



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIVE STEAMERS

AALS Website
www.aals.asn.au

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ACN 107 882 404 - ABN 81 107 882 404

AUSTRALIAN LIVE STEAMERS SAFETY COMMITTEE

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To Member Society Presidents as Addressed

Re: 2019 – 20 Safety Committee Consultation Process

This letter commences the 2019-20 consultation process on key topics of safety and operations within the AALS codes of practice.

The 2019-20 process marks to the eleventh year of consultation processes from which a number of important developments in safety and operations have been effectively presented to member societies, issues debated openly, agreed changes developed and presented to annual general meetings at annual conventions, then implemented.

The communication process to member societies and individual model engineers has been imperfect with many clubs failing to engage their memberships in the consultation process, resulting in debate continuing long after the consultation period has expired, and proposed safety and operations initiatives being withdrawn following extensive adverse commentary by societies and individuals only after the Convention documents were forwarded.

This letter is being addressed to member society presidents in a bid to ensure that the three topics for consultation are more effectively communicated by club presidents to all individual members of societies.

Additionally, the topics will be posted on the AALS website and explanatory articles published in “AME” in an attempt to reach out to all model engineers to provide them with a chance to effectively contribute.

The Consultation Topics

- Minimum braking requirements;
- Steam operator age; Junior operators on non-public days; Driver training and registration templates;
- Electrical Systems for Miniature Locomotives;
- Two-axle passenger wagons.

The Terms of Reference for each of these consultations are appended to this letter.

The Consultation Sequence and Timetable

Member clubs and individual club members are invited to promptly submit comments and issues that they believe are relevant to the consultation topics. All inputs received up to the

29th November, 2019 will be posted on the AALS website in the order of receipt, and given due consideration by the Authoring Committee and the Safety Committee in its preparation of proposed amendment motions for the 2020 Convention.

Submissions on the topics are encouraged by e-mail to permit prompt posting on the AALS website under the heading “Consultation Process” on the “News” page for the information of all members of member clubs.

Individuals interested in participating in any of the three authoring committees are invited to nominate to join. Meetings are conducted by teleconferences and by e-mail. Time demands can be significant depending on the number of contributions received and the extent to which the specific topic has been previously explored and/or documented.

The process ensures effective consultation and due diligence. The consultation process is not and cannot be open-ended. The process ensures that issues and contributions are fully addressed, all submissions considered, and both proposals ultimately determined by the democratic processes of the Association.

Those who wish to be advised by email of updates to the website can forward Alf Grigg <aagricon@bigpond.com> their email address, and the club they represent, and an email will be sent to advise of significant updates to the website. This service is also open to individuals.

Feel free to contact us preferably by e-mail to discuss these proposals. Alf is the best contact in the first instance. He can be contacted at aagricon@bigpond.com.

Regards

Allan Wallace
Chairman

Alf Grigg
Secretary

2019-20 Consultation Topics – Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for Braking

Background

At the 2019 AALS AGM a proposed amendment to the Interoperability Code of Practice was adopted. This replaced Section 4 of the code, relating to minimum requirements for braking. It was a comprehensive update of the original section 4 aiming to cater for the present and ongoing needs of the hobby, by recognising the wider range of trains that AALS members now run, compared with in the past. The new code can be accessed at <http://aals.asn.au/2019-files/190605aals-cop-for-interoperability-safety.pdf> , and a corresponding guidance note at http://aals.asn.au/2019-files/190611_alssc-guideline-note-braking.pdf .

It is a challenge to cover all facets of this complex topic within a concise, readable document, and it was prepared with the intention of reflecting existing safe practice so that the vast majority of operations would not be significantly affected. However, it was foreseeable that any such revision will require some fine tuning after initial release, as the broader membership looks more closely at its implications for their particular operation. Since the closing of the 2018 consultation, a few worthy suggestions for amendments or clarification have been received and these will be posted for membership consultation in 2019.

Terms of Reference – Braking

Further contributions from member societies are invited. Since the new structure of the present amendment has been accepted by the majority vote, the scope should be confined to suggestions that enhance, explain and clarify, or remove anomalies. Queries are invited because they provide a valuable guide to aspects which may have been misinterpreted.

The braking subcommittee will strive to make revisions that minimise misinterpretation. It may also update the accompanying guidance notes.

Terms of Reference for Steam operator age; Junior operators on non-public days; Driver training and registration templates.

State-based Steam Operator Minimum Age Limit

The Safety Committee has received a number of requests for a review of the minimum driving age for drivers on both public-running days and club-only running days. (See the AALS Operations Code of Practice section 5.2 <http://www.aals.asn.au/Resources/CoP%20Ops.pdf>)

The consultation process proposal is to amend the Operations Code of Practice Clause 5.2.2 to replace the 18 years of age restriction which is currently based on Victoria's State legislation, with an age restriction (if any) based on legislation in the State of operation.

The AALSSC intends to issue a Guidance Note summarising the various relevant State based restrictions for the use of the clubs in each state.

Guidance Note for Junior Operators on Non-Public Club Running Days

The Board has discussed and issued a guidance note (See http://aals.asn.au/2019-files/190704aals-junior-member-guidelines-for-driving-2030719_v2.pdf) to cover junior members driving miniature trains on non-public running days.

The Board believes the guidance note is a key mechanism to involve junior members in train operations, and to prepare them for public running.

Further guidelines and associated template documents will be developed through the consultation process and be issued to facilitate member clubs to adopt and implement if they don't already have their own system.

Guidance Note providing Driver Training and Registration Templates for voluntary adoption by Clubs.

The Safety Committee proposes that the foreshadowed templates would be suggested minimum requirements only, giving clubs the autonomy to add their own requirements and create their own compliant systems. Clubs needing support with these templates could adopt them without modification as a starting point. This would encourage a minimum level of uniformity across the hobby, to aid inter-club visits.

Clubs with existing procedures and systems compliant with the Operations CofP section 5 do not need to change. The committee would invite these clubs to submit their suggestions for the Guidance Note and participate in the discussion.

The Safety Committee considers that the existing clause 5 in the Operations CofP is all the code needs to detail and that there is no need to mandate any more detail. Guidance notes are not mandatory.

Terms of Reference for 2019 ELV and LV Electrical Locomotives

Background

The Safety Committee was assisted in 2018 by an authoring committee that developed a draft Code for the design and construction of electrical locomotives, whether internal combustion – electrical, or battery – electrical transmissions. The draft code covered extra low voltage (ELV) and low voltage (LV) electrical traction systems. See http://www.aals.asn.au/files/aals_cop_electric_systems_for_miniature_locomotives_04122017.pdf and adjacent discussions under the "News" tab on the website.

The development of the draft code had to be suspended in November, 2018, when the AALS insurer refused to cover the risks associated with locomotives that operated in the low voltage range. Exactly where the boundary points of low voltage (LV) versus extra low voltage (ELV) became the subject of debate and confusion and the initiative to develop a code for builders was suspended for both LV and ELV.

This suspension was unfortunate as the vast majority of electric drive miniature locos that are currently operating or are under construction have been designed to operate in the ELV range. These ELV locos continue to do so without undue or excessive risk.

Terms of Reference - ELV

The Safety Committee proposes to continue the development of the draft 2018 ELV Electrical Code with emphasis on defining the limits of the ELV code to permit safe design, construction, and operation by non-professional or trade qualified model engineers.

The development task will be undertaken by an authoring committee that reports to the Safety Committee. All assistance will be welcomed. The draft Code would be referred to the AALS insurer for approval for full insurance cover prior to being presented for approval at the 2020 AGM.

The Committee welcomes any contribution from member clubs and individuals to the development process.

Terms of Reference – LV

Additionally, the Safety Committee proposes to develop a guidance note (not a Code) on what technically constitutes an LV electric transmission loco, and what special requirements must be met in the design, construction, operation, and insurance of such locomotives for safe operation within the greater AALS club system.

This task must be undertaken by competent, professionally qualified electrical engineers who can identify and present the critical aspects of relevant legislation, regulations, standards, and codes of practice.

The Safety Committee does not anticipate that the AALS insurer will agree to insure the operation of LV locos. The implications of such equipment operating as a visiting loco at AALS member clubs has yet to be fully investigated and the implications established.

The draft guideline would be referred to the AALS insurer for approval prior to being presented for noting at the 2020 AGM.

The draft guideline will be open for comment and consultation and will be reported to the 2020 AGM as a guideline.

Terms of Reference for two-axle Passenger Carriages.

Background

In 2017, the Safety Committee received a request from Les Smith of Castledare MR to consider the feasibility of including two-axle passenger riding carriages in the Code of Practice by amending the Code to include two-axle passenger rolling stock in addition to the current limited provision for bogie-only rolling stock.

The consultation program for 2017 was over, there was no possibility of initiating a consultation process given the short timeframe to the next AGM, and the foreshadowed consultation program for 2018 was congested with major initiatives associated with safety. The proposal was deferred.

CMR has recently endorsed the topic for the consultation process.

Terms of Reference

The Safety Committee proposes to establish an authoring committee to review the proposal, take submissions from Les Smith, member clubs, and individual members on the proposal, and determine whether to recommend an amendment to the current Code provision for bogie-only passenger rolling stock.

The concept may have to be trialled to assess the actual field performance of the two-axle concept. This trial process may take up to 12 months yet may reveal that two-axle passenger vehicles are viable, safe, and cost-effective.

The Committee welcomes any contribution from member clubs and individuals to the development process.