NEW SOUTH WALES NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2009

ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA

RTSA

Railway Technical Society of Australasia
NSW Chapter
Mail: PO Box 6238, Kingston, ACT, 2604

RTSA NSW CHAPTER MEETING

Wednesday 7th OCTOBER

11.30 for 12.00 in the

CENTRAL STATION - CONCOURSE MEETING ROOM

(next to Lost Property, opposite platform 2)

"OUR TASK IS TO ENABLE THE FUTURE, NOT MERELY FORSEE IT"

The planned September meeting has had to be cancelled at short notice (SEE PAGE 2), so our next regular 'first Wednesday' meeting will now be on the 7th of OCTOBER.

The October meeting will feature Peter Moore, Executive Director, UITP – Australia and New Zealand talking on his favourite topic of Public Transport. Peter is a most entertaining and informative speaker which should make this a 'not to be missed' meeting

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READ THIS FIRST:

Unfortunate circumstances have conspired to defeat our plans for a regular meeting on the 1st Wednesday in September. First the speaker was unavailable at short notice (although there may be some benefit in this topic being delayed a few months). Plan B, to have a standby topic as a substitute, was well on the way to being settled when word came through that the venue will be unavailable all the first week in September.

Reluctantly we have had to accept that this meeting will simply not be able to be held –
THERE WILL BE NO SEPTEMBER MEETING. The next meeting will now be on 7th of October and will feature Peter Moore from UITP talking about the role and function of public transport. Details are on this month's front page.

MESSAGE FROM THE NEW CHAIR

Welcome to the August edition of the RTSA Newsletter, my first as RTSA Chair.

It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to serve as chair of the RTSA NSW Chapter for at least the next year. Special thanks to Andrew Honan for his devotion and leadership during the past three years, and his help in making a smooth transition. I pledge myself to be an active Chapter Chair and to advance the objectives of the RTSA and the interests of our members. I am looking forward to this challenge.

The development of rail people is a central focus for the RTSA and we have already made significant progress in this area. We will continue to train our workforce, offer development opportunities and strive to attract the youngest and brightest minds to rail.

Working on the RTSA committee along with attending conferences and the monthly lunchtime meetings has allowed me to meet some great colleagues from all over the state and different disciplines. I would like to encourage all members of our chapter to participate in these meetings and events this coming year and take advantage of the many opportunities the RTSA offers you.

If you are not a member of the RTSA yet, join up! Not only do you gain advantages for yourself, but you become a part of an organization that advocates and supports your career and profession on local, state and national level. Membership forms are at http://rtsa.com.au/joining/

Finally, the RTSA has started planning next year's premier rail technology event: **CORE2010 Rail - Rejuvenation and Renaissance** to be held in Wellington, NZ 12-15 September 2010 (http://www.core2010.org.nz/). The perfect time for a Spring break to see how it's done in the land of the Long White Cloud. So remember to plan ahead, save the date, and join us for a fun and informative time.

I am looking forward to meeting more of you at our coming events.

Katharina Gerstmann

RTSA NSW Chapter Chair

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RTSA DINNER – 6th AUGUST:

A goodly number of happy souls, made up of RTSA members and their partners, attended the 2009 RTSA NSW Chapter Annual Dinner that was held on August 6th at the Royal Automobile Club of Australia.

The event was a great success, and all present enjoyed the convivial atmosphere, high quality comestibles and pleasant atmosphere provided by the club.

The dinner speaker, Dale Budd, gave a talk on 'The Digital Railway' which was of technical interest to the engineers present, and was also entertaining for the partners. A review of Dale's presentation is included elsewhere in this Newsletter

During the evening, the opportunity was taken for our Past Chair, Andrew Honan, to provide a brief presentation reviewing the progress of the NSW Chapter under his chairmanship.

Our new Chair, Katherina Gerstmann, also spoke for a few minutes, outlining the directions in which she sees the Chapter moving in the future. Those present were most encouraged by Katherina's forward-thinking ideas.

The occasion provided an opportunity for our membership to socialize and spend a pleasant few hours in the company of others in the industry, while, at the same time gaining new knowledge on railway technology, all at a very moderate cost.

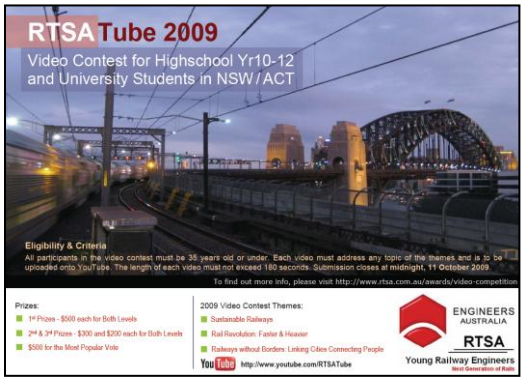
We look forward to similar events being held in future years.

ENTER THE RTSA TUBE VIDEO COMPETITION

Are you a student in engineering, computer science or information technology and under age of 35 or are you a high school students in year 10-12? Then this is for you!

Your video could be funny, quirky, serious or sad. It could be an animation or just a video of you talking. Do a rap, or a dance. Do a drama. Do it with friends, or do it by yourself. Make it complicated, or simply speak about what you think. Have fun! Win prizes! But make sure it is:

- About Railways
- Maximum 180 seconds long
- Suitable for all audiences, and
- Get it to us through YouTube by midnight (AEST), 11 October 2009.



Winners will be contacted by email or phone early November 2009.

Profiles of winners & their video will be put on the RTSA website and on top of our YouTube channel, and we might use them for publicity in the future. By entering, you'll be having your say, helping tell others about railway, and having a great time!

For more information on rules & guidelines, how to enter the RTSA Tube Video Competition and how to upload an entry on YouTube, go to http://rtsa.com.au/awards/video-competition. Good luck!

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THE 2009 COMMITTEE

The new NSW RTSA committee is substantially similar to that for the previous year. However Katharina Gerstmann has stepped up to take the role of Chair, while John Watsford has taken on the Secretarial role. Andrew Honan stepped down from the Chair and now occupies the place of 'elder statesman' on the committee, while Bill Laidlaw also fills a similar function after many years of executive roles in our Chapter. Coen Stoltz stepped down from the committee in response to the pressure of work (a common issue for working members) – Coen's contribution during the last year is much appreciated. The committee names and positions are listed on the last page of every Newsletter. Contact can be made as shown or via the Canberra address on the title bar of each page

POINT OF VIEW: Max Michell

Recently I had cause to travel from Grafton to Sydney and return. Predictably I took the opportunity to do the journey by XPT, partly to satisfy my natural travel instincts and partly to keep an eye on what has and is happening along the line. I have to say that the journey in both directions was very pleasant with on time or early running being the order of the day. Both trains were comfortably loaded and, as anyone who travels this route will know, there were significant numbers of passengers on and off at every station. In quite a few cases a seat that had been vacated by a departing passenger was immediately filled by a newly joined passenger – indicating a degree of maturity in the reservation system that optimises the use of capacity on these trains. Notably there were reasonable numbers of passengers other than the usual 'grey hair' set – real full fare paying passengers.

The NSW North Coast line is hardly a high speed route, with a succession of tight curves being interspersed with a sprinkling of tangent track sections. Despite this the overall timing was around 10 hours – only about one hour longer than driving after allowing for an hour long lunch stop at Cassagrain Winery at the back of Port Macquarie.

The ARTC concrete sleeper program on this line has been completed, but works are in hand to lengthen three crossing loops to 1500 metres – Mindaribba, Kilbride and Kerewong. In addition the recently completed double loops at Dungog and Craven, and newly install Vossloh turnouts at quite a few other loops were in evidence. Mindaribba was a particularly interesting case. In its old configuration it had a 400 metre loop on the up side with a short (10 metre) platform on the loop. All Dungog locals had to be directed through the loop to deal with the occasional passenger – on a number of round trips I have never seen any passenger activity there! The new 1500 metre loop will be on the down side. On my southbound trip we crossed a local rail car at Mindaribba, but 6 days later when I was heading north the old loop had been totally removed, leaving the platform temporarily stranded for the time being.

One of the less apparent aspects of my travels was the almost total absence of temporary speed restrictions on the single track section north of Maitland (apart from where the new loop work was happening). On a line that was once notorious for the number and longevity of temporary speeds it was most refreshing to find such a change. There is no doubt that under such conditions the XPT's have little difficulty in keeping to the timetable.

One curious aspect of the timetable is that run times are still based on locations that have long ceased to exist (such as Herons Creek, Coopernook and Banyabba) or that have been moved some distance from their original site (such as Wallarobba and Nana Glen). It hardly inspires when a train is early at one station, a couple of minutes late at the next and on time at the third while all the time running quite

normally. It probably reflects that timetablers these days rarely if ever travel the lines they table for, and in some cases are quite remote from those lines.

RailCorp had a major shut-down between Adamstown and Hamilton to allow installation of concrete sleepers, concrete bearer turnouts and general rehabilitation work to take place. Unlike many similar shutdowns this one was able to be by-passed (by trains) by using the relief roads through Broadmeadow Yard and the rarely used platform 3 at the station. Having just a single platform to cope with the terminating inter-urban trains and Morisset locals, along with through Countrylink services in both directions, as well as the passage of up empty rail cars and freight trains was a significant constraint, but in general this arrangement seemed to work quite well.

On another recent outing, on the South Coast line, trains were working single line between Helensburgh and Otford while an apparently broken rail was being replaced. In both cases track work (of quite a different character) was being done without serious disruption to normal traffic

So here we have recent examples of construction work beside the tracks, serious track work and emergency track work all being done while traffic was being worked past the sites. It is something that used to be entirely normal but now-a-days is becoming quite unusual. The obsessive demands of the Nanny State, coupled I suspect with a lack of appreciation of the 'customer', and an 'easy way out' type attitude has brought us face to face with the Pommie disease – when in doubt shut the track down. Call it what you like, blockade, possession, occupation, it is the same thing – a contraction of the railway to a part time service. NSW has been a leader in this regard but Connex in Melbourne and QR in Brisbane are now well and truly infected.

There are undoubtedly situations where track closures are unavoidable – replacement of bridges and complex turnouts being a case in point. There are others that so constrain track capacity that something has to go to allow some operation on the adjacent track – concrete sleepers on the Newcastle and Wollongong tracks in recent times being a good example. However the endemic weekend 'track work' in Sydney where anywhere from a few kms to over 100 km of track is shut down for work that in many cases is barely apparent is not a good way to encourage use of the network. Saturday on the city road network is slowly developing a reputation as having an all day peak hour. At the same time CityRail has so embedded the idea that part of the rail system will be shut down that many potential users are simply turned off (regardless of the location of weekend track work) and don't even bother. A retired friend of mine who used to visit friends in the Blue Mountains got so frustrated by weekend substitute bus journeys that he has given up. The loss of revenue is small but it is symptomatic of the attitude that this sort a practice engenders.

In Britain there has been a groundswell of revolt in regard to this practice, provoked by some significant stuff ups on the West Coast main line and other places among other things. There is a growing demand, from users and increasingly the operating companies, for what is called a 24/7 railway – a rail system that provides service full time rather than erratically part time. Given our propensity here to mimic the experiences of elsewhere it might be assumed that eventually similar demands will be heard here from influential voices (I exclude the Daily Telegraph, which recently bemoaned the 'closure' of Mindaribba during the period the Bledisloe Cup was being held).

There are some tentative signs of a shift of emphasis here. The progressive improvement of track and overhead systems has been quoted by CityRail (not to mention Macquarie St spin merchants) as significantly reducing future maintenance requirements. Some shut downs now involve an area rather smaller than once might have been the case, and there are some attempts (at times) to try and keep the trains running to the degree reasonably possible. This is a culture change as much as a technical issue and NSW as a whole is peculiarly averse to culture change. It can only be hoped that CityRail will

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progressively contract the impact of shut-downs to the lowest reasonably achievable level, with train services shut out of the shortest possible section of track. New York, among a lot of overseas cities, only shuts down very short sections of track – effectively between the nearest crossovers either side of the worksite – when they need to do work unable to be done under traffic (they run 24 hours a day so don't have the night time window that we have here). Surely if New York can do so can we. I look forward to the day.

ASIA METRO STORE

In only about two weeks the STORE group will be departing this earth (temporarily) for a hectic itinerary covering 6 cities in Asia over a 12 day period. Final arrangements are being settled and details have been forwarded to participants in the last few days.

The tour will more or less coincide with the normal date for the next Newsletter and since the Editor will be on the tour ..... However by cutting things a bit fine it should be possible to have a review of the tour in the September Newsletter, providing something of a vicarious outing for the membership in general.

THE AUGUST MEETING: reporter Malcolm Cluett

RECLAIMING RAILS USING HEDKOTE WELDING: Seamus Walsh, Hardface Technologies Ltd

Hardface Technologies Ltd is primarily concerned with Arc Welding repairs to rails and trackwork components.

The presentation commenced with a series of photographs of common trackwork defects:

Metal flow (which can hide a crack underneath) Distorted metal that has been subject to plastic flow can often break off, leading to incipient failure defects. Some of the worn components in the photos don't need a feeler-gauge to determine the extent of the wear, as it is in the order of 5 – 10mm from the original track profile !

Transverse defects (ie, fatigue cracks) in the railhead can also be detected, ground out and repaired.

Wheel burns are a common defect. The presenter showed some photos of severe wheel burns. These can also mask defects lying underneath (from ultrasonic diagnostic equipment). So the affected area is often plated first, pending repair. Traffic can still pass while the rails are being repaired (unless the defect is too severe).

The speaker said that news of a new wheel-burn came in on December 24, while the company was having its end-of-year party. A work crew was duly despatched to repair the fault !

The speaker showed a number of photos demonstrating the sequence in the repair of a wheel burn. First the defect is ground out. The rails are then pre-heated prior to welding. The weld is built up gradually with many passes. Finally the rails are ground back to the correct profile. The final profile grinding is done after the rails have been allowed to cool down, so that thermal expansion and contraction is not an issue.

The repaired zone is often indistinguishable after the repair is completed. It is important that a reference mark is painted on the rail (with a suitable offset away from the heat affected zone) so that the repaired area can be located for subsequent diagnostic tests.

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Broken or worn switch tips can be repaired, unless they defect is too severe. The welding heat has to be kept low when repairing these components.

Swingnose crossings can also be repaired. These are being increasingly used on the heavy-haul lines in NSW.

Dipped welded joints can be repaired. There was a before-and-after photo of such a fault, in-track for two years after the repair and looking good.

Rail Crossings

- Scrap value is typically $100.
- New cost is $15K.
- Repair cost is typically $3K with a one-year warranty.

Some photos of “before and after” crossings were displayed, with a remarkable difference in appearance.

The repaired items can last longer than new items, because the deposited weld metal is better-quality than the metal from the foundry.

Other work included matching of dis-similar rails and rails with battered ends. (A ramped transition section was built up on the railhead.

Head-hardened rail is also amenable to arc-welding repairs.

Manganese steel crossings often have casting defects from the original supplier. (This is a difficult material to cast.) Manganese alloys are inherently soft but harden after impact .

A new Rail-Bound-Manganese (RBM) crossing item costs $28K to purchase, so large cost savings are possible with repair rather than replacement.

One spectacular example from a BHP Billiton railway required 11kg of weld metal to be fully repaired !

The repair should be symmetrical, in terms of equal amounts of weld deposition on the RHS and LHS. (Crossings often wear in an unsymmetrical pattern.)

Explosive hardening is used on manganese steel alloys, producing a similar result to cold-working. It can’t be applied to the tip of crossings, but is used elsewhere. The explosive is applied in the form of flexible strips, which are then detonated. The company is also experimenting with hard-facing of new manganese components.

Repairs at the factory

Track components such as crossings can be taken back to the factory to be repaired. Here conditions are ideal, there are no issues with the weather and there is control of welding fume and manganese-steel dust. Ergonomics are better in a workshop.

However in-situ repairs are also common.

The speaker showed a pic of Hedcote Welding Crew and their vehicle. Ideally the vehicle can be driven up to the section of track to be repaired. After the defect is ground out, the welds are gradually built up with many passes like a pad weld.

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It is safer for the railway if worn track components are monitored and continually repaired, rather than being allowed to wear down to condemning level. Heavily worn components are sometimes permitted in freight yards where speeds are lower, and the consequences of a derailment would be less severe.

A series of photos demonstrated how a small Hedkote work crew could replace a RBM component of a turnout in the Hunter Valley. This is done typically with a one-hour duration track possession (assuming road access for a truck with a crane at the work site)

The RBM unit weighs 300kg. Three such items can fit in a light vehicle for transport back to the factory. These items can be reconditioned up to four times, before condemning.

As with all track repairs, the rail tension needs to be correct when reinstating the tracks. Such repairs cannot be carried out in extreme temperatures.

To sum up, there are major benefits to rail operators, in terms of reducing major possessions, and economies of purchasing new track components, if the existing in-track components are monitored and maintained by arc welding techniques.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Axle loads in the Hunter Valley ?
A: Currently 30 t axle loads (reputed to increase soon) with a speed of 60 km/h. The throughput is 90 Mt/annum.

Q: What about the very high-speed railways in France, and Europe generally.
A: It is believed that the manganese crossing components are repaired, but obviously the tolerances on high-speed track are much less.

Q: Residual stresses from welding ?
A: Flux-core arc-welding wires are used. The flux is an alloying flux.

Gas shield welding is not used by the company, as it is not suitable for outdoor repairs.
Stick welding electrodes are not used. Items are pre-stressed on the work bench to avoid camber.
Manganese steel components are always welded with the workpiece kept as cool as possible.
The possibility of using hardfacing wire specially for the rail repair industry was discussed. Other industries use much larger amounts of welding consumables, so the welding supply companies are more likely to make “specials” for them.

Q: How frequent are failed Huck Bolts ?
A: These are uncommon. Huck Bolts are more reliable than threaded crossing bolts. (Bolts in track components need to be kept absolutely tight.)

Q: Ultrasonic testing ?
A: This is done by another agency, as part of the company’s Quality Assurance system.

Q: Rebuilds of railway wheels ?
A: Hardface Technologies don’t do this at present.

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THE RTSA DINNER PRESENTATION: Reporter Malcolm Cluett

Dale Budd on the Digital Railway

This interesting presentation covered a number of topics, with a degree of humour. The speaker was a Director of ARTC, and has been involved in the rail industry for many years. He is well-known for his advocacy of high-speed passenger rail on the Sydney – Canberra – Melbourne corridor.

A visual comparison was made with some of the infrastructure for air traffic control (with modern state-of-the-art communications and architecture) and railway signalling (with mechanical signals and block-system safeworking in use on the Sydney – Melbourne corridor. In the Moss-Vale – Gouburn area, and elsewhere, things had hardly changed since the 1880s, but modern equipment was belatedly installed about one year ago.

The speaker singled out five different initiatives which make use of modern digital technology to achieve ARTC'S corporate objectives.

Wayside Fault detection

- Rail Squeal Monitoring
- Monitoring of Angle-of-Attack of axles (in freight bogies which have some flexibility)
- Hunting Detector (also in freight vehicles)
- Wheel Impact Load detector (for wheel flats)

The aim of all of these installations is to minimise derailments, reduce wear and damage to rails and rolling stock, and to monitor rail transit noise. A number of these sites have been collecting data since 2003. Rail squeal noise is a problem in the Adelaide Hills (which have much curvature) and in other built-up areas. The monitoring units have a doorway which opens up when a train is passing, exposing the array of sensitive microphones. Data gathered could lead to strategies to reduce noise, such as rail and wheel profiles, etc.

The other units employ rail-mounted strain gauges with associated electronics. Trains pass through these wayside detection stations at line speed.

ARTC has installed monitoring stations at Parkeston (WA), Nectar Brook, Heathfield, Port Germein, Cockburn (SA), Lara (Vic) , Werris Creek and Metford (four lines) (NSW). They make much use of digital electronics and telemetry systems.

If severe defects are found in a passing train, appropriate action can be taken.

INCAPS - In Cab Activation of Points System

This reduces the need for trains to stop for safeworking purposes, and also for allows remote locations, which do not see enough traffic to be fully automated, to be de-staffed. Train drivers approaching facing points are able to select which route they want to traverse. There are some safeguards. For example, the zone where a driver can select a route is some kilometres in advance of the junction. When the train approaches closer than this, the turnout cannot be moved – for obvious reasons. The analogy is the garage-door opener, which would be familiar to many.

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Digital Communications

ARTC inherited nine legacy train communications systems, These do not have data transfer capacity, need increasing maintenance, and are not compatible with systems in other states. A single, uniform Digital Radio system is being rolled out across the network. It will support the Advanced Train Management System ATMS (another ARTC initiative) and be compatible with the system of other authorities such as RailCorp (in the Sydney area).

There will be less clutter in locomotive cabs with only a single radio handset being required.

The system will make use of the Telstra Next G mobile phone system, and also paves the way for wider use of Train Order safeworking. The entire ARTC network, including the Nullarbor, will be covered. It will be integrated with the GPS system, and will allow real-time tracking of train locations over the internet. The actual radio transmissions are on the UHF band and it is integrated with the INCAPS system mentioned above. The cab display will incorporate a coloured screen.

ATMS – Advanced Train Management System

ATMS is designed to support ARTC's objectives of improving rail network capacity, operational flexibility, train service availability, transit times, rail safety and system reliability. It will allow removal of much existing signalling and associated lineside infrastructure. The elements of the system are as follows:

- Replace trackside signalling with in-locomotive displays
- Provide precise location of trains both front and rear
- Provide new digital network control centres, each capable of controlling all traffic on the ARTC national network, with back-up capability
- Provide enforcement of authorities to locomotives
- Provide switch settings and automatic route clearances

The benefits of ATMS are as follows:

- Increased rail capacity through closer train operation
- Improved reliability through better on-time performance
- Improved efficiency and flexibility of the rail network
- Increased safety through authority and speed limit enforcement
- Additional protection for trackside workers
- Operator savings through less fuel consumption, less wear of wheels and brakes, and fewer train crew hours
- Reduced operation and maintenance cost for the trackside infrastructure

The initial test sections of the system will be in South Australia.

LEADER Locomotive Engineer Assist Display & Event Recorder

This is basically a real-time train simulator, which is installed in-cab. It displays the in-train forces, and can be used to predict future speeds and train forces.

The objective is to reduce fuel consumption, reduce wear-and-tear due to train forces, minimise air braking and help achieve speed limits and other operational constraints. It will be a valuable tool for driver training.

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The speaker showed some LEADER display screen grabs from a large train with locomotives front and rear, operating over a route with summits and sags. (The LEADER system is already in widespread use in North America.) It was interesting to see how in-train forces are generated.

Dale was thanked for a very interesting presentation. It is intended that similar dinner meetings will become an annual event in the RTSA calendar.

THE DEPUTIES ARE NOT COMING

Our call for a **volunteer Deputy Meeting Reporter and a volunteer Deputy Editor** have so far produced a **deafening silence**! If there is anyone willing to take on some voluntary workload in the interests of the Association then please let us know – contact details at the end of this Newsletter

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Letters to the editor are very welcome. In general **letters should be relatively concise (no more than half a page)** and should relate to either past material in the Newsletter, events or activities of interest, reminiscences or future watching of the rail industry as a whole. If in doubt write anyway – the editor is quite pleasant to deal with after that first cup of coffee in the morning.*

Basil Hancock has provided a note in relation to rail accreditation ---

According to Marcel Verslype, the head of the European Rail Agency, based in Valenciennes in France, it takes far longer, and is therefore more expensive, to approve a locomotive to run in a couple of European Union countries than to approve the Airbus 380 for worldwide use.

A TGV or ICE crossing Belgium has TVM430 signalling on the first bit of high speed track (72 km), TBL2 on the second section (66km) and ETCS Level 2 on the third section (36 km), with sections of normal Belgian signalling in between. We're only talking of around 240 km of route in total, with four different signalling systems.

What's really stupid is that all three high speed sections were built in the last ten years by the Belgians. And I suppose that if you radioed through to the Line Controller they would speak French on some lines and Flemish on the others, just to add to the confusion. No wonder it's easier to approve an A380!

TECHNOLOGY PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE FOR MEDIUM VOLTAGE VACUUM SWITCHGEAR

Kasuhiro Matsuo of Toshiba will present on the above topic as part of the 2009 Lecture program for the Joint Electrical Institutions (EA, IEEE, IET) on Thursday 10th September at 17.30 for an 18.00 start. The venue is the Engineers Australia Auditorium, Ground Floor, 8 Thomas Street, Chatswood. Visitors will be welcome.

The lecture will introduce the typical structure (past and present) for circuit breakers and interrupters. Design criteria will be explained and performance innovation concepts introduced. The lecture will cover unique phenomena or characteristics of vacuum interruption and development of insulation materials. Future technical requirements of Vacuum Switchgear will also be introduced.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR READERS WHO WERE BORN IN THE 1930's 1940's, 50's, 60's and early 70's !

First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they carried us and lived in houses made of asbestos. They took aspirin, ate blue cheese, raw egg products, loads of bacon, processed meat, tuna from a can, and didn't get tested for diabetes or cervical cancer. Then after that trauma, our baby cots were covered with bright coloured lead-based paints.

We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets or shoes, not to mention, the risks we took hitchhiking. As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. Take away food was limited to fish and chips, no pizza shops, McDonalds, KFC or Subway.

Even though all the shops closed at 6.00pm and didn't open on the weekends, somehow we didn't starve to death! We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle, and no one actually died from this. We could collect old drink bottles and cash them in at the corner store, buy Toffees, Gobstoppers, Bubble Gum and some bangers to blow up frogs with.

We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter and drank soft drinks with sugar in it, but we weren't overweight because we were always outside playing!! We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on. No one was able to reach us all day. And we were O.K.

We would spend hours building our go-carts out of old prams and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. We built tree houses and dens and played in river beds with matchbox cars. We did not have Playstations, Nintendo Wii's, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 999 channels on SKY, no video/dvd films, no mobile phones, no personal computers, no Internet or Internet chat rooms. We had friends and we went outside and found them!

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no Lawsuits from these accidents. Only girls had pierced ears! We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us forever.

You could only buy Easter Eggs and Hot Cross Buns at Easter time. We were given air guns and catapults for our 10th birthdays, we rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just yelled for them! Mum didn't have to go to work to help dad make ends meet!

Rugby and cricket had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that!! Getting into the team was based on merit. Our teachers used to hit us with canes and gym shoes and bully's *always* ruled the playground at school. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law!

Our parents didn't invent stupid names for their kids like 'Kiora' and 'Blade' and 'Ridge' and 'Vanilla'. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all! And if you are one of them - CONGRATULATIONS!

You might want to share this with others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before the lawyers and the government regulated our lives for our own good.

NEW SOUTH WALES NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2009

ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA
RTSA
Railway Technical Society of Australasia
NSW Chapter
Mail: PO Box 6238, Kingston, ACT, 2604

DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC	LOCATION	TIME
7 October 2009	Peter Moore Executive Director, UITP Australia	Presentation on the UITP (International Union for Public Transport)	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
4 November 2009	Ivan Waterfield Executive Manager, Cardiff Operations, Downer EDI Rail	RailCorp PPP A-Trains	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00
2 December 2009	Alan Gardner Manager Infrastructure and Engineering RISSB	Restoration of NSWGR Beyer-Garratt Steam Locomotive 6029	Central Station Concourse Meeting Room	11.30 for 12.00

BLACK TEXT: indicates meeting is confirmed
BLUE TEXT: indicates request has been made to speaker
RED TEXT: indicates a suggested topic only at this stage

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Katharina Gerstmann	Chair		rtsa-nsw@optusnet.com.au
Andrew Honan	Past Chair		
John Watsford	Secretary	0409 602 833	jwatsford@optusnet.com.au
Max Michell	Newsletter Editor	02 9331 5662	max412@gmail.com
Basil Hancock	Meeting Topics		Basil.Hancock@railcorp.nsw.gov.au
Andrew Mackay	Treasurer		
Candice Ng	Committee	Tomas Magyla	Committee
Bill Laidlaw	Committee	Paul Harris	Committee
Chris Venn-Brown	Committee	Malcolm Cluett	Committee

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SYDNEY NEWSLETTER

Part of the function of RTSA is to keep members in touch with what is going on in the industry and with each other and to that end we are only too happy to publish items of interest. Articles, letters or editorial comment for Newsletter are very welcome. We have several hundred members locally, of whom around half a dozen have actually put pen to paper, so I am expecting a couple of hundred more correspondents of the next how-ever-long. Items for publication should be in electronic (Word) format – the editor is a total klutz when it comes to typing and would be very grateful for not having to retype articles if at all possible.

Contact details are –
The Editor, Max Michell,

- e-mail to max412@gmail.com ,
- phone 02 9331 5662 or
- post to P.O.Box 279, Potts Point, NSW, 1335.

For all other matters relating to RTSA Sydney Chapter contact Andrew Honan (Chair) or Bill Laidlaw (Secretary) as above.

CPD CREDITS

Engineers Aust members who attend RTSA meetings and events will qualify for CPD credits as per the Engineers Australia criteria. Members are responsible for recording their own CPD for audit.

NOTICE TO MEMBERS RECEIVING RTSA NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

If you receive this Newsletter by post you will have missed out or been given late advice of events in several instances lately. This Newsletter may be one of them given the unexpected delay in production E-mail is far quicker and more reliable, so let Canberra know if you are able to change from post to e-mail (address in the page header). E-mail saves time for you and costs for RTSA, which in the end can only mean better service to our members.

DISCLAIMER