



National Railway Museum Incorporated
Australia's
National Railway Museum

Strategic Plan 2016-2021



STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 – 2021

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The Hon Tim Fischer AC, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia 1996-1999. Patron and advocate for the National Railway Museum

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Australia is a large country with long distances and low population densities. Railways have been important - and are still important - in the social, political and economic development of rural, regional and urban Australia. It is the Museum's continuing vision to make this history accessible to recreational and scholarly interests alike.

It is a truism that the future is not what it used to be. And what ever it is, it is unlikely to be a steady continuation of the present. But that said, for a self-funded, volunteer based museum of national and international standing some of our underlying challenges are expected to be much the same as they were only more so. For example, financial viability in the face of competition for leisure time remaining historically relevant in the face of recreational visitation, and being scholarly accessible at the same time are critical. These are some of the challenges identified through a SWOT analysis that informs the Museum's goals and projects in this next plan. But they give rise to our ambitions too.

Governance	Collection	Financial	Marketing
<p>Challenge</p> <p>Increased complexity on managing scarce resources.</p> <p>Increase in compliance requirements.</p> <p>Ageing volunteer base.</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>Maintain strategic outlook.</p> <p>Maintain strong competencies mix on the Board.</p> <p>Succession policy.</p> <p>Mentoring program.</p> <p>Special junior volunteer membership.</p> <p>Encourage family days.</p> <p>Run special event days aimed at different interests.</p> <p>Goals</p> <p>Annual strategic reviews.</p> <p>Quarterly budget reviews.</p> <p>Personnel training.</p> <p>Pilot family projects program.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Overcrowded site.</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>Rationalize the number of exhibits in the pavilions.</p> <p>Reorganize office area.</p> <p>Goals</p> <p>Refresh interpretation.</p> <p>Increase access to archives.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Highly dependent on visitor and Semaphore train income.</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>New 5-year business plan.</p> <p>Goals</p> <p>Increase income by 5% p.a.</p> <p>Increase shop profits.</p>	<p>Challenge</p> <p>Competition for recreational visits.</p> <p>Strategy</p> <p>New marketing plan, including sharper focus on being Australia's NRM.</p> <p>Goals</p> <p>More 'Three Museum' and Port Adelaide co-operative events</p>

It is our ambition over the next five years to

- Maintain our reputation as one of the great railway museums of the world.
- Qualify for Accreditation from the South Australian government's museum standards and advisory body, History SA.
- Maintain the operating licence pursuant to Rail Safety National Law.
- Increase visitor numbers and income by 5% per annum.
- Grow membership and volunteer numbers by 5% per annum.
- Address succession issues by establishing a juniors program and mentoring key roles.
- Make access to our extensive archives more accessible for general and scholarly research.
- Run rail cars to and from Adelaide Railway Station as part of special events.
- Install more interactive display touch screen terminals throughout the museum, and ensure some are particularly orientated to children's activities.
- Complete restoration of 1924 Brill model 55 rail car (Car 8) (hopefully to operating condition).



The collection includes

19 steam locos

10 diesel electric locos

1 electric loco

3 457mm gauge locos

7 rail cars

15 passenger carriages including

Adelaide Pullman Dining Car

Vice-Regal Car and

Commissioner's Car Murray

30 freight wagons

9 service wagons

7 brake vans

11 ganger's vehicles

a 5 tonne travelling crane and

a 60 tonne breakdown crane

ABOUT OUR COLLECTION

Archive Collection

The Archives has a vast collection of corporate records and documents, annual reports, maps, timetables, mechanical and engineering drawings, oral histories, film, newspaper cuttings and ephemera from SA Railways and successor entities. Items in the archive collection date from the early 1880s.

Library Collection

The Library has a very large collection of journals and periodicals, note books and clippings covering a variety of topics that allow researchers to interpret the social, economic, political, and cultural aspects of Australian railway history with particular emphasis on South Australia. (Access to items held within these collections is presently available on a restricted basis.)

Artefact Collection

The Museum houses artefacts including textiles, uniforms, tools and personal items.

Photographic Collection

The Photographic Collection includes photographic prints, slides, and films of railway development including valuable and extensive personal collections donated to the museum.

Rolling Stock Collection

The Museum houses some of the Australia's most significant examples of locomotives and rolling stock operating over three mainline gauges, including steam and diesel electric locos, passenger carriages, dining cars, sleeping cars, rail motors, including imported locomotives, railcars and carriages from overseas. There is also a cafeteria car from the 'East-West Express', which is available for private functions.

Site Collection

2.5 Hectares, five gauges (457mm, 610mm, 1067mm, 1435mm and 1600mm), Jacketts siding (the Museum's main line terminus), original 1878 heritage listed goods shed, shelter shed, signal cabin, gangers shed, track-side infrastructure, plus the Fitch and Fluck Pavilions, the two major display pavilions containing three gauges of commonwealth, state and privately owned locos and rolling stock. The pavilions also house interpretive displays, the Adelaide Railway Station departures board, a large model railway, loco number and nameplates plus other memorabilia. A train runs daily on a 457mm gauge track within the site.

Significance of the Collections

A formal significance assessment, using guidelines from the Collections Council of Australia is in place to better manage the preservation, conservation, interpretation and accessibility of the collection and to inform the collection management plan.

Curation of the Collection

The Museum has three (part-time) professional curatorial staff.

Key facts

- 600 members
- 120 active volunteers
- 50,000 visitors per year
- Regular members meetings
- Commemorative event days
- Specialist days
- Function and convention facilities
- Occasional main line running
- 457mm gauge train running at Port Adelaide and at Semaphore
- 16,000 passengers carried at Semaphore Railway and 50,000 passengers carried at or to/from the museum per year
- Highly regarded bi-monthly journal

ABOUT OUR GOVERNANCE

Our scope The National Railway Museum at Port Adelaide, South Australia, is listed as one of the great railway museums in the world¹. It is also the largest commercial triple gauge railway museum in the world. The NRM houses, conserves, curates and interprets a collection of locomotives, rolling stock, and railway artefacts of international standing and have an increasingly accessible archive of national significance.

Our management The Museum is a self-funded organisation; managed, curated, interpreted and displayed according to evolving best practice. It is volunteer based with a part-time Executive Officer, a full time Operations Manager and three part-time Curators. It is governed by a widely skilled eight member Board with a strategic perspective; six elected by the membership and two appointed by the South Australian Government. Some of the exhibits, displays, artefacts and rolling stock are owned by the South Australian Government through the Department for the Arts. Many are owned by the Port Dock Station Railway Trust, and loaned to the NRM. The Collection is curated as a whole without reference to ownership.

Our vision is to retain and build on recognition by customers and peers as the premier railway museum in Australia; evidenced in the scope of its locomotive and rolling stock collection, its outstanding archives, the superior facilities it offers for referencing Australia's railway heritage and for the visitor experience.

Our mission is to continue to develop and operate the NRM as a successful, financially sustainable organisation that co-operates with kindred organisations, participates as a corporate citizen, contributes to the local economy and provides first rate facilities for the wider education, tourism and rail heritage markets.

Our values are expressed in a commitment to the 600 members and 120 plus like-minded active volunteers, who gain personal fulfilment and satisfaction through their commitment to conserving and interpreting railway heritage for the community-at-large, to operate in a professionally and financially responsible way by striving for excellence, best practice and continuous improvement through openness, teamwork, collaboration and respect.

¹See Fischer T. A., *Trains Unlimited* (2011). Harper Collins, p. 265 for a listing.



Our overarching goal is to conserve and portray Australian railway history through active and professional management of an outstanding and evolving collection.

STRATEGY

GOALS

NRM will do this by pursuing specific goals within the following functions over the life of this plan.

For corporate governance our goals are to

- Continue our role as steward for the South Australian Government and the Australian nation in its management and operation of the National Railway Museum and continue to perform the museum management role to the highest levels of professional expertise, which will include well-established corporate governance for its mixture of members, paid employees and volunteers.
- Maintain the museum's museological excellence.
- Ensure that its constitution is kept relevant to the environment in which it operates and to the needs of its members and stakeholders.
- Develop, implement, adhere to and regularly review policies and procedures for all critical areas of the Museum's operations (e.g. finance, collection, shop and events).
- Provide staff and volunteers with a working environment and office accommodation that best serves their needs and contributes to the efficient running of the museum.
- Grow membership and volunteer numbers overall, better understand its composition and develop youth involvement and encourage regular volunteers to become members.
- Engage and encourage the volunteer support organisations to promote the museum as a placement for their clients.
- Pursue succession planning in key roles.

and our projects are to

- Re-establish and then protect full museum accreditation through History SA by having regard to of the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries, published by the Collections Australia Network.
- Meet or exceed the legal obligations for registration as a track maintainer and train operator under the
Rail Safety National Law (2012)
Work Health and Safety Act (2012) for the operation of 'amusement devices'
(457mm railways at Port Adelaide and Semaphore are under this Act).
- Actively pursue the development of common rail heritage sector management guidelines with kindred organisations.
- Participate with the peak body Australian Tourist and Heritage Railway Association (ATHRA) and its international affiliates in furthering best practice in the preservation and presentation of railway heritage.
- Grow membership by 5% per annum.
- Create and resource a youth volunteer group.
- Strengthen administrative support to the provision of volunteers to work at the Museum.