

After four years of trying we have finally obtained permission from QR National to use their paint scheme and logo on Austrains models. The first release of models in this livery will be a rerun of the CLP / CLF series in the first quarter of 2011. This will be followed by a rerun of the X class in second quarter. The quantity of QRN locos in each run will be **very** limited and at the moment our permission from QRN extends to one run only.

**CL / CLP rerun:** Shipment of the CL and CLP in the QRN livery will be around February, 2011. at the same time we are taking the opportunity to rerun some of the more popular liveries from the first run. Also in the shipment will be limited reruns of the CLP in AN Silver / Green and Yellow and the CL in ANR Maroon and Silver and AN Green. No deposits will be taken. As usual with reruns it will be orders backed up by a cheques or credit card which will not be processed until the models arrive. Price for the CL series rerun will be \$275.00. Due to problems with the supply of sound chips we will not be offering a sound option on these locos.

**X class:** Slightly after the CL series arrives there will be a rerun of the X class series 2 and series 3. This will incorporate a run of X53 and X54 in their QR National livery. The X class model was never designed with sound in mind and we are not going to invest in an update of the chassis. The cost can just not be recuperated. The previous VR Blue and V/Line colour schemes will be rerun with a new mix of numbers for those who missed out on the previous two runs. Expected price for the X class will be \$275.00 per unit with delivery in time for the Hobsons Bay MRC exhibition at Easter 2011.

Both of the above models will be very limited quantities. Corporate changes over the next month in QRN will result in new liveries starting to appear next year. We are informed that the CLP's and X's will not be priority repaints but that they will be repainted sometime. Yes, we will be doing a QRN livery on the forthcoming **G class** but not in the first run. We already have to many variations in the first run. The G class will be a very limited quantity and priority in orders will be given to those who also order CLP and X class models.

#### **New Products:**

**The 81 / G / BL:** At last tooling is underway on this project. The factory informs us that we should have first test shots around end November, 2010. This is however may be cutting it a little fine. Delivery of the 81 /G / BL project is now expected late 2011.

**Passenger Coaches:** First test shots of the American End Platform Cars generically know as the FO's arrived early May. Some photos are now up on the web site. These are first samples and are a little rough in assembly however the coach bodies themselves require little alteration except for a modification to the side doors of the Enclosed End HFO.. Most of the fine tuning will be in the underframe and end handrails. These require a bit of work and some re thinking. The 2AA bogies are superb. The wheels have an insulated axle and ride in a pin point metal plate in the bogie side ( ah la Eureka C38 class Tender ). This enables the bogie to pick up current from the track to power the interior lighting. All cars will have full interior detail and will be lighted by LED's. You will love the individual etched brass luggage racks above each set of seats. The 2AA bogies with their pickup equipment will be made available as individual components for those wishing to light other coaches using the same type of bogie. We are doing the Mansard roof versions of the FO. Our original plan was to fit each coach with a DCC chip to operate the lights in each individual car. This however would have added substantially to the cost of each set and restrict this feature to DCC users only. Instead the lights are now be individually controlled by a discreet little switch on the underside of each coach. The factory has also taken it on themselves to fit sprung buffers. A six car set of FO's will cost \$595.00 on Advance Order. This price can be held by a deposit of \$100.00 and will hold for orders received by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011. After that the price will rise to a yet to be decided level. Additional two car sets of FO's will initially be \$200.00. A premium of \$20 will apply to the price of FO two car sets ordered separately to six car sets. This premium does not apply to two car sets containing CCA cars.

These are really neat little coaches. A train of six is around four feet long ( suitable for almost every layout ) and they were hauled at some time or place by almost every steam locomotive on the NSWGR and most first generation diesels. A complete history of these coaches is contained in the book Coaching Stock of the NSWGR volume 2. ( Still in print from Eveleigh Press and a must read for everyone modeling the railways of NSW).

These are the first new ready to run coaches made for the Australian market for seventeen years.

**The production run of the American End Platform Cars will be limited to 750 six car sets only plus CCA sets and add ons. No rerun is scheduled.**

Expected delivery of the FO's is late 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2011.

**Another set of Passenger Cars is well into tool making.** First test shots have arrived and are now undergoing some minor modifications. There is a vague possibility that they may be available at the Liverpool exhibition but this is unlikely.

## Stock Items:

### NSWGR MLE Flat Wagon & variants.

The **NSWGR MLE Flat Wagon** and its variations the **TME Pipe Carrier** and the **FME LCL container wagon** are still available however: The TME sales have surprised us and this version is now **sold out**. Also **sold out** is **FME pack E** with assorted coloured containers. We still have good stocks of pack D with yellow Melbourne – Sydney containers and of the packs of six separate containers. The MLE and its variants are moulded in diecast zinc alloy with plastic detail components. This gives them plenty of rolling weight which makes them sit on the track a lot better than previous all plastic or resin examples. The retail price for a three pack of FME's with a six container load is \$195.00. A three pack of unloaded MLE's is \$145.00. We also have available the LCL containers off the FME, with different numbers, in a separate six pack for \$30.00.

**Other MLE variants.** The MLE flat wagon was the basis for a seemingly endless variety of other wagons, both new building and rebuilds. Thus the tooling was designed so that an infinite number of variations can be done on and above the deck of the wagon. Work has commenced on two new variants of the Flat wagons. These will be **PMX** Out of Gauge Steel wagons and the original NSWGR ISO container wagon, the **GME** with accurate, ie. original design (1969) ACT, ANL & OCL 20' containers. These containers will be made available as separate items.

**The VR - V/Line – Freight Australia – Pacific National JX-VPCX Cement Hoppers: Packs M and N are Sold Out** as is **Pack K** in **VR** livery. We have only reasonable stock of other liveries. **Retail price is \$149.50 per pack of three.**

**DL:** We recently uncovered 7 cartons of DL 43 in AN Green with Yellow bogies. Most of these are now gone but a few remain. Now if we had known about these for the last eighteen months they would have sold a few times over. So, here is your last chance, the last remaining DL's with Grey roof and Yellow bogies. First in first served. \$260.00 + \$11.00 reg. post. Order forms have been changed to restore this item.

## In the Pipeline:

### ELX Open Wagon and variants.

Production run of the ELX Rib Sided versions and the rerun of the ESX Steel Carrier is now underway. They were due to ship late July however like so many items they have been delayed. The ELX's will now arrive mid October.

The Ribbed sided version will be made in **VR - V/Line** and **SAR Grey and ANR red** version will also be made. Price for this run of the ELX / ESX will be \$ 160.00 per pack of three.

**WHX Wheat Hopper:** Production of the WHX Wheat Hopper has commenced: See photos in the WHX section of the web site. First release will be late October, 2010.

We have received permission from the Manildra Group to use their names and logos on these wagons. One set will have 'Manildra Flour Mills' on one side and 'Manildra Starches' on the other as per the prototype. Another set will be decaled with the Sun Rice logo for Rice Traffic. These models will be sold in sets of four as per the order form. Opening price will be \$220.00 for advance orders rising after the models arrive. No deposit is required, just an advance order. Credit cards will not be debited or cheques banked until the models are ready for delivery.

### NR class:

After a false start late in 2008 we have now received permission from Great Southern Railway to do the 'Southern Spirit' livery on the NR class. Production is underway and should be finished end July 2010. 1200 pieces only of the Southern Spirit will be made as a Limited Edition. This will be a guaranteed one off run only. Each model will be certificated. If you order more than one model you will receive consecutively numbered certificates. If you want a specific number between 1 and 1200 please ask but we can't guarantee it. Nos 1 & 1200 have already gone. So have nos. 84 & 85 ( very popular ). Sorry. At the same time we are rerunning the Pac. Nat NR with Stars in two new numbers. NR 1 and NR 54.

During early March the two Southern Spirit livery NR class have been fitted with name plates. The two locos are now named :-

NR 84 'Southern Cross'  
NR 85 'Southern Spirit'

Shipment will be late August. As with all reruns **no deposit is required**, just an advance order. Credit cards will not be debited or cheques banked until the models are ready for delivery. The new retail price is \$275.00.

**Reruns for 2010:** October 2010 will also see the release of the **VR – V/Line C class** in the 'Basix' range.

The rerun of the 442 / 700 class has been postponed until late 2011. There is just too much happening all at once right now.

### **Flat Top T / P class:**

Research on this project is now complete and design at the factory will begin around 1<sup>st</sup> quarter next year. Being realistic it is unlikely that this project will be delivered before late in 2011 but this will probably stretch to 2012.

**Future Product:** In recent times the market for Australian ready to run models has become more competitive and the situation is now bound to happen where there is an overlap of product between manufacturers. This almost happened very recently. We try to talk to our competitors to ascertain their plans and avoid any expensive conflict. In a couple of cases we have pulled out of a project when we have found that another manufacturer was well advanced on the same one. Until recently this has worked well in most cases. Recent events though have changed the situation somewhat. We continue to exchange information on new and planned products with those with whom we are on speaking terms but we will no longer announce planned releases to the public until we have test shots from the manufacturers or in some cases until we drop the finished product on the table at an exhibition. While in China last January we accepted quotes for another set of coaches and a new wagon. Quotes have also been accepted for two single passenger coaches and eight new goods wagons. 4 x VR, 4 x NSW. The first two of these wagons will be released at the Caulfield exhibition. We have a pretty good idea what most of our competitors are doing and try to stay clear unless there is a deliberate attempt by someone to jump in on one of our projects. Thinking about something does not constitute going to do it. There are a lot of dreamers but few who put things into action. As we said before if we tread on someone's toes, well they should have talked to us. We are also doing a wagon which is neither Victorian nor NSW. It is well advanced with test shots due late August. We hope to have these test shots on display in Newcastle.

### **Stock Items:**

**C35 / NN class:** We still have a few people we have not been able to contact. If you have ordered but not received a C35 please contact us. It is likely that we are waiting to hear from you for some reason. The QSI sound versions are most impressive and while we will have good stocks of all C35 / NN variants it is likely that the sound versions will sell out first. Some sound versions are getting very low. The price of the C35 / NN is now \$475.00 for the non sound version and \$575.00 for QSI sound fitted. Some items of sound fitted locos are now Sold Out but in general no problems.

**C36 class:** All listed items are in stock except for two DCC fitted engines which are Sold Out. We have ordered enough C36 models to last some time. A working headlight has been fitted, the rods and valve gear have been upgraded to stainless steel and provision has been made in the tender for a DCC decoder. Knuckle couplers are fitted to the tender and the fitting of longer couplers, if required, is made simple by having a standard coupler box moulded into the tender. The C36 is available with the option of a factory fitted decoder for an additional \$45.00. Price for the C36 will be **\$395.00** standard and **\$440.00** with decoder. This pricing should ensure that the C36 remains the least expensive high quality Australian steam locomotive available for some time into the future. 750 units of the rerun have been made with the factory decoder which works quite well.

**New selling arrangements:** Long term readers of this epistle will know that I have always believed, despite what contributors to various newsgroups may think, that there is a life other than model railways. The continued growth of Austrains business and my own wish for more free time to indulge myself in other pursuits has made it impossible for me handle everything by myself. As such research on future projects and many other aspects of the business have suffered. The business has grown to where it is too big for one person and I have no intention of employing a second. For many years all sales of Austrains products have been handled from home. This is no longer a satisfactory situation.

Since the first week in March direct sales of Austrains products have been done through what is basically be an Austrains section of Toms Hobbies at West Ryde, NSW. The complete range of Austrains products will be on display in their own showcase and a full range of Austrains products will be available over the counter. Although you will be served by Toms Hobbies staff there will be a separate Austrains till and credit card machine. Toms Hobbies can also handle any phone mail order sales. They will not, however, take advance orders for future products or orders mailed direct to us. These will still be handled by Austrains. The present Austrains retailer network will remain in place. The new arrangements are meant to complement rather than compete with current Austrains retailers. All other enquiries about Austrains products will still be handled by Austrains.

**Now for the bad news.** Well, we tried. For five years we have been trying to get the **Z19 / Z20** class project up and running. Three quotations were received until at last we had one which combined with the strengthening A\$ made the project viable. When we asked for expressions of interest the response was luke warm. Many were enthusiastic; others applied the conditional approach eg: I'll only have it if it has sound, smell and burns real coal. Those responses were ignored. Then the factory informed us that the motor we had intended to use was no longer available and no substitute would do the job. Thus, with deep regret, we have cancelled the project. Thanks to those who replied positively. Nobody is more disappointed than I am but economics must prevail.

**Exhibitions:** During the remainder of 2010 Austrains will be attending the following exhibitions:

**AMRA Vic.**

**Caulfield Racecourse.**

**Station St, Caulfield, VIC.**

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> & Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 9 am to 5 pm**

**Our Town Model Show.**

**Newcastle Racecourse,**

**Newcastle, NSW.**

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September & Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> September from 9 am.**

**Represented by Barnes Hobbies**

**Note the revised date.**

**AMRA NSW.**

**E.G Whitlam Leisure Centre,**

**Memorial Ave, Liverpool, NSW.**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> & Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October from 9 am.**

**POSTAGE AND INSURANCE.** With the change of distribution arrangements comes a change of policy with regard to Postage and Insurance. All items posted by Austrains now have compulsory receipted delivery and insurance. Too many people were opting out of insurance with a lot of subsequent problems. **Compulsory** receipted delivery now costs \$5.00 per order. Insurance is \$6.00 per loco.

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