



7 August 2006

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT: NSW RAIL HERITAGE AND THE NSW RAIL TRANSPORT MUSEUM

- **A new future for NSW's rail heritage**
- **RailCorp heritage asset management**
- **Thirlmere upgrade – the centre of NSW rail heritage**
- **Eveleigh**
- **An assured future for NSW steam heritage trains**
- **Rail Heritage Central**
- **Regional rail heritage precincts**
- **NSW Rail Transport Museum support initiatives**

A NEW FUTURE FOR NSW'S RAIL HERITAGE:

- RailCorp and the NSW Government have announced a new, strategic approach to delivering an improved and more sustainable future for the NSW rail heritage collection
- The new rail heritage strategy was announced by Transport Minister John Watkins and RailCorp Chief Executive Vince Graham at the ceremony commemorating the centenary of Sydney Central station on Friday 4 August.
- The strategy places an emphasis on sustainable heritage management, skills development, volunteering, and the needs of regional rail heritage precincts and special interest rail heritage groups.
- The strategy has been approved by NSW State Cabinet and was developed by the State Rail Residual Management Team as a result of RailCorp's Sustainable Heritage Asset Management Review Committee outcomes in 2005.
- Most of the NSW Rail Transport Museum (RTM) rolling stock collection housed at Thirlmere is held in the RTM's custody in perpetuity under a Deed from State Rail. The RTM site at Thirlmere is leased from State Rail.
- As a key stakeholder, the RTM, together with other rail heritage groups, has been actively collaborating in the formulation of the new strategy – but the strategy is 'owned' by RailCorp and the NSW Government.
- The RTM is taking a complementary, strategic view as part of its vision of 'Telling the NSW rail story' through consolidation of activities, and conservation, display and operation of heritage assets through the efforts of our skilled volunteers and staff. The RTM's vision is set out in our Corporate Plan, which has been made available to all RTM members.

RAILCORP HERITAGE ASSET MANAGEMENT:

- A new RailCorp Office of Rail Heritage (ORH) has been formed for governance of the state's core rail heritage assets.
- \$20 million has been earmarked by the NSW Government for the heritage asset management strategy over the next 5 years, to support rail heritage in metropolitan, regional and rural NSW.
- RailCorp / ORH will formalise a partnership with the RTM – building on the RTM value cycle
- The ORH will take a planned approach to the management and maintenance of core assets, to guide priorities for funding support to the RTM and other heritage groups. The RTM is very well placed as a key custodian which already plans and prioritises maintenance and restoration projects.
- The RTM's existing roles are maintained, but governing agreements and exhibit custody arrangements are to be modernised and harmonised, without weakening our position, though details are yet to be discussed.
- The ORH and the RTM will take a collaborative approach to planning future enhancements to the display and restoration of the NSW state-owned rail heritage collection.
- A new asbestos removal plant at Thirlmere to eliminate asbestos from 17 steam locomotives is the first stage of improvement and compliance works for the collection. A tender is soon to be let for the construction of the facility to be located near the locomotive shed at Thirlmere.

THIRLMERE UPGRADE – THE CENTRE OF NSW RAIL HERITAGE:

- RailCorp have announced that \$14 million will be spent on upgrading the Thirlmere Rail Heritage Centre (TRHC) precinct, including the existing operational Thirlmere Heritage Railway track and corridor – providing improved conservation, display, operation, protection and storage for the Thirlmere-based rail heritage collection.
- Through a collaborative process with the RTM, a TRHC precinct “concept plan” has been developed. Planning is now moving toward a Master Plan for the precinct.
- A Steering Committee with representatives from RailCorp, the Powerhouse Museum and the RTM has been formed by RailCorp to oversee the project.
- Key aims of the upgrade project are to increase visitation and events; improve presentation, the visitor experience and visitor facilities, plus enhance our train operating and maintenance facilities – and to partner Government support with the efforts of the RTM's volunteers and staff.

EVELEIGH:

- Some – but not all - rolling stock and artefacts currently stored at Eveleigh will be re-located to the upgraded TRHC to improve accessibility and storage.
- The RTM will work with RailCorp to identify options for maintaining the necessary arrangements that facilitate bringing steam locomotives in and out of the city, and to maintain existing steam locomotive facilities on the network for example at Penrith, Waterfall and Gosford.

- The Large Erecting Shop at Eveleigh has for some time been essentially a single-user facility, unavailable for general heritage train useage. The RTM already operates, services and stores steam locomotives in Sydney without using the Large Erecting Shop.
- There is no indication that the Large Erecting Shop will be demolished – a more viable and a sympathetic adaptive reuse is likely to be found for the site, and has been mooted recently by the Minister for Planning, Frank Sartor.
- Organisations specialising in built heritage, such as the National Trust, are best placed to consider the Eveleigh heritage issues. The RTM's resources are focussed on the need to support the upgrade of Thirlmere.

AN ASSURED FUTURE FOR NSW STEAM HERITAGE TRAINS:

'Legends of Steam' – a strategic approach for the future of NSW steam heritage trains

- The RTM will soon launch its new 'Legends of Steam' program – a comprehensive living history, TRHC outreach and tourism initiative.
- The 'Legends of Steam' program will be a 'virtual' museum, featuring and developing NSW's operational steam heritage trains as community heritage travel and tourism experiences, complementing RailCorp's positioning of Thirlmere.
- The RTM's *Heritage Express* brand will offer an enhanced program of heritage train journeys in regional NSW, Sydney and surrounds, featuring a fresh range of 'Legends of Steam' steam train experiences, including 3801:
 - Urban and regional steam events – community flagship events and displays
 - Classic Steam Safaris – exploring NSW and developing regional tourism
 - Steam Excitement – day and weekend excursions from Sydney and suburbs
 - Thirlmere Flyer – regular day trips by steam to TRHC

complementing the existing *Heritage Express* product family:

- 'Southern Aurora' Rail Escapes and Restaurant Trains
- Thirlmere Heritage Railway
- Steam and vintage diesel nostalgic journeys
- RTM members and friends activities
- Train charters, community, group and incentive travel
- 'Legends of Steam' helps to assure the sustainable future of NSW's operating rail heritage – the upgraded TRHC provides a viable home for the heritage fleet and a flagship destination for steam operations and events.
- The RTM will provide opportunities for involvement, and will be recruiting volunteers and staff to complement the strategy.

Locomotive 3801 – a new home, better accessibility and an assured future:

- RailCorp will contribute funding of \$500,000 for 3801's looming boiler overhaul.
- A 'Between Trips' visitor facility will be established at TRHC telling the 3801 story.
- The Government will establish a special high-level committee chaired by former Queensland Rail Chief Executive Vince O'Rourke to seek to obtain collaboration between the RTM and 3801 Ltd. The Crown Solicitor has provided the Government with legal advice that the locomotive reverts to the custody of the RTM at the end of the lease in November.

- A multi-disciplinary Taskforce established by the RTM is now working to assess the best options for 3801's future overhaul, management, display and operation.
- 3801's operating future has now been assured with RailCorp's support.

Locomotive 3642 – return to steam in 2008:

- As part of the 'Legends of Steam' program an overhaul of locomotive 3642 will commence in October 2006.
- The work is estimated to cost \$150,000 – funding will be partly sourced from restoration funds in hand and RTM will launch a fund raising appeal in September 2006 to offer incentives and seek donations and sponsorship for 3642 and a NSW steam 'Future Fund'
- The return to steam of 3642 revives this popular locomotive, provides a new steam feature locomotive and valuable additional and spare capacity for the steam fleet in advance of the overhaul of 3801.

NSW's authentic heritage railway experience:

- The RTM's Thirlmere Heritage Railway is to be upgraded in 2007 / 2008, with RailCorp providing funding of \$800,000, improving the corridor and level crossings - and equipping the line for additional traffic and heavier axle loads between Picton and Thirlmere – assuring a main-line network connection and developing a true showpiece heritage railway.

Thirlmere infrastructure:

- The RTM workshop and train maintenance and stabling facilities will be enhanced as part of the TRHC upgrade – improving the scope of servicing and overhauls at Thirlmere.
- Major locomotive overhauls may be shared with Hunter Valley Training Company – in a partnership with RailCorp - with RTM technical input.
- Basing steam at Thirlmere underpins the TRHC's viability and role as an interactive heritage facility showcasing working steam and heritage skills.

Practical safety and compliance initiatives:

- Installation of retention toilets in twelve Southern Aurora and classic carriages will be carried out in 2007 / 2008 in a program funded by RailCorp
- RTM will reinforce its role as an accredited heritage rail operator by implementation of the new National Accreditation Package

Powerhouse Museum steam locomotives:

- RailCorp will provide \$600,000 in funding support for the restoration to service of Powerhouse Museum locomotive 3265 to be completed at Eveleigh.

RAIL HERITAGE CENTRAL:

- A Sydney doorway to the TRHC, Heritage Express and the RTM – a new sales office for the RTM at the heart of the NSW rail network, opening August 21, 2006.

Rail Heritage Central is located in the refurbished former Sydney Booking Office – just off the main concourse. Our phone, web and fax contact details are unchanged.

- Rail Heritage Central will also be the home of the Office of Rail Heritage – and the ARHS/nsw bookshop.

REGIONAL RAIL HERITAGE PRECINCTS:

- The ORH will build on and support existing viable rail heritage groups and sites which already have community support and tourism links.
- The RTM will build on its collaboration with existing precincts, and plan viable community programs together with them. The RTM's 'Legends of Steam' program is aimed at taking heritage to the people and participating with regional precincts, linking these precincts and the wider community to our steam program.

RTM SUPPORT INITIATIVES:

- The RTM will:
 - embark on a careful change management program aimed at supporting the strategy, the culture of volunteering, and RTM corporate development;
 - communicate changes and developments regularly and involve members, volunteers and staff in development of plans and activities;
 - focus on its value cycle, consolidation, and building capacity and capability – by implementation of its Corporate Plan;
 - together with the ORH, seek funding and support from sponsors, donors and industry partners based on a strategic view and a collaborative approach;
 - work with the ORH to ensure that disruption to existing train operations and general museum and THR activities by any project works is minimised;
 - revise the RTM organisation structure to reflect new activities and responsibilities, and to enhance management, safety, marketing and sales support functions;
 - direct resources and efforts to critical areas and activities to aid business growth and service standards – a modest increase in core, paid staff will be supplemented by an intake of volunteers in all activity areas;
 - improve volunteer involvement, recruitment and retention, identify training and resource shortfalls and broaden its skills base through training and development of people;
 - foster links with the NSW community to harmoniously develop the TRHC, to participate in viable regional and urban events and to showcase NSW's rail heritage.

NEXT STEPS:

- Check the RTM website – www.nswrtm.org – for
 - latest news on developments with the heritage strategy and 3801,
 - media information,
 - FAQs and facts
- Give us your feedback – write to us with your comments -

Email: strategy@nswrtm.org
Post: NSWRTM – Rail Heritage Strategy
PO Box K37
Haymarket NSW 1240
Fax: (02) 9379 1063

We can't acknowledge each communication received – but we will consider themes and issues raised for inclusion in our updated FAQs

- Read RailCorp CEO Vince Graham's view of our rail heritage in the next RTM *Roundhouse*.
- Come to Thirlmere for a special RTM members' day - Saturday, September 16
 - Address by Marianne Hammerton, State Rail GM and initial head of the ORH
 - Meet some of the ORH team, learn more about the project
 - See the official start of work on 3642
 - Free members barbecue and train rides on the THR

More details will be provided closer to the day