

RTSA SA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



January 2011

NEXT MEETING: ARTC East West Productivity Projects - Ben Leske

Next meeting – Lunchtime meeting Thursday 3rd February 2011

**Ben Leske – ARTC
ARTC – East West Productivity Projects**

Ben Leske of the ARTC will present on the Productivity projects and will include new projects such as:

Re-railing of track from Whyalla to Broken Hill - To re-rail 794 track km of 47 kg/m rail in new 60 kg/m rail to increase speed/axle loads.

Re-sleeping of approximately one million concrete sleepers between Parkes and Broken hill, which is part of ARTC's ongoing efforts to improve the reliability and efficiency of the Whyalla-Sydney and Sydney-Melbourne corridors.

East - West Corridor

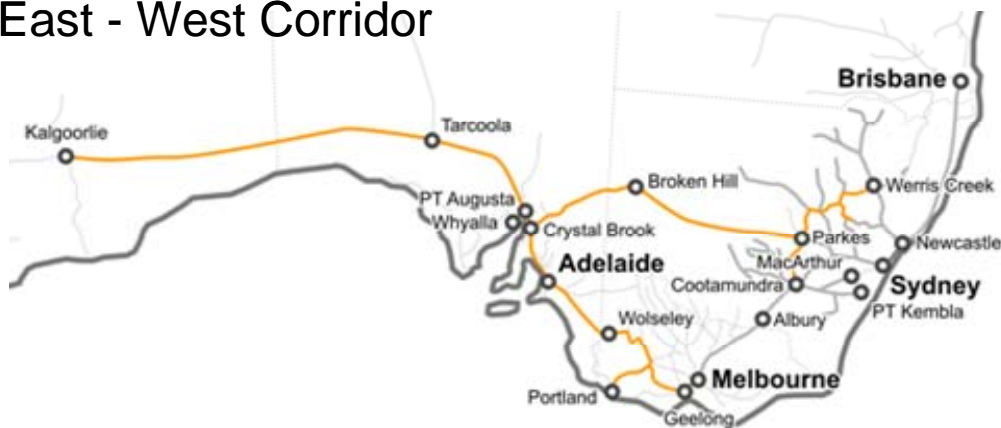


Image courtesy of www.artc.com.au

TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

VENUE:

LUNCHTIME EVENT

Fedora's Restaurant,
Hilton Hotel,
Corner of Sir Donald
Bradman's Drive and
South Road,
Hilton
SA 5033

DATE:
Thursday 3rd February
2011

TIME: 11:30 AM

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CHAPTER MEETINGS 2011

Thursday 3rd March 2011

Daniel Martucci and Scott Elaurant
'RISSB Rail Access Standards'

Thursday 7th April 2011

Tim Ryan, ARTC
Topic title to be confirmed

Thursday 5th May 2011

Julie Bullas and Karen Dowling, NRSR
'Progress on National Rail Safety Regulation and Investigation'

Thursday 2nd June 2011

Speaker to be confirmed
Adelaide 'Rail Revitalisation'

Thursday 7th July 2011

Peter Jaehne and Duncan McLeod
'Flood Damage to Tarcoola to Alice Springs Line'

Publisher

This newsletter is a publication of the South Australian Chapter of the Railway Technical Society of Australasia. Opinions expressed within are not necessarily those of the Chapter, Society or Editor.

Contributions

Contributions, including news, opinions, or letters to the editor, are always welcome. Send material by e-mail to saeditor@rtsa.com.au

Continuing Professional Development

Engineers Australia members are reminded that attendance at RTSA technical meetings contributes towards CPD requirements. Each RTSA technical meeting generally has a value of 1 CPD point.

RTSA Website

The RTSA website www.rtsa.com.au has details of RTSA activities, including future meetings and reports from past meetings, for all Chapters. Membership information for potential new members and an application form may be found at www.rtsa.com.au.

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Newsletter Dispatch

Despatch of the newsletter is now being undertaken by the ARA.

The Railway Technical Society of Australasia (RTSA)

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NEWS

The Annual Dinner and AGM

At the Annual Dinner and AGM held in the Lion Hotel North Adelaide, John Ryan gave an excellent presentation on Adelaide Zoo and a great insight into the activities of the Adelaide Zoo Volunteer Association.

The Dinner was enjoyed by a record 77 members, guests and sponsors.

The RTSA thanks its sponsors for supporting this and other events throughout the past year. Their generosity enables events such as these to be staged.



The Lion Hotel
North Adelaide



Guest Speaker
John Ryan

Committee member changes

Outgoing committee members:

Lucie Mitchell
Duncan McLeod
Bill Edmonds
Micheal Forbes
Steve Torok

Our thanks go out to these members for all their commitment and effort.

New Committee members:

Doug Gillott
Peter Haskard
Mike Hurd
Simon Mitchell
Russell Fuller

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COMING EVENTS

Nominations Open - RTSA Annual Individual Award and the Young Railway Engineer Award

Your attention is drawn to the Call for Nominations that has been made in respect of the 2011 RTSA Individual Award and the Young Railway Engineer Award.

Nominations will close on Friday 25th February 2011.

Please note, nominations can be made online or in hard copy.

To nominate online for the RTSA Individual Award please visit:

<https://engineersaustralia.wufoo.com/forms/2011-railway-engineering-individual-award/>

To nominate online for the RTSA Young Railway Engineer Award please visit:

<https://engineersaustralia.wufoo.com/forms/2011-young-railway-engineer-award/>

Further details on both Awards, can be found at www.rtsa.com.au/AwardsHonours

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

No new correspondence to raise this month, but if you have a comment or observation you would like to raise, the SA Editor would be pleased to hear from you at saeditor@rtsa.com.au

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CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

THE FORESIGHT HAD INSIGHT, IN THE LIGHT OF HINDSIGHT. That's what Sir Humphrey Appleby was told in an episode of "Yes, Minister" anyway, and recent events cause the concept of foresight to come to mind again.

I'll eat my hat if certain weather forecasts have not caused rueful reflections on the powers and limitations of foresight for the bedevilled staff of SEQ Water. No doubt more will follow as the inquiry, analysis and ethical forensics start to unfold as Queensland's floodwaters recede. Tragic as it was, the disaster can reveal cases of foresight that are instructive to anyone involved with managing infrastructure:

- The Wivenhoe Dam was built to defeat another 1974 flood, a foreseeable possibility.
- Seems the dam was nobbled, however, by the much harder-to-foresee dilemma of protecting against the dual vagaries of *too much water* and *not enough* – i.e. Brisbane's last ten-odd years of drought and water restrictions, difficulties that were serious enough for desal plants to be built.
- Weather forecasts require foresight, but no meteorologist foresees them as guaranteed. If one predicted a catchment inflow equivalent to the *whole capacity* of an associated reservoir, should you really slowly drain the entire thing in advance to avoid overtopping? Or should you wait till you know more, at the risk of draining it too fast and contributing to the very thing you're

trying to avoid? And surely you're foreseeing excess misfortune if you also throw in a 'king tide' for good measure, right?

The last is an extreme example but it illustrates nicely the quandary of choice, the weight of responsibility – and, as a side point, perhaps an interesting argument against making sticky situations stickier with commercial interests. But foresight can still be useful here: when privatising utilities, commercial influences that risk producing unconscionable outcomes in certain predicaments can be blunted by tailoring contract arrangements. But without foresight, how can you target these nuances?

FORESIGHT may also provide the silver lining to Queensland's cloud. I recall my envy of many transport corridors in a number of middle European cities; these dwarfed ours – ironically, I thought, considering Australia's purported availability of space. Actually it seems that this helpful urban form was partly facilitated by RAF Bomber Command, and I'm sure the residents would have preferred their old narrow corridors. Nevertheless, out of the ashes at least someone - armed with a stoic sense of foresight - defiantly resolved to make the best of a bad situation, improving their city and society as a result. Even if their cost is beyond measure, it seems that benefits can be wrought from having to start again.

As we see images of devastated narrow-gauge networks, let's hope that Queensland can at least benefit from this effect.

Daniel Martucci – Chair, RTSA SA Chapter