



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIVE STEAMERS

GUIDLELINE FOR CLUB EXECUTIVES IN THE CASE OF LOSS OF COMPETENCY BY OPERATORS

Advancing years and disability can lead to train drivers experiencing a reduced level of competency in their skills, to the extent that the Club executive and fellow members become concerned about safety. Any decisions made and action taken are outside the authority and scope of the AALS. Monitoring and acting on competency issues is the sole responsibility of the Club President and Executive Committee. Every club is different, circumstances vary and people are individual.

Club Presidents, at some stage you will have to address the problem of how to deal with a driver on your track who you believe is no longer safe to control a locomotive. Remember this is your responsibility to resolve. Most members whose competencies are failing will realise this and stop driving. Dealing with someone who has chosen to continue, despite safety concerns, is where you and your executive team must act. USING YOUR JUDGEMENT, you will have to persuade the individual to stop running. A few observations as to where things are going wrong should be sufficient for most people. In the unlikely case of an individual not complying with the request, further discussions over relevant points with other members of the executive team would provide useful background to the individual.

Loss of Competency can be manifest in many ways. Here are just a few examples of what competency requires:

- Remain in command of operating controls at all times.
- Able to communicate visually and/or audibly with the guard.
- Have adequate vision fore and aft. Ability to look behind.
- Have a good safety record – any collisions/incidents of relevance?
- Have an adequate technical understanding of the loco and train.
- To have mastered core driving and operational skills (e.g. maintain water level, attend fire)
- Be able to interact appropriately with all persons involved, and especially members of the public.
- Have a sufficient sense of balance.
- Have a sufficient reaction time.
- Display a mature, rational nature, especially when under pressure.
- Display sufficient alertness and ability to concentrate and obey signals.

Addressing a loss of competency is not an easy task to undertake with those who may not be persuaded, but nonetheless it is the responsibility of the elected executive to resolve.

Remember that members of the AALS Board are available if you wish to discuss the problem but they cannot make your decision for you.

Issued by the Australian Live Steamers Safety Committee - 20 April 2020