



GM1 and Standard Gauge "All change" project

Update: 22 May 2015

Following the latest developments with GM1 yesterday and today it is timely to provide an update on our project.

GM1 locomotive – initial restoration

After being awarded GM1 by the Commonwealth, we contracted in 2011 with Downer Rail for re-wheeling GM1 as the existing wheels were beyond tolerance for movement at mainline speeds. Although very slow, the work was at last carried out and appropriate certification obtained. During the wheel replacement work, Downer reported several smaller items which needed repairs, and we agreed to the costs of these.

GM1 was attacked by a vandal while waiting to be worked on at Dry Creek. The South Australian Police have recently laid charges concerning a number of vandalism attacks, including that on GM1.

Transfer of GM1 to WA

To have GM1 moved anywhere, even under tow, requires accreditation with the various track owners and controllers. We then have to obtain agreement from accredited operators to tow the locomotive.

ARTC, owners of the trans-Australian line, already had GM1 recorded in their system and we have provided them with certificates so that they have agreed the loco can be moved on their tracks.

Unfortunately, Brookfield Rail, who control the track west of Parkeston do not recognise GM1 in their current system and as part of the paperwork necessary to gain registration from go, we have to submit additional test results, including a twist test.

We obtained an offer to carry out this test from CF Rail Services. Yesterday GM1 was moved to their facility at Islington and today they advised that the test was completed and our veteran passed with flying colours.

Genesee & Wyoming who now operate the Dry Creek facility previously used by Downer, generously agreed to tow GM1 to Islington without charge – many thanks.

We continue discussions with operators regarding moving GM1 on the next stages of her journey.

Assistance from WA state government

As previously announced, we approached the Minister for Transport (WA) regarding the importance of this project, and the Minister sanctioned a major donation to assist with transportation and other costs. The donation was made by the Public Transport Authority of WA. We are grateful to both.

Our overall major project includes

- Restoration of GM1 locomotive
- Transfer of GM1 to WA to join historic trans-Australian carriages which we have already procured
- Converting selected tracks in the Railway Museum from narrow gauge to dual gauge
- Making a new display in the museum based on the change-of-gauge which bedevilled Australia's rail transport at Kalgoorlie and other border stations, with interpretive display
- Returning GM1 to operating order for special occasions

Platform development

Our overall plan for display involves a platform with narrow gauge (NG) one side and standard gauge (SG) on the second face. The "trans-Australian" train, headed by GM1, will be displayed on the standard gauge side. Development Approval for the platform has been granted by Town of Bassendean.

Civil engineer Mr Bruce Keay has very kindly prepared drawings and an estimate for the platform development.

Standard gauge track installation

Existing tracks in the museum, both the display area and the rear storage area, are all narrow gauge. For a long-term sustainable solution, we must connect both display and storage/restoration tracks to our external access, requiring 5 standard or dual gauge turnouts, 2 of which must be installed into another party's track, plus approx 300m of track converted to dual gauge.

We therefore engaged Engenium Pty Ltd to design this trackwork and deliver plans and specifications in 2013. We have now used these plans and scope documents to obtain prices from contractors for this trackwork.

Sponsorship

A generous donation has been justified and received which, together with other donations and sponsorships, gives us a major portion of the dual gauge trackwork costs.

We have also had discussions with other possible sponsors.



21 May 2015: Above: Leaving Dry Creek, home for the last several years. Photo courtesy G&W.

Below: GM1 being shunted into Islington by CF Rail Services, and on the traverser in their workshops. Photos courtesy CF Rail Services.

