Sustaining Our Rail Heritage

International Railway Heritage Conference

Marianne Hammerton
Office of Rail Heritage

15 October 2009
Sustainable Rail Heritage
Asset Management Strategy

• Key drivers – structural change
• Endorsed by NSW State Cabinet - June 2006
• Key elements:
  - Institute asset management approach to core collection of State owned rail heritage assets
  - Partner with rail heritage groups to conserve and manage core assets
  - Upgrade Thirlmere site to store and display most significant assets
  - Establish ORH in RailCorp to oversee implementation
  - Funding strategy
ORH Governance and Structure

• Overseen by Heritage Advisory Committee comprising:
  - Chair, RailCorp Board
  - Chief Executive Officer, RailCorp
  - Director, Office of Rail Heritage
  - Director, Powerhouse Museum

• ORH staffing – small establishment, supplemented by contractors and specialists, based at Central Station (Sydney)
Office of Rail Heritage objectives

1) Asset Management:
   - Facilitate the proper care and sustainable management of the State’s core rail heritage assets

2) Working with Custodians:
   - Engage with rail heritage precinct/special interest groups and strategic partners

3) Skills Transfer:
   - Facilitate the development and transfer of heritage conservation skills

4) Enhancing Volunteering:
   - Recognise, value and develop rail heritage volunteering
ORH Portfolio

• Assets in ‘custody’ managed via 12 rail heritage groups with ~ 3000 members & 600+ active volunteers

• Fixed assets:
  – 7 Precincts: Valley Heights, Picton-Mittagong Loop Line (incl. Thirlmere), Cooma, Finley, Werris Creek & Tenterfield
  – Heritage facilities at South Eveleigh (Large Erecting Shop) and Broadmeadow Roundhouse

• Moveable assets:
  – Rolling Stock - ‘core’ heritage fleet (239)
  – Small objects - from clocks to uniforms (over 2,500)
ORH Portfolio
1) Asset Management

- Identification of core collection (fixed and moveable) well advanced
- Updating RailCorp’s items listed on the State Heritage Register:
  - places and items of importance to the people of NSW
  - commissioning of thematic history
  - development of collection management plan and system

Sydney Central Station
1) Asset Management - fixed

- Facilities for storage, display, operation and restoration:
  - Rail Heritage Centre Upgrade at Thirlmere (1 hour south of Sydney)
    - Enhanced facilities and public access to the State’s significant rail heritage items
    - Partnership with NSW Rail Transport Museum and collaboration with Powerhouse Museum
    - New roundhouse (complete), multifunctional building, landscaping and exhibition fit out due to be completed December 2010
1) Asset Management - fixed

- Facilities for storage, display, operation and restoration (cont):
  - **Large Erecting Shop**, South Eveleigh (on State Heritage Register):
    - Rail heritage storage, operations, maintenance and lay over
    - Collocation of two groups
    - Staged repairs underway and consultation on layout
  - **Broadmeadow Roundhouse** (on State Heritage Register):
    - Re-use of State Heritage Register asset
    - Accommodation for ~50 heritage rolling stock items
    - Completion end October 2009
1) Asset Management - moveable

- Prioritised funding of moveable heritage projects including:
  - Asbestos removal from rolling stock
  - Loco 3801 major overhaul - new boiler being manufactured in Germany and NSW Rail Transport Museum undertaking mechanical overhaul
  - FP1 Pay Bus restoration by apprentices completed and related exhibition at Central Station
  - Loco 3265, support for Powerhouse Museum restoration
2) Working with Custodians & Partners

- Design & implementation of Custody Management Agreements incorporating funding support against Asset Management Plans

- Facilitation of:
  - networking, communication and information sharing (through Rail Heritage forums and website)
  - promotional materials and collaborative events
3) Skills Transfer

- Established a Churchill Fellowship in Rail Heritage:
  - First recipient sharing knowledge

- RailCorp commitment to apprentice restoration projects:
  - FP1 Pay Bus restoration and associated exhibition
  - Torque converters for rail motors
  - Early 20th century powder van

- Implementing a Skills Transfer Strategy with custodians:
  - Conservation Volunteers Australia engaged for a 12 month pilot program - three project streams: Skills audit and register; Fast Track Heritage and Rail Reserve Teams
4) Valuing and Enhancing Volunteering

• Linking groups with relevant support:
  – eg Volunteering NSW

• Establishment of Volunteer Awards:
  – three successful functions to date, recognising outstanding performance across 6 categories.

• Engagement of RailCorp staff in rail heritage journey
Lessons learnt & emerging opportunities

**Strengths**
- Building on existing rail heritage groups and attracting emergent groups
- Leadership engagement
- Resource
- Leveraging experience / capabilities from elsewhere eg CVA & skills transfer

**Weaknesses**
- ‘early days’ in hard measurements
- Pace of alignment

**Opportunities**
- Current and projected investment in rail in Aust
- Outreach / public interface
- Emergent RHC
- Alignment with other ventures

**Threats**
- Renewal of volunteer base
- Group independence versus collaboration
- Political volatility