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# AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF LIVE STEAMERS

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AALS Web Site  
[www.aals.asn.au](http://www.aals.asn.au)

Limited  
ACN 107 882 404 - ABN 81 107 882 404

## AUSTRALIAN LIVE STEAMERS SAFETY COMMITTEE

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Dear Secretary,  
Australian Association of Live Steamers Ltd

I apologise for the length of this letter but there is a lot to cover.

At long last we are near the end of the Code of Practice revision. Since the previous draft version was circulated and your feedback incorporated, we have taken a different approach which makes the document much easier to read as well as being more compact.

Just to recap, at the 2020 AGM, the ALSSC was tasked by the members to revise and reformat the Codes of Practice (CoP) into a more modern and user-friendly document(s). The three CoPs were:

- Code of Practice – Operation of Miniature Railways, Road Vehicles and Plant
- Code of Practice – Standards for the Interoperability and Safety of Miniature Railways, Road Vehicles and Plant
- Code of Practice – Training of Operators and Attendants of Miniature Railways, Road Vehicles and Plant.

The attached revised version of the CoP combines all three and is simply titled:

- **Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Miniature Railways, Road Vehicles and Plant.**

The Code of Practice is, along with the AMBSC Boiler Codes, one of the most important tools we have which enables us to enjoy our hobby free from interference. For decision makers in the various State Authorities unfamiliar with our activities, the external view of our hobby is confusing. For example: -

- We operate commercially but we are not “commercial operators”
- We operate amusement devices but we are not “amusement device operators”
- We operate boilers but we are not “boiler operators”

For this reason, if no other, the governance provided by the AALS CoP is fundamental to the passage of our hobby through time and essential to enabling future generations to enjoy, both as participants and visitors to our open days. This is why compliance with the Code of Practice is a condition of every club's affiliation with the AALS.

In the introductory pages of the revised CoP you will find some new material. It is recognised in 2021 that the model engineering hobby is undergoing generational change with many of the old hands becoming elderly and several who have passed on. It is therefore important at this juncture to record the basis upon which our hobby legally operates and document some of the concessions that have been rigorously pursued, secured, and vigorously safeguarded for the benefit of all participants. Newly included introductory sections provide insight into the legal status of our activities as well as examples of those concessions as they appear in Government documents. This is included for the enlightenment of incoming generations with the invitation to

explore such linkages to understand that “playing trains in public” is a right that has been hard fought for and needs ongoing protection.

The consolidation of three former documents into one single CoP has necessitated the creation of an overarching structure into which the existing clauses, without significant alteration, could be re-marshalled to produce a user-friendly document.

The reformatted CoP aims to group important information under broad operational areas that require your attention as an affiliate of the AALS. This overview is titled “Mandatory Activities” and it provides a snapshot of the requirements on one page for use as a ready reckoner; a short list if you like, for an individual society to consider “What have we got for that?”.

Emphasis remains on autonomy for individual societies to self-regulate in the manner they see as best fit for their specific and unique circumstances, however, for legal compliance it is vitally important a universal framework of compliance exists to the satisfaction of Insurers and Regulatory Authorities.

In terms of procedures and documentation, you may have a lot, or you may have a little, subject to individual circumstances and available resources. However, everybody should at least be able to demonstrate to Authorities that they have thought about these specific matters and have a viable response for them. These are the times.

Language has changed in this version. In 2021 we find the words “...you must do this...” a little confronting for volunteer organisations so, with that in mind, the language used in this version of the CoP has been modernised to “invite participation in mandatory activities”. The implications are the same: legal requirements dictate matters which must be incorporated in our day-to-day activities. Where we interact with the Public, to whom we legally owe a Duty of Care, these matters are not negotiable.

So far as possible, clauses from existing documents remain unaltered. They have been re ordered under the headings provided by the “Mandatory Activities” structure adopted to organise the combined material. There were occasions when minor changes were necessary to improve readability. There were instances where a new sentence was required so the revamped text made sense. Some new material has been created to fill obvious blank spots that showed up under the new format.

Due to information appearing in a different sequence to previously, the numbering of individual clauses has changed. To correlate the movements of clauses from the current versions of the CoP to the 2021 version, a “**CoP Changes**” document is attached. The changes document shows where every clause from the previous versions is now to be found. At the end of the CoP Changes document we have listed the new material which has gone into this version and provided two methods for dealing with this.

### **What we require from you**

Your Competent Person(s) have been this letter and the attachments. Please ensure they have received them.

The next step is for every club to go through the attached Code of Practice along with the CoP Changes document and then, if you wish, to provide feedback to the **ALSSC Chairman**. This feedback will be taken into consideration when preparing the final CoP document for voting at the next AGM. Because this process has been a very long one and it is late in the year we would ask that you keep your feedback concise. You only need to refer to clause numbers and briefly state what you think needs to be changed. We are all aware of the various issues and scenarios so there is no need for lengthy multi page explanations or reasons. We need to have your feedback by **Friday December 10**.

Cheers,



David Proctor  
Chairman, Australian Live Steamers Safety Committee  
16/10/21