



Federation of Heritage Railways of Southern Africa

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Dear FEDRAIL SA member,

## **FEDRAIL NEWSBRIEF No: 28**

**18<sup>th</sup> December 2018**

Welcome to our last News Update of 2018. We have limited this edition to feedback from the recent meeting in Cape Town between the South African Heritage Resources Agency and the various railway preservation stakeholders.

### **David Richardson from FEDRAIL SA sent us this report.**

The South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA) recently called a meeting at their Cape Town HQ to discuss “The State of Railway Heritage Resources in South Africa” and more specifically “What and how much should form part of the National Estate?”

The meeting was attended by representatives from Transnet, Train Operators, FEDRAIL SA and HRASA and interested parties. Sadly, some of the major operators did not attend. The meeting was timeous given the recent events where the disposal of locos was halted by SAHRA after objections were raised.

We have not set out to detail a set of minutes here but merely observations on what transpired at the discussion.

Regina Isaacs of SAHRA who, over the last ten years, has overseen the process for SAHRA of what and what should not be saved, opened the meeting. SAHRA in their initial discussions some years ago acknowledged that they had not fully understood the dynamics at play among interested and affected parties concerning the preservation of railway objects of heritage value but are now completely au fait with it. Although various lists were drawn up over time, these have now been replaced by new ones as part of the review process. The contentious issue for most of the delegates was whether locomotives not identified as Heritage Objects should be scrapped. As of the start of the meeting this was the status quo and scrapping was planned but objections halted it.

Elvin Harris of Transnet identified a number of issues from their perspective. One being a replacement for Kobus Volschenk who had retired and was Transnet’s link with SAHRA and secondly the shortage of funding at Transnet per se. This meant that preservation could not be at the top of the list for expenditure, even expenditure for commercial operations was tight. The bottom line is that money raised from disposals does not go directly to preservation. However, Transnet will be issuing a report in the near future on heritage resources from their perspective. They will liaise directly with SAHRA in the future.

This led the discussion to the so called “Moratorium” on disposals in both narrow gauge assets and 3’6” gauge assets. Although SAHRA emphasised there was no Moratorium, objections to disposals (particularly scrapping) had effectively created one. In the narrow gauge arena Sandstone identified two locomotives at Joubertina and Patensie which they wished to save as they were deteriorating rapidly together with a number of wagons on the PE narrow gauge line but

were stopped from doing so. SAHRA again said no Moratorium was in place but that objections had been raised by Apple Express. How to deal with or counter these objections was not discussed at the meeting. Charles Phillips, who has been very vociferous on social media against scrapping any locomotives, outlined a plan for a reserve of locomotives which would be kept for future generations. The meeting was supportive of this initiative but the bottom line is one of funding. Transnet cannot achieve movement of over 100 items (including coaches) to a safe place, funding being the key issue again. Although not stated, it did seem that such a reserve would be welcomed by all but how to achieve this is the key question.

Sandstone presented two suggestions, one to offer the locomotives to overseas investors but with the proviso they remain in SA and secondly to engage an international consultancy run by Steve Davies, MBE, who had experience of these issues elsewhere in the world. The meeting felt that the suggestions had merit and Sandstone will pursue this further.

So what was the outcome? In general, everyone was in agreement and averse to scrapping. Transnet will liaise with Sandstone and other potential suitors regarding the sale of any locomotives as the discussion of sales was outside the scope of the discussion. Transnet will continue informing SAHRA of any intention to dispose of locomotives including, Joubertina, Patensie and 3'6" gauge Garratt locomotives in compliance with the provisions of the NHRA.

Although no instant solution was found, ideas to be explored towards addressing the challenges raised at the meeting, were as follows:

1. A Memorandum of Understanding between SAHRA and railway interest groups who could be appointed as expert advisors if there is no conflict of interests, as per the National Heritage Resources Act, No 25 (s32) to advise SAHRA in safeguarding heritage railway objects.
2. Transnet will explore the possibility of changing their policies to enhance and improve their management of railway heritage objects in order to create an enabling environment for owners/lease lenders in order to safeguard railway heritage.
3. Looking to sustainable initiatives such as those in Kenya and the United Kingdom to guide South Africa on how to conserve railway heritage for future generations.

Although many might not see this as a concrete outcome, this was one of the first meetings of its kind in a long time involving the major stakeholders and the positive outcome was that everyone was on the same page.

## **Fedrail News Updates**

Since our last newsletter we have published a number of interesting news items under the News section of our website. Have a look and see what you may have missed. <http://www.fedrail.co.za/index.php/news>

## **Calendar**

The 2018/19 schedules can now be found on all the operators' web sites but here are those for the next few weeks.

### **Reefsteamers**

26<sup>th</sup> January Magaliesburg Express.

16<sup>th</sup> February Magaliesburg Express.

2<sup>nd</sup> March Irene.

23<sup>rd</sup> March Magaliesburg Express.

<http://www.reefsteamers.com/>

### **Wonder Steam/Friends of the Rail**

From Pretoria to Cullinan.

No details for 2019

<http://www.friendsoftherail.com/joomla/>

### **Umgeni Steam Railway**

From Kloof to Inchanga.

22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> December

1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> & 27 January 2019

<http://www.umgenisteamrailway.com/>

### **Ceres Rail**

From Cape Town to Elgin

22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> December

5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> January 2019

2<sup>nd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2019

<http://www.ceresrail.co.za/>

### **Atlantic Rail**

Cape Town to Simonstown

No details available.

<https://atlanticrail.co.za/>

### **FEDRAIL SA Web Site**

<http://www.fedrail.co.za/index.php>

### **Membership**

We urge all our readers who are non-members to join FEDRAIL SA. If you belong to a private railway club or operator you might like to use the opportunity to promote your club so we can provide an opportunity for dialogue and cooperation. We would really like to hear from you. Members are invited to share this newsletter and non-members are invited to join FEDRAIL. Full details can be found on our website, [www.fedrail.co.za](http://www.fedrail.co.za) under membership applications. You can also pick up the latest industry news on the site. Current members will have received their renewal notices by now and we urge them to make prompt payment for the 2018/2019 subscription. Reminder notices will be sent shortly for those members who may

have missed the first invoice. Join FEDRAIL SA now and add your voice to Railway Preservation and Rail Tourism in Southern Africa.

**Tailpiece.**

Ian Welch of Mainline Steam in New Zealand is a strong supporter and member of FEDRAIL SA and owns a number of ex SAR locomotives both here and in New Zealand. Recently Mainline Steam's J Class 1211 was in action in Auckland on The North Pole Express for the Christmas season. Our thanks to Aaron Pilkington for the photo.



On behalf of the board of FEDRAIL SA may I take this opportunity to wish all our members a safe and peaceful festive season and we will see you all again in 2019.