committees. In this regard I am pleased to announce that Tom Hampton, a young engineer from John Holland Pty Ltd Rail Division, has offered to join the SA Chapter of the RTSA and has been unanimously accepted to be co-opted onto the committee. I am sure Tom will bring fresh ideas to the committee and provide some youthful enthusiasm which will benefit our local Chapter. However we still have plenty of room on our committee for additional people, especially Young Engineers, to assist us in preparing meetings and conferences which are of interest and benefit to us all.

### Meetings

#### **3 March 2005 - Port River Expressway and Bridges**

A joint meeting with and hosted by the PWI South Australian Section. Max Shuard gave a detailed presentation on the background to the upgrading of Port Adelaide, the transfer of focus from Middle to Outer Harbour and the influence this has had on the options adopted for the Expressway. The Port River Expressway, the name given to the road from Port Wakefield Road to

Victoria Parade is also the name given to the project to construct two bridges over the Port River.

For rail, it will mean metamorphosis along the Le Fevre Peninsula from a quiet backwater handling about 600,000 tonnes per year to a major transport link transporting 4 to 5 million tonnes per year.

The original plan was to deepen the harbour around to Middle Harbour where the existing grain terminal is located. This proposal made use of the existing grain and container handling infrastructure and had minimal influence on the rail network.

When examined in detail, the cost of deepening and maintaining the 14 m depth along a long channel, combined with the environmental issues this raised, significantly decreased the attractiveness of the Middle Harbour proposal.

In reviewing the Outer Harbour option, it was realised that the key to providing a suitable arrangement was the efficient handling of grain. The proposal adopted includes a rail balloon loop and grain storage located away from the berth with a conveyor belt to feed grain to the new berth.

The storage facilities at Outer Harbour for grain are planned to be much smaller than the facilities at Middle Harbour, and so a regular rail service would need to be guaranteed. Similarly, container traffic to Outer Harbour would grow as the larger ships will be attracted by the deeper berths at Outer Harbour. This meant that the annual average tonnage carried by rail is likely to be 5 million tonnes per annum. This is a far cry from the 600,000 tonnes originally estimated for the bridge.

The main features of the Port River Expressway Project Stages 2 and 3 are the two new river crossings, one road and one rail, east of Port Adelaide.

With the much greater rail traffic volume and the need to run a scheduled service to serve a just in time grain terminal and also be linked to mainline rail schedules, it became apparent that original proposals for a low level opening bridge would not be adequate.

In theory the need for a lifting rail bridge was mollified by the following:

- The design of both bridges has been raised to 10m AHD allowing the tourist boats to operate under the bridges.
- Tug berths are to be moved to Outer Harbour
- Reluctance of Navy and Passenger ships to use Inner Harbour
- Need for berths for the sailing ships One and All and Falie north of the bridges.

- Offer to shift the Yacht club to a new site.

If a lifting bridge is adopted, selecting a satisfactory design will be challenging.

The type of lifting bridge selected varies with the span. A single leaf bascule is the most economic for spans up to about 40 metres. The Port River rail bridge has a clear span of 30 m. A bascule has the advantage of no height limit. Above spans of approximately 40 metres a tower lifting bridge or a rotating bridge are the technical options, but much more expensive.

The challenge with any lifting bridge is to locate the bridge structure accurately enough to allow the safe passage of traffic. Rail is the most critical as the tolerances are much tighter, within 1 mm. Interlocking and signalling are other issues not easily solved in a manner to ensure reliable working.

**Editor's Note:** Subsequent to Max's presentation, the SA Government has announced that both the road and rail bridges will be opening bridges.

**7 April 2005 - ARTC in NSW**

Malcolm Owens from Australian Rail track Corporation provided an overview of ARTC's investment plans for New South Wales. Since the original lease plan for NSW was formulated including up to \$872 million in capital works, a further \$1 billion has been made available through a special Federal Government grant and Auslink funding. In light of the additional funding, ARTC has reviewed its investment options for the North South corridor (Melbourne-Sydney-Brisbane) and Hunter Valley. Over the next 4-5 years the projected works are aimed at reducing transit times between Melbourne and Sydney and Melbourne and Brisbane by around three hours and nine and a half hours respectively, at the same time doubling the number of available train paths. Over the same period, the coal carrying capacity of the Hunter Valley network will be lifted from 85 million to 140 million tonnes per annum.

<b>7 July</b>	Re-Tendering of TransAdelaide's Railcar Maintenance Contract
<b>4 August</b>	Review of Heavy Haul Conference-Brazil
<b>1 September</b>	New Trans Adelaide Trams (joint with PWI)
<b>6 October</b>	Upgrading of Glenelg Tram Infrastructure
<b>3 November</b>	TBA
<b>29 November</b>	SA Chapter AGM Dinner



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**RTSA**  
**RAILWAY**  
**ENGINEERING AWARDS**

The RTSA Awards Committee has completed its review of the nominations that have been received for 2005 and will present its recommendations to the RTSA National Council at its meeting in July.

In 2006, nominations will be called for in four categories of award

- Individual Award
- Industry Award
- Young Railway Engineer's Award
- Railway Engineering Student's Award.

The RTSA web site will be up-dated soon to provide all the current details with respect to these various awards.

It can be advised, however, that nominations will close on **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2006.**

When realising that it is the intention to present the awards at CORE2006 in May 2006, it is stressed that the Awards Committee will not be able to accept any late nominations as this will prejudice the time available to Committee to conclude the process of review promptly.

## **iQR Derailment Cause Analysis Training**

Derailment Cause Analysis is a key element of any derailment reduction strategy. Acquiring this core capability is a challenge that many rail operators face.

Based on industry-recognised best practice training systems, iQR's Derailment Cause Analysis Training teaches individuals how to correctly identify derailment cause(s) and contributing factors and recommend appropriate actions to prevent reoccurrences.

Lead presenter for the course is international derailment investigation specialist who

Mike McLoughlin, Director, Rail Accident Investigations with Catalis Rail Training (UK).

Course content covers effective investigation of derailments and prevention of derailments by understanding the contributory factors. Courses are multi-disciplinary to encourage networking between Operations Managers, Rolling Stock Engineers and Infrastructure Maintainers.

### **Brisbane**

19-22 July 2005

26-29 July 2005

### **Rockhampton**

2-5 August 2005

For further details **contact Anne Baldwin** at iQR on **07 3532 3043** or e-mail **anne.baldwin@qr.com.au**

## **Brake Systems Focus Group**

The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) intends to establish industry focus groups on a range of subjects both technical and operational. In the first instance, a Brake Systems Focus Group will be formed with the following objectives:

- Consider topical brake systems issues
- Peer review of standards
- Information exchange
- Dissemination of good and best practice

Attendees are expected to be expert practitioners in the braking discipline from train operators and managers. Suppliers and manufacturers would be invited on an as required basis. Meetings would probably be held every 3 to 6 months. Such groups will be a source of information and expertise for consideration by the newly formed Standing Committees (in this case the Rolling Stock Standing Committee).

For further information contact,

**John Shalders**  
**ARA Code of Practice Manager**

**Phone 02 6270 4509**  
**Mobile 0438 704 509**



Conference on Railway Engineering

# “Rail Achieving Growth”

30 April – 03 May 2006

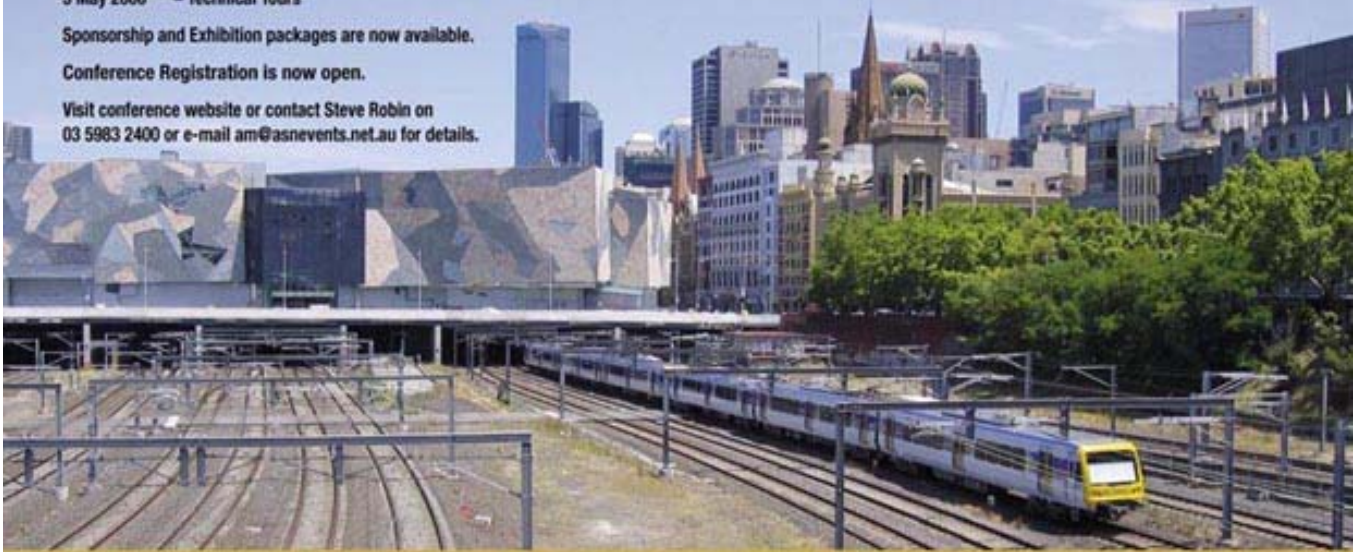
The Grand Hyatt, Melbourne Australia

30 April 2006 – Registration & Welcome Cocktails  
1-2 May 2006 – Conference Sessions & Partners Program  
3 May 2006 – Technical Tours

Sponsorship and Exhibition packages are now available.

Conference Registration is now open.

Visit conference website or contact Steve Robin on  
03 5983 2400 or e-mail [am@asnevents.net.au](mailto:am@asnevents.net.au) for details.



[www.core2006.org](http://www.core2006.org)

The Railway Technical Society of Australasia (RTSA) will hold its next international Conference on Railway Engineering, CORE2006, at the refurbished Grand Hyatt in Melbourne from Sunday 30 April 2006 to Wednesday 03 May 2006. The theme of the conference will be “Rail Achieving Growth”.

CORE2006 will provide an ideal setting for establishing and consolidating networks amongst professionals associated with the railway industry. The conference technical sessions, informative technical tours and expansive industry exhibition planned as part of CORE2006 will also provide delegates with valuable opportunities on which to build effective business relationships.

Three parallel streams are planned over the two day conference sessions to present 70 high quality refereed technical papers covering various topics including Projects and Planning, Safety and Risk Management, Signalling, Track/Rail Maintenance, Vehicle/Wheel Maintenance, Condition Monitoring etc.

Three different technical programs have also been planned on the final day of the conference (3 May 2006) highlighting the new Regional Fast Rail (RFR) project, the historic Castlemaine to Maldon railway system and various railway facilities and workshops in the Melbourne and surrounding areas.

Two different partners programs have been arranged for the Monday and Tuesday (1 and 2 May 2006) of the Conference. Each tour showcases a part of Melbourne’s uniqueness and culture, and promises to be a great day out.

Conference registrations are now open. All potential delegates, exhibitors and sponsors are invited to submit their registrations and/or expressions of interest through the conference website at

[www.core2006.org](http://www.core2006.org)

For further details please contact Mr Steve Robin at ASN Events on [sr@asnevents.net.au](mailto:sr@asnevents.net.au) or telephone +613 5983 2400.

*Ravi Ravitharan* Chairman CORE2006 Organising Committee