



### Pending Arrivals:

**The 81 / G / BL:** The first of the G class arrived late January in time for the Corio exhibition. This shipment consisted of three variations only ( 2 x Freight Australia and VR Blue G220). The factory then closed down for Chinese New Year holiday and is only now getting back to work at something resembling full capacity. As a result most of the 81 / G / BL's were left at the factory with the bodies waiting to be matched to the chassis. There have been further delays with shipments since Chinese New Year. The factory will be giving out a revised shipping schedule soon. The G's will be followed by the BL's then the 81 class with the last shipment due around mid-May. We will send orders out as soon as we have all ordered product in stock. For those who have ordered a combination of all three variants you may have to wait until everything arrives. Shipping a few pieces at time is going to confuse things and probably take more time in the long run. Please bear with us. We did say that we would contact everyone by letter before delivery.

This task has proved to be beyond us. There were over 1500 separate customers who have ordered these models with numerous permutations of orders. As such we are now only contacting customers where there are major problems with the order needing resolution. In many cases we are just making a quick phone call to resolve any difficulties. ( It would help if some of you answered your mobiles ).

**Production problems.** As most of you will be aware there have been major difficulties with some of the factories in China who produce model railway equipment. Unfortunately the factory making the 81/G /BL project is one of those. Three changes of ownership over the past eight years has resulted in many changes of policy. Where once we were able to have short runs of many different liveries this is no longer the case with two of our three suppliers. As a result the factory informed us in early January that they were limiting the number liveries and numbers they would do and asked us to nominate those liveries we wished to drop. A commercial decision had to be made and we nominated those liveries for which we had least orders. At the same time the factory told us that, for various reasons some numbers would be changed and some variations we still wanted would not be done. We have been requested to place a new order for a second production run very late 2014 but the factory will still not guarantee that we will get everything we want. So while we are still getting the same volume of stock the variants are now reduced. We apologise to those whose choice of models has been restricted. This was totally beyond our control and, like many things which are happening with Chinese manufacturers right now, completely unforeseen. The revised order form shows what locos will be available in the first shipments. If we need to change locos we will contact you. If a change is necessary you will be contacted.

**81 class Candy locos:** For some reason there appears to be a problem with the production of the Candy 81 class. We are trying to get an answer from the factory as to exactly what is happening but the office has just returned from CNY and things are a little vague. What we do know is that on a production / shipping schedule received last week the Candy 81 has been put back to last off the production line and shipment after 15<sup>th</sup> April. The problem does not affect any other models and as the 81 class Candy orders are a small percentage of the overall project we will keep in touch with those customers independently.

Please do not ring us asking where your models are. This only delays things further and infuriates the staff who are trying to pack the orders and get them posted. If you need to communicate with us an email in best however many of the computer generation seem to think that an email should evoke a response within ten minutes. When you are getting 150/200 emails a day this is not possible. Long complicated epistles giving your life story before getting to the point also cause delays. If you have a problem or a question please keep it succinct. The price of the 81 / G / BL has now gone up to \$295.00. Those with models on order may still order extra models at the old price of \$245.00.



**LHG Goods Brake Van:** At last the LHG Goods Brake Van has arrived and been distributed. Thanks for the kind comments from some who have been impressed enough with this model to let us know. Your comments are appreciated.

**Variations of the LHG.** We are doing two versions of the 49'3" LHG Brake Van. Firstly the as built version with two windows in the guards compartment end. These vans all had this configuration until the early 1950's when the windows were removed and they were rebuilt with solid timber planked ends. A further variation of the original version is the one off #7118 which carried advertising for the railways parcel service on both sides. One of these is included in pack B.

Some dispute has arisen in the councils of the wise about the OHG code applied in the early 1950's to some of the vans which retained their screw couplers while the remainder of the fleet was fitted with autos. The late R.G. Preston ( an author renowned for the accuracy of his writings ) in his book 'Day of the Goods Train' states that these vans were used on stock trains where the four wheeled Cattle and Sheep vans had not been fitted with auto couplers. However excellent documentation also exists showing that sixteen vans coded OHG with screw couplers were transferred to the carriage sheds at Central in the weeks before Easter and Christmas holidays for thorough cleaning for use as supplementary passenger guards vans during the holiday periods. A task to which they were ideally suited and regularly performed in country areas when the need arose. So the LHG is a multi purpose van.

The LHG are being sold in twin packs based on eras. Pack B is as built with end windows 1930's / 1940's era. Pack B will also contain the van with advertising.

Packs A and C will be early 50's with one LHG and one OHG. Packs D & E contain vans in their mid 50's through to the early 80's configuration.

LHG packs will be \$165.00.



**The Way and Works Train.** When many vans and coaches had finished their economic life in main line service they were transferred to service stock. Most of the larger stations had a few vans, wagons and coaches painted cream and silver lying around in the yard as storage or sleeping accommodation for the Way and Works crews who kept the system running behind the scenes. Many LHG Brake vans finished up in this role. Austrains will be releasing a two car pack consisting of an LHG van and LFX coach ( based on original photographs ) painted cream with silver roof. This will be a Limited Edition of 480 sets only selling at \$230.00 for the twin pack. It is a once only run and will not be repeated. When we have had the LHG on display at exhibitions interest in this set has been very high. The W&W set will have to wait until the production run of the LFX coach happens.

**442 / 700 class:** in the Austrains 'Basix' range arrived late February and will be distributed around the time this newsletter comes out. The Basix range is made from early Austrains tooling which does not meet the standards of modern day products in detail and electronics. They are however mechanically identical to newer Austrains products in that they retain the reliable 5 pole skew wound motor, all wheel pickup and drive of all other Austrains locomotives. The 442 / 700 is also fitted with an 8 pin DCC plug. The first loco in the Basix range to have this accessory.

The rerun is, by necessity, limited in its scope. The factory will no longer do numerous variations of colours and numbers so, this run consists of 442 class in Indian Red, Reverse and Freightail Blue and 700 class in SAR Mustard Pot, ANR Red & Silver and AN Green. While we had hoped to keep the Basix range under \$200.00 this is no longer possible. Massive factory price rises, particularly on the production side along with the devaluation of the \$A means the 442 / 700 will be \$245.00.



**Dog Box Coaches:** Due Late May 2014.

We are making three versions of the Dog Box coaches all based on the 49'3" chassis. Two versions of the LFX ( Mansard and semi Elliptical roofs ) and one version of the HCX branch line composite Brake coach with semi elliptical roof. There were only two numbers of this particular HCX on the 49'3" chassis. All the rest were of varying lengths so we are limited to this one type. The Dog Boxes will be sold as TWO Packs in both Tuscan & Russet and Indian Red liveries. Prices to be advised closer to shipment date.

**And later in the year:** We also have booked reruns of the **VR I – I/A Open Wagon** and the **B wagon** plus more of the very popular **M Cattle Wagon**. To round off the Victorian product there will also be a **short run of the JX – VPCX Cement Hopper** in both VR and V/Line around August.

**The ultimate S truck:** Until now no S truck model has been made accurately. It seems that the most common NSWGR drawing ( and the one used by all past manufacturers including Austrains ) is incorrect in many of its measurements. Thus the only way to get the S truck correct is to get out and measure a few assorted examples. However perfection is hard to achieve. The first test shots, while the subject of much debate, were rejected as being lacking in certain details and incorrect in some dimensions. The tooling modifications are now complete and production is now underway. Watch out for the release of the ultimate S truck at an exhibition in NSW around May 2014.

We are told that one of our competitors has dug out some old S truck tooling, spent a bit on a few wire add ons and will be releasing the aforementioned model early in 2014. Before you rush out with credit card in hand check out the price and detail of the Austrains S truck and make your own decision.

**ACX Composite Sleeping Car:** Tooling is now complete for this model and we have first test shot samples which look so good that they may not even need any tickling up before we go into production. We will hold release of the ACX until the second half of 2014. The first half is getting a bit busy.

**SOC Ore Wagons:** Tooling for these models was completed three years ago and production was pushed back due to us having to give priority to other models at this factory. We have now been given a production date which should see them get here around September.

## That's enough for new stuff for 2014. Now what have we got in stock.

**Y class:** We still have very adequate stocks of the Y class in VR Blue and V/Line liveries is now in stock. If you ordered a model and have not yet received it please contact us. We have sufficient stock of the Y class to last some time. Despite massive factory price rises since the first production run we have been able to keep the price down to \$275.00. [< link to Y class order form >](#)



**CW Cattle Wagon.** We have very good of the NSW **1915/1921 CW Cattle wagon** packs. These comprise four of the new 1915 version and two 1921 version wagons in a six pack. There are three different packs with new numbers on the 1921 version. When compared side by side the difference in the two types of vans is quite obvious. Photographic evidence exists some wagons of this version of the CW still being in service in the mid 1960's making them suitable for the steam /diesel changeover period. The price is \$240.00 per pack. [< link to Cattle Wagon order form >](#)



**NSW Four wheel wagons:** We still have very good stocks of the following four wheel NSWGR wagons:

SRC Refrigerated Van	3 pack ( 2 different numbered packs )	\$120.00
ICV Refrigerated Van	3 pack ( 2 different numbered packs )	\$120.00
MV Meat Van	3 pack ( 1 pack only )	\$120.00
LV Louvre Vans	4 pack ( 2 different numbered packs )	\$160.00
LV Louvre Vans Milk Van version	4 pack ( 2 different numbered packs )	\$160.00
CV Covered Van / PV Powder Van	4 pack ( 2 different numbered packs )	\$160.00



### Four wheel Oil Tankers: Most of the original run of Oil Tankers is now Sold Out.

However we now have in stock the 'Shell' liveried tankers. These are the correct colours for this wagon as it is based upon the ex Shell version preserved at the RTM Thirlmere. Because of a resurgence of interest in steam era and diesel changeover period models these wagons are being sold in era packs with different coloured tanks to match a particular era approximately. These packs are Yellow ( 1950's era ) Silver ( 1960's era ) and Black ( 1970's era ). The wagon packs of three are \$120.00.



Late in the year will see the release of the **KF / CKF four wheel flat wagon**. After being used for everything from tractors to bags of wheat these wagons were then converted to become a very early container wagon. This model will use the proven smooth running Austrains 11' wheelbase chassis with a die cast metal body for running weight.

VR Four wheel wagons: We have limited stocks of the following:

<b>ELV1</b>	HD Van / Powder Van	4 pack	\$160.00
<b>TLV2</b>	T Van / HD Van	4 pack	\$160.00
<b>TV 3</b>	T Vans	4 pack	\$160.00

[< Link to Order Form >](#)



### The American End Platform Cars:

There are only around fifty six car sets left and these are now all Tuscan & Russet. We are sold out of all Indian Red sets. Around 15 packs of EP005 two car packs in Tuscan and Russet still remain. **All CCA sets are now sold out.**

[< link to order form >](#)



## Other New Products:

### Z-20 class 2-6-4 Tank Locomotive:

Because of a backlog of product production of the Z 20 class has now been postponed until mid 2015.

GME Original Container wagon. [< link to GME photo >](#) [< link to order page >](#)

When the first dedicated container ships arrived in Sydney in early 1969 they discharged at the new container terminal at White Bay. In their wisdom the powers that be decreed that containers would be stuffed and unstuffed ( that's packed and unpacked to you non shipping types ) at a new depot at Chullora, some 20 miles distant. To transport these shiny new boxes the NSWGR converted 16 UME type Flat wagons to GME Container wagons each carrying two of the 20' variants. The usual load was MHG / 16 container wagons / MHG hauled by a single 44 class.

As containerisation progressed and more suitable wagons were developed the GME's were used as individual wagons for general container transport. A regular use was to transport 2 x 20' containers to any of the regional freight depots set up around the state. Some of the wagons were still in use in the mid / late 1980's.

Our MLE wagon was originally designed with a conversion to these two wagons in mind. Each GME will be fitted with two 20' containers of the original design with appropriate logos. ACT, OCL and ANL. The containers are also available separately with different logo variants.

**PMX 'Out of Gauge' Steel wagon.** [< link to PMX photo >](#) [< link to order form >](#)

With an increase in the early 1960's of the maximum sheet width coming out of the Pt Kembla Steelworks to 10'6" the railways needed a wagon to carry this width sheet without resorting to expensive well type wagons or difficult to schedule 'Out of Gauge' trains.

Perway Workshops were given the task of converting 13 wagons from HME type Flat wagons. Originally coded PME, they were later recoded PMX for bogie exchange. The support frame was designed to be removable, the load braces attached to the deck by clips. The support frame is set at an angle of 26.6 degrees. Some of these wagons are still operational under Pac. Nat. ownership.

Price for the PMX is \$160.00 for a pack of three. For the GME \$150.00.



**LHO Passenger Brake Van** and **KP Mail Sorting Van**. Both of these items have been designed to complement the FS / BS cars in the composition of mail trains. The LHO can also be used wherever a Passenger Brake Van is required for trains from the early 1960's onwards. The new vans are being sold in a three pack with an FS coach. **Retail price is \$330.00 per pack.**

[< link to order page >](#)



**VR - V/Line – SAR - ANR ELX Open Wagon and variants.**

Some versions of the ELX Bogie Open Wagon are starting to short. The rest should sell out by around April next year. Remaining ELX Are \$ 160.00 for a pack of three. **ESX models are now Sold Out.**

**WHX Wheat Hopper:** Now Sold Out of set W3 'Manildra Flour Mills'. All other sets W4 is decal with the Sun Rice logo for Rice Traffic. These models are being sold in sets of four as per the order form. Price is \$220.00.

[< link to photo >](#) [< link to order page >](#)



**Bits and Pieces: We still have small stocks of the following:**

**C class:** In stock available in VR – V/Line colours in the 'Basix' range. **Except C501 Sold Out.**

**Price \$195.00**

[< link to photo >](#) [< link to order page >](#)



**CL / CLP:** In stock available in ANR Maroon & Silver and AN Green only.

**Price \$275.00**

[< link to photo >](#) [< link to order page >](#)

**NSWR 80 class:** In stock available in Tuscan, Reverse and Freightrail Blue in the 'Basix' range. **Price \$195.00** 8011 in Pac. Nat livery is Sold Out.

[< link to photo >](#) [< link to order page >](#)



**C35 / NN class:** The QSI sound versions are most impressive and while we will have good stocks of all C35 / NN variants most of the sound versions are almost Sold Out including preserved engine 3526. The price of the C35 / NN is **\$475.00** for the non sound version and **\$575.00** for QSI sound fitted. [< link to order page >](#)



**C36 class:** All listed items are in stock except for some DCC fitted engines which are Sold Out. We ordered enough C36 models to last some time however demand has increased substantially since the release of the FO coaches. 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 **\$450.00** with decoder. This pricing will ensure that the C36 remains the least expensive high quality Australian steam locomotive available for some time into the future. Please check availability on the web site price list before ordering. [< link to order page >](#)



## Almost Sold Out Items:

**DL class:** In stock available in AN green, Pac Nat Blue and National Rail light and dark grey.  
**Price \$260.00**

As we don't have enough to make order forms worthwhile the above items will be offered at exhibitions at discounted prices until cleared.

**Repairs:** Austrains does not offer a repair service however if you are unable to repair or service a model yourself contact Paul Baker. 0439 566391 or email [prb287@hotmail.com](mailto:prb287@hotmail.com)

**Office Hours: And communication problems.** Austrains is a business like any other. Just because the office is at home does not give customers open slather to phone at all hours of the day or night. Although the situation has improved we are still getting calls at what normal people would consider to be ridiculous hours. If I have a reputation for being abrupt or grumpy is it any wonder when some lunatic phones at 6.30am to complain that his loco doesn't work because it fell off the layout last night, or another rings at 7.40am on a Sunday morning and continues to talk over the top of me despite me telling him that I was standing dripping wet after just coming out of the shower ( that ain't a pretty sight ) or another rings at 7.30pm just as I am sitting down to a much anticipated steak and wonders why he copped an earful. The most recent persistent offender started ringing at 6.02pm and finally gave up around 9.00pm ringing around every two minutes during that time. Then he was highly upset when I gave him a few choice profanities the following morning. Give us a break.

An increasing number of people appear not to have learned or been taught any social skills whatsoever.

## Our office hours are 9.00am to 5.00pm AEST/AEDT Monday to Friday

If the office is unattended the phone is usually switched through to a mobile. If you can't phone during that period please, save me the stress and send an email or a letter or a carrier pigeon.

If the office is unattended the phone is always switched through to a mobile. We try to reply to all calls recorded on the phone but this is not possible if you ring from a private number or through a corporate switchboard were the young lady on the switch hasn't got the foggiest idea what a model train is, let alone who in the organisation would want to buy one.





## **Warranties:**

All Austrains products are covered by a 12 month Replacement warranty. In other words we replace rather than repair most items returned to us under warranty. This warranty only applies to items sold by Austrains or by an authorised Austrains retailer. We are currently disputing a warranty claim made by a customer in Queensland for a locomotive purchased in supposed new condition from a retailer who apparently claimed to be an authorised Austrains retailer. It appears that the loco was second hand and the retailer was most definitely not an authorised Austrains dealer.

Nor are items purchased second hand over ebay covered by warranty. Be careful. Check the Austrains dealer list on this web site before purchasing a supposed new product.

## **Our arrangement with Retailers:**

### **Please take note of this to avoid missing out on some models:**

For a peaceful life our preference would be to supply all our product to retailers from day one and allow them to do all sales while we disappear into a contented semi retirement. However this is just not a viable option for any manufacturer who wishes to expand their range and stay in business. The reasons for this are many and complicated. Suffice to say that the reason there are so few Austrains retailers usually relates to the inability of many of the retail trade to carry the amount of stock we deem necessary to promote the range as we wish to see it promoted. Current Austrains retailers have proven that they can do the job for us and we are happy to continue supplying them as we can. Surprisingly there are a few retailers who would probably qualify for an Austrains franchise but have never approached us. That is their loss.

The other part of this equation is that the cost of new tooling in China is horrendously expensive. To offset this initial cost we need a markup on cost better than we can get by just supplying retailers. This is why we direct market. Not all Austrains products, especially new tooling items, are available immediately to the retail network. Rolling stock items are especially expensive to tool compared to the retail return which can be made on them. So, while you may walk away with a happy heart after placing an order for a new Austrains product with your friendly neighborhood hobby shop that does not guarantee that you will get it. We have even had recent examples of orders being placed with retailers who are not Austrains authorised dealers. In these cases those placing the orders missed out completely.

Austrains retailers are aware of these conditions when they accept a franchise. Please check availability before placing an order for advance delivery with a retailer.

**AUSTRAINS OFFICE PHONE NUMBER IS:           02-9817-2333   (Mon-Fri, 9am – 5pm)**

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