

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 / CLF: While doing the QRN livery we may also take advantage of the opportunity to rerun some of the more popular liveries from the first run and to add **sound** to part of the run. The CL series was originally built with space for sound speakers and we are discussing this possibility with the factory and QSI. No advance order 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. Expected price for the CL series rerun will be \$275.00 standard and \$385.00 with sound. We are also contemplating the idea of a twin pack with one sound and one non sound loco perhaps with a factory fitted DCC chip.

X class: Around the same time as the CL series 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 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. And before we receive a torrent of mail and phone calls, Yes, we will be doing a QRN livery on the forthcoming **G class**. This will also be a very limited quantity and priority in orders will be given to those who also order CLP and X class models.

The last Newsletter: Please read this part Carefully.

After fourteen years and forty four mailouts we have decided to at least try to catch up with the twenty first century before the twenty second arrives. This newsletter will be the last general posting we will conduct. There will be a questionnaire in the next posting asking whether you wish to remain on the snail mail list or be advised by email every time an update is done to the Austrains web site. We realise that many of our customers are elderly and stuck in their ways or have not caught up with the computer age and we will maintain a twice yearly posted newsletter for them only. On the questionnaire are some non compulsory questions which we hope will give us an idea of the changing demographics of our customer base. The results of this survey will be shared with other manufacturers and the model press should any care to ask. **It is not compulsory** but please take a few moments to fill in the questionnaire. Feel free to not answer any questions with which you are uncomfortable such as those relating to income. If you do not reply with at least your contact details you will be removed from the contact list completely. The questionnaire will be sent by mail only. We are only surveying current customers. It will not be available off the web site.

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.

New Products:

The 81 / G / BL: At last tooling is underway on this project. If all goes well we will have first test shots from the factory on display at the AMRA exhibition at Liverpool, NSW, in October. 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. Photos will be up on the web site second week in June. These are first samples and are a little rough in assembly however the coach bodies themselves require little alteration. 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 31st January, 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.

Expected delivery of the FO's is late 2nd quarter 2011.

Another set of Passenger Cars is well into tool making. We expect to have test shots early June and product available later in the year. These will be released at the first exhibition after they come off the production line.

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: a) 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-VPCXCement Hoppers: A rerun of the Cement Hoppers arrived late last year. **Combo Pack N is Sold Out.** We have good stock of all other liveries. There are two packs of VR and two of V/Line livery (**with new sets of numbers**) and Pac. Nat Blue and Freight Australia Green. One pack is entirely Freight Australia Green with a small logo. Not leaving NSW out we have made two packs of the repainted cement grey Pacific National versions, mostly numbered 50 or less which are now operating in NSW. **Retail price will remain at \$149.50 per pack of three.**

DL: It's amazing what turns up when you start to move your stock around. We had several hundred cartons stored in my daughters huge suburban garage. Recently she and her husband bought 61 hectares somewhere the other side of Woop Woop and informed us that we were being evicted until such time as we pay for a glossy new storage shed to be built on the new property. During the move we uncovered 7 cartons of DL 43 in AN Green with Yellow bogies. 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 are due to ship early July. The first public release will be at the AMRA Vic. Caulfield exhibition in August.

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 around mid September, 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 mid 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 remains at \$275.00.

Reruns for 2010: August 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 in the next two years.

Flat Top T / P class:

Research on this project is now complete and design at the factory will begin around 1st 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 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 of these wagons is due for release at either the Caulfield or Newcastle exhibitions. 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 around August. We hope to have test shots of this one 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.

Exhibitions: During 2010 Austrains will be attending the following exhibitions:

This year the Epping Model Railway Club exhibition moves to a new location:

**Thornleigh Brickpit Stadium,
Dartford Rd,
Thornleigh, NSW.
Saturday 12th June to Monday 14th June from 10 am.**

**AMRA Vic.
Caulfield Racecourse.
Station St, Caulfield, VIC.
Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd August 9 am to 5 pm**

**Our Town Model Show.
Newcastle Racecourse,
Newcastle, NSW.**

Saturday 4th September & Sunday 5th September from 9 am.
Represented by Barnes Hobbies
[Note the revised date.](#)

AMRA NSW.
E.G Whitlam Leisure Centre,
Memorial Ave, Liverpool, NSW.
Saturday 2nd, Sunday 3rd & Monday 4th 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.

AUSTRAINS OFFICE PHONE NUMBER IS: 02-9817-2333
Postal Address: PO. Box 3076, Putney, NSW, 2112

Our Fax # is 02-9817-2377
E-Mail: info@austrains.com.au