

# RTSA SA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

April 2011



## NEXT MEETING:

### Progress on National Rail Safety Regulation and Investigation.

**Next meeting –Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**Julie Bullas and Karen Dowling – NRSR  
Progress on National Rail Safety Regulation and Investigation**

Julie and Karen will be introducing us to the functions of the National Rail Safety Regulator / coverage of the National Rail Safety Investigator and the work required to be undertaken prior to establishment in 2013. They will also give a brief history including key timeframes and challenges.

Julie had over 25 years of experience working with the Commonwealth Government in a variety of roles, predominately leading major change projects.

Julie is currently the Project Director for the implementation of a National Rail Safety Regulator responsible for the development of national policy and legislation, guidelines, procedures and processes and the establishment of the structure, roles, responsibilities, staffing requirements, costs and cost recovery as well as IT systems and as Julie says anything else that is needed to ensure Australia has a fully functional national rail safety regulator by January 2013.

Julie has chaired the National Rail Safety Regulators Panel and co- chaired the Rail Safety Co-regulation Group comprising of industry representatives and state regulators.

Julie has also worked with Brisbane city council, Queensland Transport as Director of Rail Safety and Queensland Rail.

Karen Dowling is an Adelaide-based member of the ATSB's team dedicated to the re-negotiating of the agreement with state governments to include intrastate track to the existing interstate jurisdiction of the ATSB,

Prior to joining the ATSB, Karen worked for the National Transport Commission (NTC). During her time at the NTC, Karen wrote the proposal for the national regulator and investigator.

Karen has also worked in a range of other policy areas, including land use planning, environment and primary industries.

## TECHNICAL PRESENTATION

### VENUE:

Engineers Australia  
Sir Robert Chapman  
Theatre  
Level 11  
108 King William St  
Adelaide

### DATE:

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011

### TIME:

5.30pm (for 6.10pm start)

Light Refreshments will  
be provided.

**The Railway Technical Society of Australasia (RTSA)**

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## CHAPTER MEETINGS 2011

### Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011

Mark Dreschler, PTS  
Adelaide Rail Revitalisation and  
investigation and design.

### Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Peter Jaehne, FreightLink  
'Flood Damage to Tarcoola to Alice  
Springs Line'

### Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011

Randall Barry and Simon Mitchell.  
PTS  
PTS Railcar Fleet

### Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011

George Erdos, ATSB  
Near miss at Cootamundra

### 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.rtsa.com.au).

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### Newsletter Dispatch

Despatch of the newsletter is now being undertaken by the Engineers Australia SA Division.



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## News

### Light Rail worldwide

#### Bielefeld's Vamos LRV breaks cover



"Vamos" is a 34m-long LRV designed specifically to operate on the city's metre-gauge lines. It has as a result adopted numerous innovative technologies and designs which means that despite being only 2.3m-wide and 2.65m-wide above the platform level, the vehicles can still accommodate 230 passengers.

On board the train, the driver's cab and passenger areas are equipped with air-conditioning while 19-inch flat-screen monitors display destination and route map, advertisements and real-time connection options as well as estimated departure times from the next stop.

Innovative technologies were also adopted for the driver's cab. Two ergonomic Kiepe touch-screen driver cab displays are used for all of the operational functions of the vehicle as an open console concept instead of conventional closed operating boards and dashboards.

Bielefeld ordered 16 of the vehicles with an option for an additional 25 in January 2009. The first vehicle will be delivered in June and presented to the public in July before extensive testing takes place. The first Vamos LRVs are scheduled to enter service in the autumn.



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## News

### Heavy Rail Worldwide

#### Caltrain Electrification



Clem Tillier's rendition of an electrified Caltrain

#### San Francisco USA

Another Diesel to electric conversion project

Caltrain currently runs on diesel. The electrification project would convert diesel propulsion to electric propulsion. Electricity would be delivered to the trains through overhead wires.

#### Why Electrify?

- Faster, electric trains accelerate and stop more quickly.
- More service. Faster acceleration would allow more station stops with the same amount of travel time, which would restore service to some stations that had been reduced since 2004. Shorter travel times also allow the same trains to run more trips throughout the day.
- Cleaner, because electric trains will not spew tons of harmful diesel pollutants.
- Quieter, because electric trains have no diesel engines revving up day and night.
- More reliable, electric train motors experience less down time than diesel engines.
- Reduce dependence on foreign oil, because electric trains can take advantage of cleaner domestic electricity. For a fraction of the cost, electrification would save 1.7 times as much fuel as building a BART train line from San Jose to Fremont.

Article taken from

[http://www.bayrailalliance.org/caltrain\\_electrification](http://www.bayrailalliance.org/caltrain_electrification)

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## Meet the team

As there have recently been a number of changes to the Committee of this chapter it seems like a good opportunity to acquaint / re-acquaint our members with their committee.

This month's new committee member's 'pen portrait' is'

**Peter Haskard**

**RTSA Secretary**



Peter is a qualified mechanical engineer with 8 years' experience in the rail industry. He is currently working as the Trams Engineering Manager for Public Transport Services (formerly TransAdelaide).

A born-and-raised Crow Eater, Peter grew up in the remote desert township of Woomera during its heyday as a USAF tracking station and RAAF training facility, with the odd rocket launch sprinkled here and there. The pursuit of study has inevitably brought him to Adelaide

When not stuck on the rails, he enjoys getting outdoors with a spot of fishing or hiking when the opportunity arises

Peter is married with 3 children (all girls, 66.6% redhead!) and is a passionate Port supporter,

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## COMING EVENTS

### Advance Notification of next year's RTSA Awards

Please note that nominations for the 2012 Railway Engineering Student Thesis Award and the Wheel-Rail Interface Award are now being taken.

For both awards the closing date is Friday 24th November 2011.

Both awards attract prizes of:  
\$4000;  
Plaque and;  
One year free membership of the RTSA.

Full details can be found in the March newsletter.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

There has not been any correspondence received this month.

If you have a comment or observation you would like to raise or even a relevant anecdote, the SA Editor would be pleased to hear from you at [saeditor@rtsa.com.au](mailto:saeditor@rtsa.com.au)



# RTSA SA CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



Comments from the Editor – March 2011

[Comments from the *Chair* will return when *he* does, i.e. from travel in Outback South Australia].

## NEW TRAINS FOR A NEW AGE

Well it is now official; Adelaide is getting state of the art rolling stock with increased levels of comfort, technology and safety. I wonder what the difference will be to the average commuter; will there be an improved perception of safety, efficiency and more importantly value for money?

Will the public understand the environmental gains, the increased level of safety and technology or will they just see a different train without anything more than the inevitable fare increases?

There is no doubt that there will be detractors, probably before the railcars have even been seen.

There will be political statements and assurances, media debate and public opinion and all of this before the vehicles run a kilometre on the AMPRN.

Will the introduction of new trains encourage people to use our public transport systems, other than for the initial novelty factor? Perhaps not, other than the projected increase from economic factors.

The introduction of trams to Adelaide provides an example of public perception; the Flexity trams have been fixed in many minds due to some negative publicity during their introduction. Remember the strapline “a street car named perspire”? One perception is that these are faulty trams that are not reliable or suitable for the network.

In contrast the public opinion of the Citadis trams has been generally positive. This could at least in part due to the fact that people are now 'used' to modern trams so the transition is not as great, and

the internal aesthetics of the Citadis trams are much more pleasing than the dark grey and black interior of a Flexity. Being introduced after the earlier and initially-controversial tramline extension may have also helped.

So despite the fact that the Citadis has been a little more maintenance-intensive than the Flexity, a perception seems to exist that the former are much better trams.

For purchasing the 4000-class railcar, all the hard work by DTEI, BTA, supporting consultants, procurement staff and project management teams have been and will remain unseen and unsung, even amongst the engineering community.

These thoughts have prompted me to consider the PR aspects of our industry, or rather the lack thereof. I cannot remember seeing an article in any media, national (British) or local, promoting the efforts of rail related industries aimed at the rail user and people who may be affected by the prosperity of their neighbouring organisations.

I do, however, remember that Alstom once had an open day for the local Birmingham community; it was only done once and never spoken of again. Even when Richard Branson came to the Alstom Washwood Heath site with his media circus for the completion of the first Class 390 Pendolino, Alstom did not involve the local community. The rail and national press were there of course but the latter gave little information; it was all about Branson as a 'celebrity'.

Are we happy to be unsung heroes and have the public 'blind' to the engineering efforts and should we be? Could a bit of self-promotion even encourage recruitment?

**Russell Fuller – Editor, RTSA SA Chapter**



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Comments from the Editor – March 2011

