



SteamRanger's Heritage - an insight into our past

BACKGROUND

In 1992 the SteamRanger Management Committee(SMC) established a Standardisation Working Group (SWG) to examine and report on the options available to enable SteamRanger to continue its operations , arising from the Federal Government's "One Nation" policy, which required the standardisation of the Adelaide to Melbourne rail line.

The conclusion was that SteamRanger should establish a new depot at Mt Barker in the Adelaide Hills

A separate archive article on the SHR website give an insight into the lengthy and complicated negotiations involved from two different viewpoints and the subsequent physical relocation of equipment and rolling stock from Dry Creek to Mt Barker.

This more lengthy article, an edited compilation of updates provided to members in issues of the ARHS (SA Division) Newsletter in 1993, 1994 and 1995, gives more detail on the depot relocation

Relocation of SteamRanger Depot from Dry Creek to Mt Barker (1993 to 1995)

Edited compilation of selected reports from ARHS (SA Division) Newsletter

1993

Initial Negotiations April 1993

Negotiations have commenced with the State Government concerning the effect that standardisation will have on the operations of SteamRanger. Messrs Bull, Busch and Thompson met with the Transport Development Portfolio Coordinator, Mr. R. J. Payze, for discussions.

The meeting was advised that the National Rail Corporation would not accept a third rail option through the Mt I, Lofty Ranges and in fact the State Transport Authority has agreed to make available one of its existing broad gauge tracks as a standard gauge line between Goodwood and Belair. The NRC has a number of reasons for not accepting this option, including technical, financial and the availability of resources.

Arising from this meeting a working party was established with G. Bull (SteamRanger) and C. Parsonage (STA) to investigate the realistic cost estimate and the feasibility of establishing a depot at Mt. Barker. In this matter consulting engineer Mr. J. Adams was engaged to assist. His report has been received and it is now being considered.

Concurrently, other options are being pursued in order that a considered and informed decision can be made. Whatever option is adopted to be presented to the State Government it must have a realistic cost base and be practical.

Concept Plans for Mt Barker Depot June 1993

The Chairman of the Standardisation Working Group, Graham Bull, has written to the Transport Development Portfolio Coordinator (Mr. R. J. Payze) regarding the effect of standardisation on the operations of SteamRanger.

The letter expressed the opinion of many of our members that provision of the third rail between Belair and Mt. Barker Junction was the best option for SteamRanger as it would enable the tourist train service to continue with a minimum of disruption. The fact that the third rail between those two locations was not being provided was considered to be short sighted, particularly from the tourist aspect, and the disruption it would cause to our operations,

SteamRanger at present provides a rail tour from the Keswick Rail Passenger Terminal to Victor Harbor and return for its passengers. For this concept to continue after standardisation it would require a standard gauge train from Keswick to Mt. Barker, where passengers would transfer into the broad gauge train to continue the journey to Victor Harbor.

To provide this operation it would be necessary to :

- install a standard gauge turnout at Mt. Barker Junction to allow access to Mt. Barker,
- convert the railway track between Mt. Barker Junction and Mt. Barker from broad to Standard Gauge.
- provide a dual gauge turntable at Mt. Barker, along with a standard gauge run-round track and a dead end siding behind the existing platform which will terminate at the station buildings,
- convert some of SteamRanger's existing steel carriage fleet and the provision of storage facilities in the Adelaide area.

Irrespective of whether or not standard gauge trains operate from Keswick, broad gauge trains will operate between Mt. Barker and Victor Harbor and as a consequence it will be necessary to ;

- Undertake significant upgrading of station facilities at Mt. Barker, including toilet facilities, shop / souvenir area, ticket office and car and bus parking.
- relocate the rolling stock, equipment stores and associated facilities currently at the Dry Creek Depot to Mt. Barker. This cost is known to be in excess of \$1 m.

Mr. Payze was advised that the transfer of SteamRanger broad gauge activities is a very large and complex project with many unknown factors, which will only appear as work proceeds. As costs cannot be determined with reasonable certainty, it is necessary that adequate recompense be provided, with the flexibility to cover unknown and increased costs as they become apparent.

The Standardisation Working Group has indicated it is prepared for its representatives to meet with Mr. Payze and discuss the matter further before making a detailed submission.

Both Graham Bull and Ian Johnson met with senior staff of the District Council of Mt Barker concerning the relocation of the depot to Mt Barker. The positive reaction expressed at the meeting was most encouraging.

The Need to Expedite Negotiations August 1993

Representatives of the Standardisation Working Group met with, the Chief Executive Officer, Department of Transport Mr R J Payze, on **Tuesday 31 August 1993** to discuss matters pertaining to standardisation,

The representatives expressed concern at the slow progress of negotiations and the need for early finalisation to enable facilities to be completed before the standardisation work commences. This would enable the shifting of equipment etc. to commence at the earliest opportunity thereafter.

Mr Payze stated that although progress might appear slow it was thorough. He is having a review undertaken of the

- . legal issues
- . financial issues
- . engineering requirements,

This review is necessary so as to ensure that the State Government can determine its position in regard to the possible expenditure of public money.

He indicated that the attitude of the National Rail Corporation is not sympathetic towards the cost of relocation. It is likely that the matter of funding the cost of any relocation would involve the State Government or the Federal Government either singularly or jointly. It is understood that the State Minister of Transport Development has advised the Federal Minister for Transport that this additional expenditure is likely to be necessary as a by-product of the standardisation project.

The State Minister is understood to have received an undertaking from the Federal Minister that he will consider a proposition, if one is made to him, on the financing of the relocation cost. The Federal Minister has merely undertaken to give such a due consideration at the appropriate time. Mr Payze indicated that he hoped to be in a position to initiate detailed discussions prior to the end of September and would be contacting Mr. G Bull at that time

Clearly, there is a long way to go in what is an extremely complicated negotiation process.

Preparation of a Draft Cabinet Submission December 1993

On **4th November 1993** Messrs Bull, Busch, Johnston and Thompson met with the Chief Executive Officer, Department of Transport (Mr R J Payze) for discussions concerning standardisation and its affect on the operations of SteamRanger :

A general discussion took place regarding the SteamRanger submission and the matters contained therein, At the meeting it was agreed with the principle that like-for- like would be at cost to the Government with SteamRanger providing the cost of improvements (enhancement) above the like-for-like facility. This was on the basis that SteamRanger is being forced to move and it is not of its own choosing. It was pointed out that the Government would contribute to the cost of the provision of the turntable at Mt Barker as this would equate to the loss of the triangle at Dry Creek.

Mr Payze indicated that the forthcoming State Election would affect the timetable for negotiations. He was aware that time was a critical factor as the Depot and move had to be completed prior to standardisation in April/May 1995. In the meantime, he would undertake the preparation of a draft Cabinet submission. He indicated that it was likely that negotiations would take place with the Federal Minister for Transport. Mr Payze indicated that the SteamRanger representatives would be kept informed of progress and further meetings would be held, as necessary.

1994

A Revised Submission presented to D.O.T February 1994

The President, Mr Thompson, noted that in November 1993 the Liberal Party Transport Policy was announced and the following statement appeared on page 17.

“...support SteamRanger’s tourist rail operation re-establish its base at Mt Barker, a move necessitated by the standardisation of the Adelaide – Melbourne line”

He stated that he can only presume that this reference came about following his representations to the Hon Diana Laidlaw MLC concerning standardisation and its effect on the operations of SteamRanger.

As reported in the December Newsletter SteamRanger representatives met with the Chief Executive Officer, Department of Transport on 4th November 1993. Arising from that meeting, and to assist in the preparation of the submission to Cabinet, Mr J Adams was engaged to provide a cost base for the relocation project, with particular emphasis on updating construction and transport costs.

Mr Adams has submitted his report and after being considered a further submission was sent to the Chief Executive Officer on 11 January 1994 and it is expected a meeting will be convened to discuss matters raised. The Minister for Transport (Hon Diana Laidlaw MLC) and the Member for Kavel (Hon J W Olsen MP) have been apprised of the status of negotiations.

Mr. J Adams has prepared a program of the activities involved in the relocation, which is based on the transfer being completed prior to April 1995, being the scheduled date of conversion of the Adelaide - Melbourne railway.

Mt Barker Junction to Mt Barker Link Discussions April 1994

G Bull and J Adams have completed the review of the cost and methodology of the possible **standardisation of the Mt Barker Junction to Mt Barker** section of line. The report has been received from Mr Adams. He has costed the conversion of the Mt Barker Junction to Mt Barker section at **\$279,000** and the works associated with the standard gauge track at Mt Barker at **\$156,000**, without the contingency item being included.

I advise that representatives from SteamRanger met with the Chief Executive Officer, Department of Transport (Mr R J Payze) on 23/2/94 to discuss various matters pertaining to the relocation of the Dry Creek Depot to Mt Barker.

A letter has been forwarded to Mr Payze seeking an additional financial contribution for undercover storage space and for the standard gauge link between Mount Barker Junction and Mount Barker. Until such time as formal Government approval has been given I do not intend to make any detailed statement as regards funding arrangements, beyond keeping members informed as to the status of negotiations.

Submission of DOT Report to Cabinet June 1994

Information was received that the Chief Executive Officer, Department of Transport had submitted his report to the Minister for Transport for consideration by Cabinet. The report of the Standardisation Working Group is currently being prepared.

A meeting occurred on Wednesday 25 April 1994 between representatives of SteamRanger and the District Council of Mt. Barker at which was discussed the involvement of Council in the refurbishment of the Mt. Barker Station building. The involvement of the District Council of Mt. Barker is important to the successful operation of the broad gauge rail service to Victor Harbor.

Registrations of Interest have been called for the design, specification and construction of the new depot at Mt. Barker. This action is normal prudent business practice and will allow an assessment of the most economical and advantageous method of managing the project.

Face to face discussions with the Premier August 1994

Arrangements were made for the President to meet with the Hon Dean Brown to discuss matters pertaining to standardisation and the effect on the operations of SteamRanger when both attended the opening of the Whale Watch Centre at Victor Harbor.

The Premier had read our submission. The President pointed out that the time constraint was critical hence the need to get the depot construction under way now and the difficulty in negotiating with contractors because of no advice of government funding and the lack of availability of funds. He asked about what would happen if works were not completed within the time frame - little or no security or protection from the elements etc. He agreed that it was important to resolve quickly; in conclusion he said he would speak to Minister Laidlaw on 4th July 1974 and ask that this matter be resolved smartly.

SteamRanger has sought from the State Government **\$2.4M** which is the estimated cost of the overall package. This is made up of \$2.2M for the construction and transfer of the depot from Dry Creek to Mt Barker and \$200,000 as a contribution to convert the 5 km broad gauge section of line between Mt Barker Junction and Mt Barker to standard gauge. Even now with changed legislative requirements concerning OHS&W, building and fire safety standards and water controls it is expected that this figure will still require SteamRanger to fund the excess cost above the \$2.4M.

Deputation to SA Minister for Transport July 1994

Minister Laidlaw received a deputation of SteamRanger representatives (Messrs Thompson, Johnston, Lambert and Adams) on Tuesday 26 July to discuss the overall project.

At the meeting we were informed that State Cabinet has decided that it is not prepared to fund the overall project because it sees the whole matter as being one of Federal responsibility because the Federal Government is implementing standardisation of the Adelaide -Melbourne railway line as part of the 'One Nation' package announced in 1992. This approach has been accepted by the Premier.

The Minister has endeavoured to speak with the Federal Minister for Transport but has been unsuccessful. She indicated however that her staff has made his staff aware of the position. From comments made by her it would appear that Federal funding for the overall project is a matter for Federal Minister Brereton to decide.

She expressed support for the work that volunteers undertake to keep SteamRanger operational. She is personally following up contact with the Federal Minister's Office in order to get a result as she agrees that it is most important that this matter be resolved as a matter of urgency.

She was aware that the former State Transport Minister Hon. B Weise MLC had discussed SteamRanger and its relocation to Mt Barker with the former Federal Minister Collins and is pursuing this aspect. Minister Laidlaw asked what approach had been made at the Federal level. She was advised that a letter had already been forwarded to the Member for Mayo, Mr A Downer MP. She then said SteamRanger and its members should send a letter to all Federal MPs and to the Federal Minister supporting her approach. She urged a concerted approach to get Federal funding. Accordingly, Graham Bull has written to all Federal Members of Parliament outlining the seriousness of the situation and seeking Federal funding.

The President subsequently advised ARHS members:

“Quite clearly if SteamRanger is to survive in its present form and continue the employment of its five paid employees then members must support SteamRanger by writing to the Federal Minister for Transport and all Federal Members of Parliament calling for Federal funds to be made available for the overall project.

Given the fact that I had previously met with Minister Laidlaw and provided her with information concerning the standardisation and its affect on the operations of SteamRanger, when she was Liberal Shadow Minister of Transport, and the support given to the relocation in the Liberal Transport Policy Statement I find the result very disappointing. Notwithstanding the disappointment, however, the effort into seeking Government funding will go on”.

Consulting Engineers Report August 1994

A contract for tree felling commenced on 11/7/94 and was suspended on 14/7/94 after complaints from the public and an on-site meeting with the Property Manager, Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources. The demolition of the old house is not yet complete and all site activity has been suspended pending the outcome of SteamRanger's application to the District Council of Mt. Barker for Planning Approval.

There was confusion as to which authority was the Planning Authority, viz Council or Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources, as the depot is to be on Crown Land. Based on advice that DENR would be the Planning Authority the project proposals were submitted to that Department and subsequently written approval to proceed was given on 31 May 1994.

In view of the above, Council approval in principle then was sought. On 7 July 1994 advice was received that Council had no hesitation in giving such support to the concept on the understanding that a formal application pursuant to the Development Act is still required to be lodged. The Development Application was lodged on 22/7/94 and is expected to be publicly advertised for two weeks. Subject to public comment and Council deliberations it will be up to 8 weeks before a decision is known.

Earthworks and drainage design well advanced but is now awaiting site clearance in order to obtain more accurate levels. As a consequence the calling of tenders for the earth works is also delayed.

The Brief for Design and Specification will be completed at the end of July. It is intended to seek offers from a short list of 8 or 9 organisations who submitted their names as a result of the Call for Expressions of Interest. In the light of the current situation it may be necessary to use the design and construct method, although this 'fast tracking' could incur cost penalties.

The Tree Advisory Officer, Botanic Garden, was engaged to provide an assessment of the trees to be removed as part of the depot construction. The report indicated that many of the trees were old, diseased and nearing the end of their useful life. Some trees were about to reach the stage where they would become a hazard with falling branches. This report accompanied the Development Application sent to Council.

As a consequence of the removal of trees at the site and the complaint from a member of the public, the President was asked by the Mt. Barker Courier for a statement. After consultation with Graham Bull, Ian Johnston and the Consulting Engineer I issued a detailed press statement on 18th July 1994. The consequent editorial supported SteamRanger's move to Mt. Barker as being beneficial to the community. The resulting report in the paper was also favourable to SteamRanger.

Meeting and Correspondence with State Minister for Transport July and August 1994

SteamRanger representatives met with the State Minister for Transport on 26th July 1994 and were advised that State Cabinet considered the matter of funding to be the responsibility of the Federal Government. Accordingly, the State Minister for Transport on 2nd August 1994 wrote to the Federal Minister for Transport seeking Federal financial support for the cost of relocation.

In response to her letter, the Federal Minister for Transport in his reply dated 26th August 1994 rejected any Federal funding for the relocation as he considered it to be a State/Local Government, Regional/Local Tourism and SteamRanger responsibility.

The State Minister for Transport in her letter dated 30th August 1994 again made strong representations to the Federal Minister requesting that he re-consider the matter of funding for the depot relocation. She put forward a proposal that the State Government would contribute \$600,000 to the depot relocation on the basis that the Federal Government would match that sum. To date, the State Minister for Transport has received no further advice regarding Federal funding.

Federal Minister's Funding Rejection September 1994

On 30th July 1994 Graham Bull wrote to the Federal Minister for Transport seeking funding for the project.

On 6/9/94 the State Minister for Transport made a Ministerial Statement to the Legislative Council regarding the funding of the depot relocation (Legislative Council Hansard pages 241 - 243 incl.).

It was not until 12th September that the Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Transport wrote to Graham advising that the Minister had rejected any Federal funding for the relocation as he considered it to be a State, Local Government, Regional/Local Tourism and SteamRanger responsibility. This was in line with the letter dated 26/8/94 from the Federal Minister for Transport.

In summary, the statement indicated that the depot relocation cost had to be reduced.

The State would provide \$600,000 subject to a matching grant from the Federal Government; assistance worth \$400,000 in kind that the land upon which the storage sheds are housed will be retained as the Government is keen to provide an opportunity for Steamranger or some other party to operate a regular historic broad gauge rail service through the Barossa Valley to Angaston.

The ARHS may be required to cull its rollingstock to only that necessary to operate the Cockle Train between Victor Harbor and Goolwa and the tourist railway between Mt Barker Junction and Victor Harbor.

Meeting with State Minister of Transport September 1994

Matters discussed included at a meeting on 7th September 1994 were

(a) Funding

The Minister advised that the SA Government funding position was subject to conditions. Federal Government refusal meant that SA was left with the sole responsibility to fund the relocation. Cabinet held the view that it was not a State responsibility. The State has no means to make full restitution on a like-for-like basis. It was reiterated that the Federal Government has more responsibility. However the State would allocate some funds.

There is a need to reduce the cost of the depot from \$2.165M to \$1.26M. She said this could be achieved by a cash reduction and the use of 'in kind' activities.

The position is as set out hereunder:-

| | | |
|---|--------------------|--------|
| March 1993 shed construction estimate escalated 4%. | \$1,130,000 | |
| Asset relocation (road & rail transport, plant hire, labour) | \$196,000 | Note 1 |
| Tracklaying labour & supervision | \$205,000 | Note 1 |
| Additional track materials | \$150,000 | Note 2 |
| Relocate & install Naracoorte turntable | \$20,000 | |
| Additional survey & design | \$50,000 | |
| Project Management | \$60,000 | |
| Sub Total | \$1,811,000 | |
| Rounded to | \$2,000,000 | |
| | | |
| Plus History Trust additional shed space | \$165,000 | |
| Total | \$2,165,000 | |
| | | |
| Mt Barker Junction – Mt Barker 5kmn conversion (now deleted) | \$200,000 | |

Notes;

1. Total in-kind contribution of \$401,000
2. Deletion presumably because TransAdelaide no longer requires depot land

The State Government has allocated \$600,000 being the sale of STA land at Dry Creek to the Commissioner of Highways. This is the State's contribution to cash funding. The 'in kind' service will be provided by the CSO people and other activities eg transport.

It was stated that TransAdelaide no longer requires the shed facility. If Federal funding is not forthcoming it is unlikely that further State funds will be made available.

The Minister had again written to the Federal Minister for Transport requesting reconsideration of the Federal attitude. Surprise was expressed at the Federal Government attitude given it had a moral responsibility to fund completely or at least contribute to the cost of relocation. A response from the Federal Minister was thought to be forthcoming by 10th September 1994.

The Minister asked the SteamRanger representatives to review the costing of the depot with a view to determining the bare minimum facilities needed to operate the Victor Harbor Tourist Rail way which would not jeopardise the financial viability of the operation and to report back.

(b) The current and future use of Goolwa Depot was discussed in general terms.

(c) The Minister expressed concern that SteamRanger (ARHS) had not commissioned a professional organisation to undertake a survey of public travel needs. This was an omission which did not help the SteamRanger cause.

(d) The Government was concerned about the financial viability of the organisation, particularly where Government funds are involved. The Minister stated that the Government would monitor the financial performance each year. SteamRanger representatives pointed out that the financial position is monitored on a monthly basis and will continue to be so.

(e) The conversion of the locomotives and rollingstock to Standard Gauge was discussed in general terms as was the conversion of the track from Mt Barker Junction to Goolwa.

(f) The Minister raised the matter of the Government's desire to see a tourist train service operate to the Barossa Valley.

The locomotives and rollingstock on lease from Trans Adelaide, rollingstock leased from AN and locomotives and rollingstock owned by the ARHS/SteamRanger were discussed in general terms. The Minister indicated that there may be a need to cull rollingstock and take only those necessary to operate the VHTR. The requirements of SteamRanger to operate an effective and cost efficient operation to Victor Harbor and derivations thereof were discussed in regard to availability of locomotives and rollingstock.

(g) The Minister referred to a 1986 report prepared by an STA officer on the condition of the Currency Creek bridge.

SteamRanger representatives were not aware that such a report was in existence. Subsequent discussion with Mr Harvey found that although he was aware of the bridge inspection at that time he did not have a copy of the report. Mr Harvey advised that he was never informed of any structural problems associated with the Currency Creek structure.

The Minister was advised that the Road Transport Agency Bridge Inspection Unit had undertaken an inspection of this and other structures on the VHTR in April 1994. The officers are currently finalising their report. It is understood that the Currency Creek bridge, which is on the State Heritage Register, is in reasonable condition. A preliminary draft copy of the bridge inspection report was forwarded to the Minister.

(h) The Minister asked for an opinion regarding the appointment of a Government representative to the SteamRanger Management Committee. No objection was raised to the suggestion but the precise details have yet to be worked out.

The SteamRanger Management Committee has asked Mr J Adams to look at options available to reduce the cost of the depot, having regard to the planning approval given by the District Council of Mt Barker and the minimum train operating requirements. A workable option can be developed and Graham Bull is now seeking a meeting with the State Minister for Transport to discuss this and other matters relating to the Minister's statement.

The President has been in telephone contact with the Federal Minister's Office although he has received no written communication in response to several letters. In a telephone conversation on 27/9/94 with an officer of Mr Brereton's Office he was informed that SteamRanger had not been forgotten, however, the Minister had not been able to consider the subject of funding of the relocation because of other matters of more pressing necessity. He was further informed that his Office hoped a decision would be made by 14/10/94 at the latest. There was reference to the possibility that Mr Brereton would be in Adelaide during week ending 7/10/94. The President is seeking a meeting with the Federal Minister but is awaiting a response to this request.

Cessation of work at Mt Barker

October 1994

In the light of the uncertainty regarding funding, the SteamRanger Management Committee has stopped all work at Mt Barker until further notice. This has prevented the undertaking of earthworks and drainage works. No contract for the design of the depot has been let. Needless to say the timetable is way behind and the desired finish date of February 1995 for the depot will not be met. This has serious implications for the orderly transfer of locomotives, rollingstock, machinery and stores to Mt Barker as well as their protection.

Since July the dilemma in which SteamRanger finds itself has been the subject of media attention; radio, print and television. The President has been asked to appear on television, speak over the radio both in news services and talk back programs and make statements to the print media. It has been very heartening in what is a difficult situation to have SteamRanger in the public focus in such a positive manner.

It was being suggested that a tourist train service be operated to the Barossa Valley. The President has had discussions with the State Member for Light (Mr M Buckby MP) and representatives of the SteamRanger Management Committee are to meet with him to further explore his idea in regard to such a train service.

Final Financial Negotiations

December 1994

A summary of the current situation is;

1. SteamRanger sought \$2.4M for the cost of the depot and conversion of the 5 km broad gauge Mt. Barker June, to Mt. Barker section to standard gauge.
2. The State Government indicated that it was interested in the depot relocation cost of \$2.1M
3. Following the failure of the Federal Government to fund the full cost the State Government indicated that it was prepared to provide \$600,000 plus \$400,000 'in kind' provided the Federal Government contributed a further \$600,000.
4. In other words the State Government indicated that it saw the cost of the depot as being \$1.2M plus \$400,000 'in kind' assistance.

At the meeting with the State Minister for Transport SteamRanger was asked to look at the cost of the depot and review same and provide a cost of a facility that would not jeopardise the financial and operational integrity of the organisation. This request was duly complied with and on 28th September 1994 the Minister for Transport was advised that this revised cost was estimated at **\$1.335M**. On 12th October 1994 Messrs. Thompson, Johnston, Lambert and Adams met with the Chief Executive Officer, Department of Transport. The meeting had been called by Mr. Payze to discuss the revised cost of the depot as contained in the letter dated 28th September 1994 to the Minister for Transport.

| | WAS | NOW |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Survey, Design, Project Management | 165,000 | 100,000 |
| Siteworks | 75,000 | 75,000 |
| Earthworks & Drainage | 170,000 | 90,000 |
| Buildings | 660,000 | 550,000 |
| Turntable | 70,000 | 100,000 |
| Services | 190,000 | 210,000 |
| Trackwork | 420,000 | 100,000 |
| Transfer Equipment & Rollingstock | 200,000 | 70,000 |
| Incidentals | 50,000 | 40,000 |
| History Trust additional u/cover | 165,000 | NIL |
| TOTAL | \$2,165,000 | \$1,335,000 |

Mr. Payze discussed the individual items and reached the conclusion that the estimate put forward was, from an engineering aspect, satisfactory. He advised that he would report to the Minister for Transport accordingly.

2. On **Friday 14th October 1994** the Federal Minister for Transport announced that a Federal contribution of **\$250,000** would be forthcoming and no more. He re-iterated that the SteamRanger relocation is a matter for the State Government and he did not see it as a Federal responsibility. This money was from the unspent funds from the Outer Harbour railway improvements. Tate Minister Laidlaw expressed concern at the Federal Government attitude and its effect on ensuring the relocation of SteamRanger to Mt. Barker.

3. Messrs. Thompson, Johnston, Lambert and Adams met with the S.A. Minister for Transport and Mr. Payze on **Friday 21 October 1994**.

Matters discussed included:-

The Minister indicated that she had again written to the Federal Minister for Transport seeking Federal funding for the relocation project in the light of his earlier refusal to make funds available.

Mr. Brereton had now replied to the State Minister for Transport that there were surplus funds available from the One Nation package allocation for the Outer Harbour transport access redevelopment. The sum was \$250,000 and it could be used for SteamRanger purposes, subject to no further Federal funding being used for the project.

The Minister indicated that the State would provide \$600,000 plus \$400,000 'in kind' assistance as already announced. This together with the Federal financial contribution would make a total cash grant of \$850,000. The Minister was pressed for a grant of SIM, as had been broadly mentioned in earlier discussions, she responded by saying that it was based on 50 percent of the original \$2.1M. In this case the State contribution is still 50% of \$1.2M, hence the proportion has not altered. The SteamRanger representatives pressed the point that this meant there was a shortfall of \$500,000 between the cost to relocate and what was actually being provided. In this light they asked that the Government provide some form of bridging finance by way of a Government guaranteed loan or additional funding by way of grants from other Government sources.

The Minister asked Mr. Payze to follow through the requirements necessary with a view to obtaining a Government guaranteed loan for (say) \$300,000 to \$400,000. She indicated that this would need to be channelled through the Minister for Industry, Manufacturing, Small Business and Regional Development (Hon. J Olsen) and may need scrutiny by a Parliamentary Committee.

The Minister asked if SteamRanger wished to proceed on the above basis, with negotiations continuing to finalise the 'in kind' assistance, additional funding from other sources e.g. Government guaranteed loan or tourism grant. At the request of the SteamRanger representatives, the Minister agreed to initiate action to make an advance payment to allow earth works etc. to proceed. The response was in the affirmative.

With regard to the 'in kind' assistance, the Minister indicated that agreement had been reached with the Minister for Correctional Services for the use of persons under the Community Service Order scheme.

With regard to transport requirements, this would require further clarification as to type of vehicles required and when and the source from which they would be obtained.

The Minister indicated that Mr. C Parsonage would be seconded full time to undertake the necessary co-ordination for the project and liaison with SteamRanger's Project Manager, Mr. J Adams.

The Minister indicated that there had been discussions with another operator regarding the operation of a train service to the Barossa Valley. Consequently, this matter will not be pursued with SteamRanger nor will the Dry Creek depot be required for use by another operator. Mr. Payze indicated that the Montague Road project would sever access to the balance of the Dry Creek depot land. Access could only be provided at a cost of \$1.2M by the construction of an additional span on the bridge separating the road from the railway tracks. The Road Transport Authority did not consider this to be economically justified and would not make such a provision. This meant that the RTA would use the land for landscaping purposes. The eventual lack of road access would make the site unusable.

In the terms of the STA lease, the ARHS may clear the land of all structures on termination of the lease. Mr. Payze indicated that whatever buildings owned by SteamRanger were on the site they could be removed, as required.

As the negotiations stand, the financial position is as follows:-

September State Government proposal
\$1.2M (cash) + \$400,000 (in kind) = **\$1.6M**
(with Federal & State Governments sharing 50 per cent of cash grant).

October Combined Governments offer
\$850,000
(with Federal \$250,000 and the State \$600,000 as cash grants)
plus \$400,000 (in kind) = **\$1.25M**

The cash shortfall is therefore \$350,000

Negotiations have reached the stage where the offer from both Governments is quite firm. The result of the negotiations is personally very disappointing particularly in the light of the significant efforts by the many people involved.

The result is that SteamRanger must look at new ways of funding its works whether it be by sponsorship, Government grants for specific purposes e.g. Federal tourism grants (through local councils), Landcare and Environment Action program and so on. It must be remembered, however, that both Federal and State Governments had originally rejected any responsibility for funding the cost of relocation.

Representations were made by the community, local Councils, regional and local tourism organisations, Federal and State Parliamentarians and SteamRanger regarding the situation. As an example, the Leader of the Opposition (Hon. M DRann MP) spoke about SteamRanger in the Grievance Debate in the House of Assembly on 12/10/94. Likewise, in the Adjournment Debate in the Federal House of Representatives the Member for Adelaide (Ms. Trish Worth) raised the future of SteamRanger.

As a consequence of these representations, both Governments reconsidered their respective positions and made funds available. In the light of Government expenditure priorities and the community demands and expectations which are placed on such expenditure the State contribution is reasonable but I am of the opinion that the Federal Government has been less than fair in its funding allocation for the project.

All sectors of the media have been supportive of SteamRanger in the position in which it found itself. The publicity was conducted in a deliberate, even-handed and responsible manner calculated to ensure that the SteamRanger name was regarded as being a responsible organisation.

Relocation Issues

Since the meeting with the Minister for Transport discussions have been held with Department of Transport representatives regarding the administrative arrangements for the relocation of the depot. At this stage, the Government has undertaken a valuation of the land and improvements on the land leased by the ARHS for the depot. The result of the valuation is awaited as this has a significant bearing on the future of the carriage shed.

Current indications are that the two small sheds will be removed and relocated to Mt. Barker. It will be necessary to enter into an Agreement with the Government specifying the conditions applicable for the funding of the relocation. The State Government money will be paid in stages commensurate with the expenditure. The State Minister for Transport has written to her Federal counterpart indicating acceptance of the federal contribution of \$250,000. To date no response has been received from the Federal Minister regarding payment.

A further review of the project has resulted in the consulting engineer preparing a staged development for the project. The first stage will cost approx. \$1M. This will be funded by the \$850,000 cash from both the Federal and State governments, the public appeal and SteamRanger funds. The SI M is the absolute bare minimum that is required to maintain the operation, but is less than satisfactory because of the lack of undercover storage for the carriages. The money allocated to buildings (viz \$200,000) will only provide for the locomotive shed and not the carriage shed. The cash shortfall is \$350,000 and this would have provided for the construction of 3/8ths of the original carriage shed

The District Council of Mt. Barker has lodged an application for a grant of \$380,000 from the Federal Regional Tourism Development Program 1994/5. The money will be used for the carriage shed and the interpretive and public viewing area. A representative of the District Council of Mt. Barker attended part of the ARHS Council meeting on 8th November 1994 to discuss Council support, both financial \$150,000 and 'in kind', for the refurbishing of the Mt. Barker station building and environs and the suggested Terms of Agreement relating thereto. The meeting was exploratory and enabled a wide ranging frank and open discussion to occur. It enabled both the District Council representative and the ARHS Council to better understand each others position and the varying viewpoints involved.

Some of the Terms of Agreement need clarification and a letter from the District Council formally advising of the Agreement is **now awaited**. Upon receipt, it will be put before the ARHS Council for a decision.

Discussions are on-going between 5DN, Channel 9 and The Advertiser regarding the launch of the public appeal. Because of commitments by the media the appeal will be launched on 1 January 1995.

The Australian Army Reserve (Royal Australian Engineers) is still examining its involvement in the relocation of the Bridgewater turntable to Mt. Barker.

Consulting Engineer's Progress Report November 1994

- the contract for earthworks was signed on 15/11/94 with Adelaide Civil Pty. Ltd. which commenced works on 23/11/94.
- Discussions have occurred regarding the use of surplus Government buildings, viz Police Dept. hanger at Novar Gardens and RTA building at its Walkely Heights Depot. Unfortunately there are a number of disadvantages which preclude their use.
- A formal submission has been made to the District Council of Mt. Barker regarding the use of 718 sq. m of its land for turntable purposes.
- An inspection has been undertaken of the Mile End Diesel Depot pits with a view to recovering items for re-use at Mt. Barker.
- A letter has been sent to Australian National seeking the donation of track materials for Mt. Barker.

1995

Agreements to Proceed

SteamRanger has spent nearly \$100,000 of its own funds on the preliminary activities and earthworks associated with the new depot at Mt. Barker. At its meeting on 19 December 1994 the SteamRanger Management Committee decided that, as no agreement had been reached with either the State Government or the District Council of Mt. Barker regarding funding, it would be imprudent to spend any further SteamRanger funds as this would have implications for the financial situation for the organisation. This decision is indeed proper given the prevailing circumstances.

Since that decision was made, negotiations have been proceeding with officers of the Crown Law Department and the Department of Transport regarding the preparation of Agreements between the State Government and the ARHS for the payment of \$607,000 as earlier indicated by the Minister for Transport.

Three Agreements are involved,

- Deed of Surrender of the existing Lease with TransAdelaide for the land at Dry Creek
- Relocation Deed - Payment of Monies by State Government
- Annual Licence issued by the Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources for the Depot site at Mt. Barker.

The Agreements were considered by the ARHS Council at its meeting on 23/1 /95 and accepted, with the President and Secretary/Public Officer being authorised to sign and seal the documents on behalf of the Society. The execution of these documents will enable the transfer of Government money to SteamRanger in an orderly manner. Providing there are no last minute delays the first cash payment should be made in early February. In the light of the foregoing, the SteamRanger Management Committee has agreed that the Consulting Engineer, Mr. J Adams, can proceed with further preliminary activities.

Negotiations with Mt Barker Council achieve mutually acceptable solution - 12th January 1995

The District Council of Mt. Barker wrote to the ARHS regarding its involvement in the refurbishing of the Mt. Barker Station building and the provision of car parking and landscaping of the environs. The conditions sought by the District Council were not acceptable to the ARHS Council. A letter to that effect was sent to the District Council following which a deputation from the ARHS Council made a presentation to a meeting of the full Council. As a consequence, the District Council referred the matter to its Tourism & Heritage Committee for further discussion with ARHS Council representatives. Representatives of both organisations met on 12th January 1995 at which there was a frank and open discussion and the attitude of both groups were strongly articulated. The representatives were able to achieve middle ground with a view to obtaining a fair and workable result that both organisations could live with.

These were adopted by the ARHS Council on 23rd January 1995

Conditions agreed to were

CONVERSION OF MT. BARKER JUNC. TO MT. BARKER TO STANDARD GAUGE

It is agreed that the ARHS will not convert from broad gauge to standard gauge the 5 km section of railway line between Mt. Barker Junction and Mt. Barker within the next 3 years, subject to, if within that time, the District Council of Mt. Barker can be convinced of the value of conversion then there is the option to release the ARHS from this condition.

LIMIT OF 6 TRIPS FROM ADELAIDE

It is agreed that no limit will be placed on the ARHS in regard to the number of trains that it can operate from Adelaide. The ARHS agrees that it will publish the fact that people have the option to either board the train at Adelaide or at Mt. Barker where a different fare rate will be paid which will not exceed two thirds of the total fare.

LEVY

The District Council of Mt. Barker is borrowing the sum of \$150,000 to enable it to carry out the restoration work on the station building (\$50,000) and for car parking and landscaping (\$100,000). With regard to the station building, a significant part of the labour component is being undertaken by Community Service Order personnel, LEAP Scheme personnel and community organisations. The cost of \$50,000 covers the cost of material required for the restoration. The ARHS Council is concerned at the use of the word 'levy'.

It is agreed that the ARHS (SteamRanger) would make a contribution to the District Council of Mt. Barker payable yearly over a 10 year period on the understanding that the money will be retained for expenditure on station building maintenance or some other worthwhile project within the Mt. Barker station yard. The ARHS Council is prepared to make a contribution of \$3,500 in 1996 increasing by \$250 per year up to and including the year 2005.

The reason for commencing the contribution in 1996 is the fact that the depot will not be completed for some months and on present indications steam train services from Mt. Barker are unlikely to commence before August 1995. This will place an undue strain on both the physical and financial resources of the organisation.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO CAR PARK

The ARHS has an Operating Agreement with the Minister for Tourism, which is extended on a yearly basis until such time as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources issues a Miscellaneous Crown Lease for the railway land between Mt. Barker Junction and Victor Harbor to the Society. The ARHS Council agrees that public access to the car park will be for the term of the Miscellaneous Crown Lease, subject to train patrons having preference in using the car park on those days when trains are operating.

TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICE

The ARHS Council agrees in principle that a room in the Mt. Barker station building will be made available for use as a Tourist Information Office, however, the mutually acceptable details are to be worked out by ARHS and Council representatives.

A letter outlining the revised conditions was considered by the Council at its meeting on 6th February 1995. The Council sought minor changes to the revised proposal which was accepted by the ARHS Council at its meeting held on 14 February 1995. The changes are as follows:

TRAINS FROM ADELAIDE

This was amended to read *"that a brochure for wide distribution be published showing fares and timetables from Mt. Barker and that the steam segment of the journey commences from Mt. Barker."*

LEVY

This was amended by deleting the words *"on the understanding that the money will be retained for expenditure on station building maintenance or some other worthwhile project within the Mt. Barker station yard."*

The revised conditions are a significant change to the original proposal and the combined efforts of both the Society and the District Council can only but benefit SteamRanger in particular and Mt. Barker generally.

Funding Provided

April 1995

With the signing of the three documents as detailed in February, the State Government has provided the first instalment of \$50,000 from its grant of \$600,000. The remaining money will be paid as claims for expenditure are submitted. However, this is dependent upon the settlement of the land purchase between the Commissioner of Highways and TransAdelaide. John Lambert, the SteamRanger Treasurer, is liaising with the appropriate Departmental officers. The Federal Government grant of \$250,000 has not been received and action has been to find out what has happened to it with the request that the money be made available as soon as possible.

A public appeal supported by 5DN, Channel 9 and The Advertiser commenced in late January/ early February. There have been some large donations but the bulk of the money received has been in the \$20-\$50 range. As at 29th March 1995 the appeal had raised **\$11,300**. Arrangements were made to give the appeal more exposure.

Consulting Engineer's Progress Report March 1995

Contract for earthworks at Mt. Barker achieved status of practical completion on 6 February 1995. The final cost was \$58,556.

A contract for the design and specification of buildings and services for the new depot was awarded on 27 January 1995 to Oldbury Pty. Ltd. This has progressed to the stage of having plans virtually ready for submission to the District Council of Mt. Barker for building approval. Definition of scope of buildings possible to erect cannot be determined at this stage. The availability of funds is not clear and is dependent on other priorities, in particular the turntable construction costs.

Surplus funds may be available from the track laying allocation because of material and plant being obtained by judicious means and the maximum use of CSO labour. The latter has considerably slowed progress through irregular attendance and changing personnel but the philosophy will pay off financially. First two turnouts, per way siding and No. 1 road dead end are virtually complete.

Security fencing contract let and should be completed for lock-up by 4 April 1995.

The District Council of Mt. Barker has made an area of 718 sq m of land available for the turntable at peppercorn rental. The Main Line is to be closed and broken for preparation of the area for turntable construction after the last train on 3 April 1995. The 3 Field Squadron Australian Army in conjunction with Civil Construction Skills and Technology Centre will undertake the rough earthworks for the turntable over weekend 8-9 April.

There is no news on the result of the submission by the District Council of Mt. Barker for funding under the Federal Regional Tourism Development Program.

The District Council of Mt. Barker is now proceeding with work on the station building. Advice has been received that a Planning Application is required for the car park and associated works and this is being processed.

SteamRanger volunteers have performed well to recover steel beams and other loose materials from the Mile End Diesel Depot pits. Other tasks for SteamRanger and PichiRichi volunteers are being considered. There is, however, difficulty in the lack of availability of suitable tools and equipment to allow too many people to participate in a given task at the same time.

Settlement of Land Purchase June 1995

Settlement of the land purchase between the Commissioner of Highways and TransAdelaide has been completed. To enable the Federal Government grant of \$250,000 to be paid on the same procedural basis as State Government funds the ARHS Council approved the signing and sealing of the Deed of Addendum by the Seal Holders. The Minister for Transport has signed the document. With all the detailed administrative procedures completed money is now flowing through to reimburse SteamRanger the costs incurred in relocation.

Statement of expenditure to 28th February 1995

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Project Management | \$ 55,390 |
| Siteworks | \$ 12,539 |
| Earthworks | \$55,694 |
| Structures | \$ NIL |
| Turntable | \$ NIL |
| Services | \$ 1,020 |
| Trackwork | \$ 65,389 |
| Equipment | \$ 3,738 |
| Others | \$ NIL |
| TOTAL | \$193,770 |

Cooperation with Mt Barker Council

At its April meeting the ARHS Council offered comment on the draft Agreement between the Society and the District Council of Mt. Barker. The District Council has agreed to lease 718 sq. metres of land at a peppercorn rental for a period of 10 years with a right of renewal for the purpose of installing the turntable.

On 2nd May 1995 the first meeting was held of the Joint SteamRanger & District Council of Mt. Barker Working Group. Matters discussed included:-

- Mt. Barker Station refurbishment
- Turntable - drainage; power requirements
- Station entrance road
- Depot construction progress
- Commencement of operations - promotion

The refurbishing of the building is expected to be completed by September

Consulting Engineers Report May 1995

Security fencing was completed for lock up on 5/4/95.

Building development approval is proceeding with a number of queries from the District Council of Mt. Barker being answered. Main request is for a detailed landscaping plan and planting schedule for the Dutton Road fence line. Council has favourably considered a request for remission of fees and has agreed to a partial remission.

A layout design for bus and car parking has been prepared and submitted to the District Council of Mt. Barker for Development Approval application. The proposal includes reforming and widening of the access road from Dutton Terrace to the line of the yard boundary (formerly a gateway). This is on a narrow strip of land which is included in the ARHS leasehold. As there are two other accesses to the adjoining property which use this section of road consideration will be given to handing that portion to the District Council for future maintenance. Otherwise the responsibility for maintenance will lie with SteamRanger.

All turnouts, the perway siding, Nos. 1 & 2 road dead ends and part of turn table access have been completed but still have to be ballasted and lifted. Main Line and Passing Sid ing should be available for re-opening for run round purposes in June.

On 8-9 April the 3rd Field Squadron Australian Army General Reserve from Warradale Barracks, in conjunction with Civil Construction Skills and Technology Centre, undertook the rough earthworks for the turntable pit and access track formation. This was a very successful and well organised operation. It was a good effort by all concerned. The Squadron also carried out drainage improvement work on the northern side of the station yard. It has also offered to carry out any further similar work that may be needed but this will have to wait until next financial year.

Turntable design complete and discussions with Brambles are arranged to plan relocation from Bridgewater to Mt. Barker.

The engineer indicated that progress will now be very much dependent on the weather over the next couple of months. If there is significant rain, access across the adjoining paddock for the heavy cranes and low loaders involved in the shift of the turntable from Bridgewater will be impossible until the area has dried out later in the year.

Statement of Expenditure to 30/5/95

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Project Management | \$ 62,311 |
| Site works | \$27,980 |
| Earthworks | \$61,856 |
| Structures | NIL |
| Turntable | NIL |
| Services | \$ 1,020 |
| Trackwork | \$ 86,629 |
| Equipment | \$ 7,179 |
| Others | \$ 6,924 |
| TOTAL | \$253.899 |

Further Discussions with DC of Mt Barker - June and July 1995

Negotiations have been completed between the Society and the District Council of Mt. Barker regarding the terms of the lease for 718 sq. metres of land for the turntable. The District Council has agreed to lease the land at a peppercorn rental for a period of 10 years with a right of renewal. The terms of the lease is acceptable to the Council. Consequently, the ARHS Council has approved the Seal Holders signing and sealing the Lease Agreement. The document was executed at the third meeting of the joint SteamRanger & District Council of Mt. Barker Working Group in the presence of the Mayor, District Council of Mt. Barker.

Meetings of the joint SteamRanger & District Council of Mt. Barker Working Group were held in June and July to discuss matters of mutual interest.

The Council was unsuccessful in its application for a Federal Regional Tourism Development Grant of \$380,000. It is the present intention of the District Council to re-apply for a grant next year.

Consulting Engineer's progress report July 1995

Building development application being considered by Council. Formal approval now awaited.

Expressions of interest in tendering sought; closed 20/6/95 with 19 submissions and a further 8 for specific services or supply. Short list of 7 registrations of interest has been prepared and tenders will be invited closing 28/7/95. Pricing should allow tailoring of work possible for completion by contract as Stage 1 based on predicted funds available. Possible start September 1995.

All turnouts, the per way siding, Nos. 1 & 2 road dead ends and part of turntable access have been completed but still have to be ballasted and lifted. Main Line and Passing Siding now available for re-opening for run round purposes.

Turntable design complete. Manufacture of holding down bolts and base plate drilling for ring rail and centre bearing fastenings will proceed shortly. Volunteers, with the assistance of Brambles, raised the turntable at Bridgewater on sleepers so that dismantling of the centre bearing and other necessary maintenance work may be arranged. The wet weather has precluded further work on the turntable at either Bridgewater or Mt. Barker.

Statement of expenditure to 31st July 1995

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Project Management | \$67,671 |
| Site works | \$27,980 |
| Earthworks | \$61,856 |
| Structures | NIL |
| Turntable | \$ 1,983 |
| Services | \$1,020 |
| Trackwork | \$93,523 |
| Equipment | \$7,179 |
| Others | \$5,129 |
| TOTAL | \$266,341 |

Mt Barker Station Refurbishment

On 11 August 1995 Messrs. Adams, Johnston, and Thompson attended the graduation ceremony of participants in the LEAP Scheme for the refurbishment of the Mt. Barker Station building. The students were taught skills such as carpentry, hand and power tool operation and communication during the 24 week course. They stripped and painted timber, restored the roof and gables and installed a section of brick paving on the platform.

The building is not fully refurbished and we understand Council is examining a proposal for the involvement of Skillshare to complete the building. The building should be fully refurbished by the time operations commence from Mt. Barker in May 1996. Although progress might seem to be slow and value for money might not be fully evident the importance of such schemes to SteamRanger can not be underestimated, particularly in the intangible sense. It is a win/win situation. We might say that from conversations at the ceremony the establishment of the SteamRanger Depot at Mt. Barker is seen as being worthwhile not only in the tourism area but also in the area of vocational training.

Consulting Engineer's progress report August 1995

I can report that a recommendation has been made to the SteamRanger Management Committee and the ARHS Council that a contract be awarded to Collaroy Constructions for the construction of the locomotive shed complete with 40m of carriage shed (frame only). Work should be completed by the end of January 1996. The contract for the construction of the engine shed was signed on 18 October 1995 by a representative of Collaroy Constructions and the President and the Secretary/Public Officer of the Society.

Building development approval has been received from the District Council of Mt. Barker. However, further structural changes to the building will have to be submitted to Council for its approval. Council approval will be required to enable the storeshed and the truckshed to be relocated to Mt. Barker. District Council of Mt. Barker has completed the removal of trees in the station car park area.

To achieve the timely transfer of operations and for the works to be kept within the budget, careful planning and a concerted effort will be necessary by all volunteers. The following activities have been scheduled to be undertaken by volunteers:-

- electrical and compressed air reticulation.
- construction of the locomotive pit.
- turntable infrastructure construction and turntable relocation.
- completion of track laying
- sorting, loading and transfer of equipment and stores.

Statement of expenditure to 30th September 1995

| | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Project Management | \$73,425 |
| Siteworks | \$27,980 |
| Earthworks | \$ 61,856 |
| Structures | NIL |
| Turntable | \$1,983 |
| Services | \$1,020 |
| Trackwork | \$96,228 |
| Equipment | \$7,179 |
| Others | \$5,129 |
| TOTAL | \$ 274,800 . |

Consulting Engineer's progress report October 1995

Building contract progressing well. Steel frame to be completed by 1st December 1995 with roof and wall sheeting to be erected week commencing 11th December 1995

Meeting has been held with District Council of Mt Barker planning and building officers to obtain agreement on locations of Store and Truck sheds to be relocated from Dry Creek. Formal alteration to approved planning application being arranged.

Meetings have been held with District Council of Mt Barker regarding internal layout of station building. Council is re-designing the car park and it has agreed to be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of access road and car park.