

NOVEMBER
2011

information

Newsletter of the Cape Western
Railway Society.
(Branch of the Railway Society of
Southern Africa)

Events...Events...Events

With the non publication of our newsletter in October, some of my events have not been able to reach you.

Our end of the year braai at Live Steamers will take place on Friday 16 December at 13:00. There will be the usual Raffle, Prizes and hopefully the train rides. Bring your own meat, refreshments, eating utensils and a table and chair if you have one.

Early next year I am thinking of planning a trip to Worcester by Metro, with a tour of the KWW Winery. The train departs Cape Town late afternoon and reaches Worcester early evening. As the train leaves Worcester at 04:40 the next morning, we will be staying for two nights.

I will inform you about the details in a future newsletter. If any member has ideas for events for next year please contact me.

Mavis Ridgard - 021 559 4282

Preservation October 2011 by Keith Robertson

The Site : This area is now looking quite neat, thanks to Mr. Connelly who came along with his weed wacker and lawnmower - well done Con! Plans have been drawn up and submitted to council for an freestanding (AKA demountable) shed. The shed will be 50 meters by 9 meters. Will have more news by next month.

PUG : Work has begun to restore vandalized and missing parts from PUG. Once done she will have a boiler test.

Coach 290 : After canvas covering the roof was cut in two by the thieves, the roof now leaks in several places. Con is making up new vent panels at his wood factory to replace the broken ones. This coach has also get to be rewired.

Coach 1825 : -This coach was also vandalized, and new vent panels will also have to be made. Both coaches need to be repainted!

6J 641 : Painting and restoration continue on this engine. The entire cab inside is being rust-proofed and painted and windows will be fitted back soon!

Containers/Workshop : Once again this area is a mess. Everybody uses it as a storage facility - perhaps we should invest in another container!?

OZ Wagon : This wagon will be moved to the front line soon as it is easier to work on and more accessible to electricity. Still a few planks to replace and some painting on the bogies to be done.

THF Locos : Who knows?

EC Rees : After theft from this loco, we decided to fit it out with burglar bars and have welded up the off side engine panels (Thanks Dawie!).

PS On Friday 28 October, Epping CID installed a security camera across the line at "TRULY" (they make calculators!). This cam-



Dawie, Denton and Keith fitting temporary vent panels to coach 290

NEXT BRANCH MEETING : TUESDAY 6 DECEMBER 2011

Opinions expressed or information supplied, are given as accurately as possible and producers and subscribers of this newsletter do not hold themselves responsible for any misinformation or errors whatsoever.

Chairman : Jeremy Hutton - 084 517 7480
Secretary : Diana Lester - 021 797 1125
Treasurer : Roger Smith - 021 5315998
Events : Mavis Ridgard - 021 559 4282

Cape Western Railway Society,
P. O. Box 491,
Goodwood, 7459

era sweeps right across our site down to the bridge. So now we hope our site will be more secure against the terrible theft we have had recently.

Malcolm's This And That : The evolution of safety measures since the 19th Century has resulted in near perfection of standards on railways. One has only to think back to the early days of when rail travel was a highly dangerous means of travel and death tolls in accidents were common place. As safety features improved the number of casualties decreased, but the one factor which is very difficult to eliminate is the human one. Lack of adequate training and irresponsibility has taken our railway system a step backwards.

When last has there been a prosecution of a railway employee (particularly drivers) when he or she has been the cause of the deaths of passengers. It seems that the Railway Administration of today have a devil-may-care attitude to railway accidents and accept them as part of the railway scene.

Talking of railway safety measures and on a lighter note, how about this treatise on the first primitive signalling notice issued to train staff. Talk about Irish logic!

"A signal ball will be seen at the entrance to Reading station when the line is right for the train to go in. If the ball is not visible the train must not pass it."

No doubt there will be more said about the break-ins we have had at our Epping site. It has devastated our rolling stock and equipment. It could not have been worse.

It is high time that the Government of the day started taking drastic action in stopping this scourge. The theft of copper and brass has become a national crises. It should be treated on the same footing as sabotage.

To close : The railway preservation fraternity face great odds. But don't let us give up on steam!

R1 BILLION Redevelopment Of Part Of Cape Town Station : A R1 BILLION redevelopment of part of the Cape Town station precinct that includes a three-star hotel and office and retail space has been agreed between the authorities and a major property group.

The redevelopment, which is expected to be at least 18 months in the planning before construction starts, is centered on the north-western corner of the precinct, at the junction of Adderley Street and Old Marine Drive, and no rail services will be affected.

Grant Rock, executive manager of development and investments at Intersite, the external business unit of the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa), said they were "very excited" by the agreement. He explained that this was not part of the massive R20bn redevelopment of the railway complex between Cape Town station and Woodstock, announced early last year.

That project would potentially involve sinking the railway line underground and it is envisioned that living spaces, museums and art galleries would be created on the freed-up space stretching from the city to Salt River.

"That redevelopment relates to rail operations in planning for future growth, and has not been finalized yet. But that's not within our ambit."

Intersite called for tenders for the new project in March this year to find a development partner "to commercialize certain areas in the station precinct and to create commercial opportunities", he explained. "That was a competitive process and we had some very good responses from property development groups." Intersite had selected the Eris Property Group as the preferred bidder.

The group's proposal was for a development estimated to cost R1bn in the first phase, and involved a three-star hotel, retail space of 25 000m², and office space of about 20 000m².

"They will be taking advantage of air rights – that is, they will be going vertical. They will be given a long-term lease over certain sections of the station. So this will be additional revenue for us, which is the purpose of the exercise for Prasa. Most of the development will be concentrated where there are no station operations, at the corner of Adderley Street and Marine Drive. At the moment it is a food quarter and an open parking lot – it is really at the back side of the station. We're very excited and we're busy finalising the agreement at the moment and then we'll start the detailed planning. We hope to hit the ground in about a year-and-a-half," he

said.

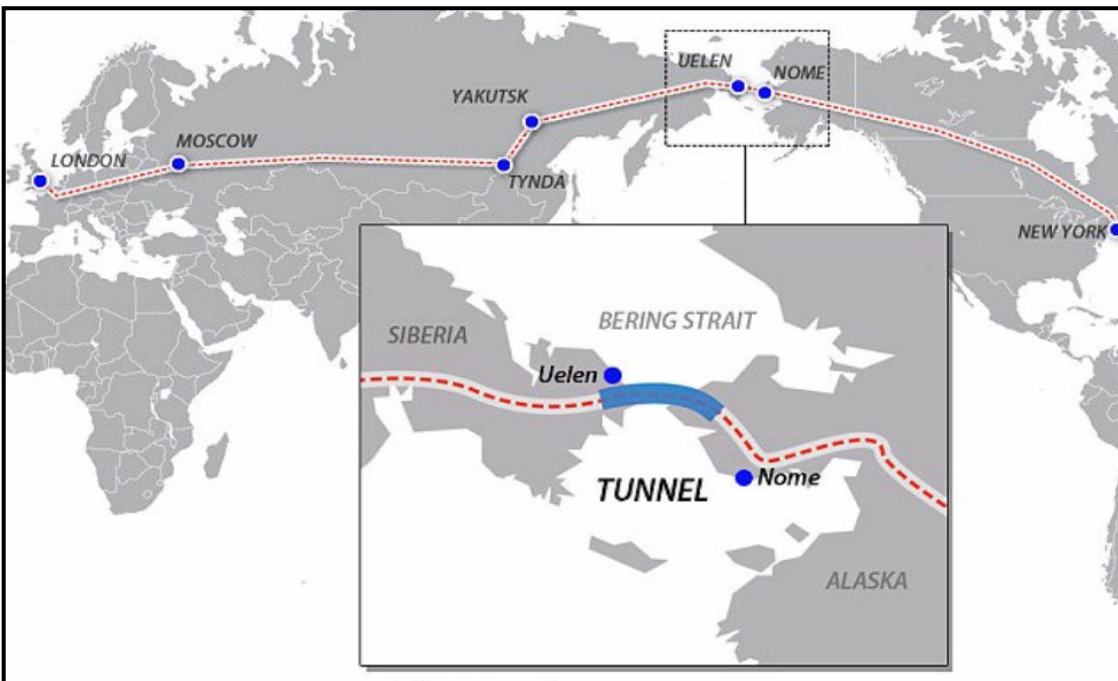
Before last year's Fifa World Cup, Cape Town Station was upgraded to the tune of R480 million, with major changes being made to the station forecourt, Strand Street paving, a bus parking lot and paving on the station deck.

New ticket offices were built on either side of the station, and the entrance to the concourse was widened. Tens of thousands of train commuters pass through the station area every day.

The station is also major transport interchange: taxis operate from the above-ground station deck, and long-distance buses run from an area behind the main station building.

john.yeld@inl.co.za

Trip Of A Lifetime would Take The Best Part Of three weeks through picturesque Alaska and Siberia. Russia set to complete extension of rail network to tip of Siberia by 2030. This £60 billion plan would see 65-mile tunnel bored under Bering Strait and linking East and West



The prospect of an epic train journey from London to New York might seem like a distant dream for those seeking the ultimate railway holiday. But booking a ticket from St Pancras to Grand Central station could be a step closer after Russia gave the green light for plans for a 65-mile tunnel under the Bering Strait.

The Kremlin this week gave its support for a £60billion scheme that would link Asia and North America and allow for a potential once-in-a-lifetime train journey.

The proposed tunnel would pass underneath the Big Diomedes and Little Diomedes islands and straddle the international dateline to link East and West.

Engineers have said there is no technical reason the tunnel could not be completed and it could provide a cheaper way of shipping freight around the world.

The idea was first raised by Tsar Nicholas II in 1905, but was this week endorsed by Aleksandr Levinthal - deputy federal representative for the Russian Far East - at a conference on developing infrastructure in the country's remote north-east.

The three-day conference, held in the eastern city of Yakutsk, brought delegates from the U.S., China and Britain and was aimed at capturing the economic potential of the resource-rich region.

Mr Levinthal told The Times : 'We should see advanced development of road and rail infrastructure here [in the Russian Far East] and improvement in the investment climate in Russia as a key aim.'

A 500-mile railway line stemming from the existing Trans-Siberian line to Yakutsk - costing £900million and due for completion in 2013 - is part of Kremlin plans to extend rail lines 2,360 miles to the north-eastern

tip of Siberia by 2030.

That could open up the way for the construction of a tunnel - which could take up to another 15 years to complete. The route would be twice the length of the Channel Tunnel, in a sparsely populated area miles from large population centres. It would also require U.S. engineers to create through train lines in Alaska, linking it with cities in Canada and onwards.

Currently, travellers would have to get a ferry to Anchorage, Alaska, from the U.S. west coast and train services in Russia would only take you as far as Chita or Vladivostock, before they move down into China and Mongolia.

It remains to be seen whether Russia could finance such an ambitious project, but it opens up the possibility of a breathtaking train journey through picturesque Siberia and Alaska.

Information provided by Ray Hattingh

Plan To Split Transnet To Boost Ailing Rail Sector : State-owned port and freight rail company Transnet could be stripped of its rail infrastructure assets and become an operator competing with private-sector companies, if proposals to open the rail sector to private investors are adopted. This is the essence of a Department of Transport master plan, to be submitted to the National Planning Commission tomorrow. The plan must be adopted by the Cabinet before it can be implemented.

Extract From : Business Day 24 August 2011

Splitting Transnet Is The Way To Go : SA MUST be one of the few countries in the world in which the largest portion of the state-owned transport infrastructure is controlled by departments other than the transport department. The vast majority of our transport infrastructure is controlled by Transnet, which reports to a different ministry. The Department of Transport is, however, responsible for policy and planning.

This context sets the stage for some bruising internal battles over what should be done to solve SA's transport issues. In a sense, the department's detachment allows it a degree of independence of vision and, in the spirit of that sense of objective oversight, it has come up with a very good idea: Transnet should be responsible for maintaining the rail network, and private or quasi-private entities should act as operators.

The reasoning behind this idea is pretty unimpeachable: the essence of SA's rail network is that it is failing, and failing fast. The proportion of freight transport that travels by road has been increasing for years. The service levels of the rail division of Transnet are very poor and getting worse. The two, poor service levels and declining usage, have become a self-reinforcing cycle.

The rail division of Transnet is saved essentially by two railway lines — the coal line to Richard's Bay and the iron-ore line to Saldhana. It's easy to see why this is so. These are bulk transport lines with captive customers. Most others who do have an option have chosen to move their goods by truck, incredibly, even when it is more expensive to do so. The reliability, sophistication, time accuracy, service culture and general competitive attitude of logistics operators have left rail in the dust.

This is only one of Transnet's problems; it also needs expensive upgrades to its lines and rolling stock. It's conceivable that Transnet could manage part of this upgrade, but it probably will not be able to afford it in its totality, at least at the pace at which SA's transport infrastructure needs to grow. Acting deputy director-general for integrated transport planning Clement Manyungwana says the investment requirements in the rail-freight sector are far greater than Transnet's balance sheet can bear. Transnet's five-year investment plan of R110,6bn is just not enough.

Hence, the department has come to the obvious and welcome idea to house Transnet's infrastructure assets in a separate state-owned Rail Infrastructure Utility, which would manage them on behalf of the government. In addition, a Transport Economic Regulator would level the playing fields between Transnet and other rail operators, facilitating competition.

It is crucial that this regulator should operate effectively. One of the problems with infrastructure management is that the state entities that find themselves in an effective monopoly position end up making use of that position, not to reduce costs but to behave as a form of hidden taxation.

Port charges are a good example. It recently became clear that port charges in Durban are more than any other major dock in the world, and almost double the global average. Transnet has applied to increase fees for port services and facilities by 18% next year.

Faced with rising costs on the one hand and a need for increased spending on the other, the solution is obvious: increase competition and attract private investment.. Is the plan a pipe dream? The department's plan seems to be at odds with other parts of government policy, and with Transnet's own perceived interests. The fact that the plan has been gathering dust for more than five years may be instructive in itself.

Yet, the point is that this issue should not be a matter of ideological purity or departmental territoriality; it should be based on what is practically necessary. The department's notions come a lot closer to that principle than anything else we have heard so far.

Editorial From : Business Day 25 August 2011

Transnet Rail Split Would Be 'Disastrous' : The CEO of State-owned freight logistics group Transnet Brian Molefe said on Thursday that it would be "disastrous" to split the group's rail unit into separate infrastructure and operational entities and to house the infrastructure assets in a new Rail Infrastructure Utility.

Such a move would undermine the balance sheet of Transnet, the size and strength of which was critical to enabling it to raise the debt finance needed to modernise and expand its rail, ports and pipelines infrastructure and assets.

Molefe was responding to reports that such a vertical separation was back on the policy agenda, following a presentation by a Department of Transport (DoT) official to lawmakers earlier in the week.

DoT acting deputy director-general for integrated transport planning Clement Manyungwana argued that such a split, which had been considered in previous policy documents, might be considered again to improve the efficiency of the rail system and of Transnet Freight Rail (TFR), which had lost significant market share to road hauliers over the past three decades.

But neither Transnet, nor the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), which is the utility's shareholder Ministry, supported the policy, which DPE spokesperson Mayihlome Tshwete insisted was "not on the cards". In fact, Tshwete told Engineering News Online that the Public Enterprises Minister Malusi Gigaba and Transport Minister Sibusiso Ndebele had held discussions subsequent to Manyungwana's presentation and had concurred that a restructuring of TRF was not the immediate priority.

Instead, the focus would be on ensuring that Transnet delivered on its R110-billion investment programme over the coming five years and added the rail capacity required to ensure that South Africa could improve its trade performance, while moving freight from road to rail.

It was also agreed that, while the DoT was the overall policymaker, the two departments should intensify their bilateral engagements so that such "misunderstandings could be avoided in future". DoT director-general George Mahlalela added that any decision on the restructuring of the country's rail operations would be dealt with by Cabinet.

He stressed that, in line with the Infrastructure Development Cluster delivery agreement, the current focus was on ensuring a significant shift of the movement of freight from road to rail. "However, any restructuring of current rail operations, whether pertaining to the Department of Transport, the Department of Public Enterprises, or even private operators, is a policy consideration that will be dealt with by Cabinet and communicated accordingly by Cabinet," Mahlalela added.

POOR TIMING : Molefe said the timing of the presentation was unfortunate, as it had the potential to undermine the image of Transnet as a stable entity in the eyes of domestic and foreign bondholders.

Transnet would borrow R25-billion over the coming five years to fund its investment plans, with cash from operations accounting for R96.4-billion. The money has so far been raised on the domestic and foreign capital markets as well as from development finance institutions, export credit agencies, bank loans and commercial paper. Transnet aimed to increase the size of the Domestic Medium Term Note programme from R30-billion to R60-billion to fund its 2012 capital projects.

“Over the last five years, we have spent R85-billion investing in both maintenance and additions of new capacity. Over the next five years, we will spend a further R110-billion and I think at this point it is inappropriate to be talking about vertical separation,” he said.

“To give [bondholders] the impression that government is about to split up Transnet and take away Transnet assets needs to be challenged. Because if it is indeed so, it will create alarm in the bond markets with respect to Transnet bonds. So the timing is inappropriate and the comments, I think, were insensitive to where we find ourselves.”

Equally, they did not fairly reflect the efficiency improvements that were being achieved as a result of recent investments including the lowering of transit times for containers between Johannesburg and Durban from 38 hours to 16 hours. “On the coal line, we recently achieved a weekly record of 1.6-million. Export iron-ore is up to 1.1-million, manganese from 2-million tons per annum to 5-million tons per annum and export coal via Maputo is up to 37 trains per week from 14 trains previously,” Molefe added.

He also said that work was progressing on various public sector participation (PSP) programmes as well as various partnership models, from build-operate-transfer schemes, to opening access to privately owned locomotives and wagons, to private wagon ownership and lease agreements.

PSP projects could also be pursued to expand coal, iron-ore and manganese exports, as well as to equip the remaining two berths at the Ngqura container terminal and in building new inland terminal capacity in Johannesburg and Pretoria.

Molefe was also particularly displeased with the media’s reportage of and editorialisation on the matter.

He indicated that the Business Day had not attempted to provide a balanced view of vertical separation and noted that its editor, Peter Bruce, had responded antagonistically to Transnet when it had earlier criticised the way it had edited and reproduced a story on Transnet written by Reuters.

He quoted Bruce’s emailed response to its criticism as stating “if you think it appropriate to declare war on Business Day . . . I will give you one”.

“In my view, this is a matter that needs to be debated in an open environment, without anybody threatening anyone with war,” Molefe concluded.

From : Engineering News

Thought For The Month

The difference between knowledge and wisdom :

Knowledge is to know a tomato is a fruit.

Wisdom is to know not to put one in the fruit salad

