



## Media Release

---

22 November 2006

### **CONDITION ASSESSMENT FOR LOCOMOTIVE 3801**

RailCorp CEO Vince Graham today provided an update on the future of locomotive 3801.

“The locomotive 3801 will continue to run to serve the thousands of men, women and children who love this great train.

The locomotive is currently leased by 3801 Ltd from the New South Wales Rail Transport Museum (NSW RTM) - this lease expires on Sunday 26 November.”

In response to a question on 6 November at the Budget Estimates Committee hearing, Mr Graham confirmed the status of 3801 Ltd’s lease of the locomotive.

*“In 1986, 3801 Ltd, the Rail Transport Museum at Thirlmere and StateRail entered into a 20 year lease of that locomotive that expires in November.*

*“The advice of the Crown Solicitor – twice asked for and twice given – is that at the conclusion of the lease in November 2006, under the previous legal agreement the locomotive reverts to the custody of the RTM.”*

In August, as part of 100 years of Central celebrations, the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport and Police announced a \$500,000 overhaul of the locomotive to safeguard its operating future for generations to come.

“Early next week, a joint crew comprising staff of NSW RTM and 3801 Ltd will drive the locomotive to the Hunter Valley Training Company at Maitland.

“The services of the Puffing Billy Engineering Team\*, led by Alan Gardner, a well known and respected rail engineer will lead an expert technical panel to assess the condition of the locomotive.”

Mr Graham said the thorough condition assessment will look at what maintenance and upgrade work will be required to ensure the locomotive can continue to operate for future generations.

“The locomotive is one of this State’s great steam icons and that’s why we are committed to ensuring it is in the best shape possible.

Mr Gardiner and the technical panel will also consider when the work needs to be undertaken.

“This assessment is about taking stock of the locomotive’s condition to ensure it can meet its operating commitments in 2007.”

Mr Graham said the independent panel of experts formed by the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport and Police in August to consider options for collaboration between the Company 3801 Ltd and the Rail Transport Museum, had made significant progress.

Chaired by former Queensland Rail Chief Executive Officer, Vince O’Rourke, this panel consists of the Chairman of Tourism Australia, Mr Tim Fischer and the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Railway Association, Mr Bryan Nye.

Mr Graham said the panel is currently preparing findings to present to the Deputy Premier and RailCorp - the culmination of three months of analysis and discussion of the heritage industry including consultation with the Boards of New South Wales Rail Transport Museum and 3801 Ltd.

“The panel will be ready to present their findings to the Deputy Premier in a matter of weeks and I am confident the findings will steer the rail heritage

industry towards a sustainable future that will help ensure the vast collection of railway icons will be accessible to future generations.

“And I assure those families and children who wish to continue enjoying the locomotive 3801, and the volunteers and staff of NSW RTM and 3801 Ltd – that the locomotive 3801 will also be a part of that future,” Mr Graham said.

*\*Puffing Billy, known as “Australia’s Favourite Steam Train,” is an historic steam train still running regularly in Victoria. The Engineering team is world renowned for their expertise in rail heritage conservation.*