

19<sup>th</sup> May, 2016

Hon Secretary  
Club as addressed

**Re: Consultation Process on Nominated Safety Issues**

This letter constitutes the commencement of a consultation process with all AALS member clubs on two safety proposals as raised by member clubs. We propose to consult, evaluate responses, then submit final recommendations to member clubs for determination at the 2017 AGM in accordance with the AALS constitution.

This consultation process is intended to provide a forum for detailed evaluation and discussion of issues associated with the purpose and benefits of two safety proposals:

- A proposal from Castledare Miniature Railway to review the Safety Code with respect to yoke couplers, drawbars attached directly to bogies rather than the carriage frame, and load carrying point loadings between bogies and the carriage frame. The Castledare detailed drawing submission is as per Attachment No. 1;
- Two consultation proposals from Altona Miniature Railway to evaluate and draft guidelines for the safe electrical installation of electrical equipment in petrol-electric locomotives, and the fail-safe arrangements for radio-controlled and tethered locomotives in the event that the radio link or tether fails.

Further information on both topics, and any related topics, will be posted on the AALS website as they are received.

The consultation process has proven to be a better approach to the current process of drafting and submitting motions to the AGM. The latter involves virtually no debate given that most member clubs have determined their position and have returned their completed votes well before the AGM.

**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 that they believe require addressing. All inputs received up to the **31<sup>st</sup> October, 2016** will be posted on the AALS website and given due consideration by the Safety Committee in its preparation of proposed amendment motions for the 2017 Convention.

Submissions on either or both topics are encouraged either by e-mail or by post. Formal posted documents will be scanned for prompt posting on the AALS website under the heading “Consultation Process” on the “News” page for the information of all members of member clubs.

The process ensures effective consultation and due diligence. The consultation process is not open-ended, and will ensure 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 any reasonable time to discuss these proposals. Alf is the best contact in the first instance, and can be contacted at 0428 164 890.

Regards

Allan Wallace  
Chairman

Alf Grigg  
Secretary

## Castledare Couplers Proposal

The following is an excerpt of the items for consultation from the Castledare consultation submission for review and possible adoption by the member clubs at the 2017 Convention.

In summary, the first CMR proposal is that the AALS standard drawings be revised to present the details in greater clarity as per the attached drawings in Attachment No. 1.

The second is to specifically prohibit mounting drawbars to bogies.

The third proposal is to encourage centre loading of bogies rather than side-loading as can be witnessed in some recent advertisements for assembled bogies.

The detailed submissions are as follows:

1. **Yoke Buffers**. *There are some in-accuracies with the AALS “standards” illustrations and a lack of general knowledge as to the basic operation of this coupling system. The attached drawings (four in total) depict the relationships (see as per Attachment 1). Failure to observe the relationships can lead to buffer face “locking” and inability to negotiate curves successfully. The WAGR used a Drag Link for passenger service for added safety against uncoupling in service and to act as a restraint to roll-over in a derailment situation. Dimensions have been added so that components can be made.*
2. **Bogies** (couplers mounted on such and those advertised with rigid body mounting) *It has been pointed out to CMR that the AALS “standards” do not specifically mention that bogies are not to be fitted with couplers. Couplers are not fitted to bogies of rolling-stock around the World as this is detrimental to the intent not to unload wheel-sets and or increase lateral forces. Bogies with couplers in a compression derailment situation (they probably caused such) will rotate and thus jack-knife the carriages (that is, they cannot hold a “straightish” line) and throw persons out. The WARFORD recent derailment is an example and the first five points raised on the attached documents are not really relevant. Couplers on bogies are very dangerous and MUST not be allowed.*
3. *Even more strange is that bogies are being advertised that do not have a centre plate and seem to rely on roller side-bearers thus providing a rigid four-point inter-face to the wagon / carriage body. This arrangement means that any tendency to rock, to move into super-elevation or run through track geometry variations will cause wheel unloading which is most un-satisfactory. Gap side-bearers as per railway practice should be employed fitted just inside of the wheel-set running line. These direct a line of force to the inside rail face. Some bogies have been seen where the side-bearers are out-side of the frames and thus any*

*rocking etc uses the wheel-sets as pivots. A simple diagram inserted to the AALS standards can clarify these issues.*

As of the 19<sup>th</sup> May, the detailed drawings accompanying this item are being enhanced to better highlight the issues raised. The plans will be posted on the AALS website on receipt.

The Safety Committee invites debate and commentary to these proposed changes and/or clarifications to the Safety Code and standard drawings.

## **Electrical Safety in Petrol-Electric Miniature Locomotives**

Altona Miniature Railway representative Robert Cox attended the 2016 Convention Safety Committee meeting and raised the issue of the need for the Association to develop guidelines for model engineers who design and construct petrol-electric locomotives.

Robert raised concerns that some model engineers may be unwittingly failing to comply with regulatory and Australian standards that apply to portable electrical equipment. He acknowledged that many locomotive electrical systems may operate with voltage under regulatory thresholds and may therefore be safe, while other electrical systems may be operating at voltages that could create risks of electric shock to users.

Additionally, he raised the question of fail-safe controls on radio-controlled and tethered locomotive systems, and sought guidance from the Safety Committee on what safeguards can/should be inherent in such loco control systems. This covers a failsafe for when a locomotive is controlled by a controller on a cable and the cable comes out of the engine. For example it should go to neutral (hydraulic system) and the engine or motor stop.

Both issues were deemed to be worthy of development into a consultation document.

The Committee is confident that both issues are regulated and/or specified by state regulations and/or Australian standards. If there are gaps in the regulatory and standards environment, we can explore and create guidelines to ensure a safe operating environment for our hobby.